

**Palliative Care Tips - Carleen Brenneis RN, MHSA Program Director, Regional Palliative Care Program, Penny Parker RN, BN, Manager, Palliative Home Care - Issue #22 (Issued August 2002)
(Collect them all)**

Emergency Response System (ERD): Palliative Care Protocol

Purpose:

To ensure an appropriate level response to a palliative care client in the community, the Emergency Response Department has developed (jointly with Palliative care) a new dispatch protocol with questions specific to palliative care clients. It is expected that the use of the protocol will decrease the number and type of responders (such as police or fire with sirens) when an ambulance is all that is required.

The protocol will be applied when a call is received from:

- A palliative care professional in a facility (Hospice and Tertiary Palliative Care Unit)
- A palliative care professional or family physician, whether that professional is with the client or not.
- The caller is not a palliative care professional, but a palliative care professional is with the caller.

And:

- The client is registered with the medical examiners office and has a valid “do not resuscitate” order in the home.

Procedure:

1. Caller must identify self as a palliative care professional or family physician.
2. If the caller meets the above criteria, and the client is palliative, the dispatcher will ask questions according to the palliative care protocol. The significant difference between this protocol and others is that the dispatcher will ask if there has been a sudden or unexpected change in the condition. I.e: Is he/she breathing normally? (*If no, is this a sudden or unexpected change*). In the non-palliative protocol, any breathing difficulties would require ALS support.
3. For planned admission transport, police and fire will no longer respond. The Edmonton Police Service will only respond at the request of the ERD.
4. This protocol **only applies** to clients who are serviced by Edmonton Ambulance Authority.

REMEMBER: For referrals, questions, or telephone consultations call 496-1300 weekdays and weekends.

Palliative Care Tips are now available on our Website: www.palliative.org