

## Defining Allied Health Interventions in Palliative Care

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**Background :** Allied Health Professionals in Palliative Care play a major role in the care of patients and their families facing a life limiting illness. Unlike other areas of health where the emphasis is on cure and treatment and success is measured by the clients return to health, in palliative care it is a lot more difficult to measure interventions by allied health professionals. This is due to the complexity of the psychosocial, cultural and spiritual issues faced and the ongoing deterioration of the client's physical health. The palliative care phase is a clinical tool which is used to describe the stage of the client's illness and their clinical needs and is determined by the interdisciplinary assessment of the physical, psychological., emotional and spiritual needs of the patient.

**Method:** The Palliative Care Phase is one tool that Allied Health professionals can use in defining the work they do and the clinical needs of palliative care clients. The five stages in the Palliative Care Phase are Stable, Unstable, Deterioration, Terminal and Post Death Support. The Allied Health Professionals play a vital role in all stages of the illness trajectory in identifying client needs and helping to maximise the client's quality of life.

**Discussion:** The palliative care phase tool is important in identifying clinical need and defining appropriate intervention by palliative care professionals. With the changing health system and move to activity based funding it is important for allied health professionals in palliative care to demonstrate what they do and to be able to measure patient outcomes effectively Allied Health professionals play a major role in the care of patients and their families facing a life limiting illness and as such the work they do needs to be defined and measured appropriately.