

Age UK Northamptonshire End of Life – *Case study update (Spring 2012)*

Following procurement by tender, Nene Commissioning commissioned private healthcare organisation, Nestor Primecare to provide services to patients at the end of life and to support their carers. The contract will run from 1 November 2010 to 31 October 2013, with a possible two year extension to 2015. Nestor Primecare subcontracted Age UK Northamptonshire to deliver support within the contract.

Nestor Primecare was commissioned to:

- Care for patients and their families and carers in the last eight weeks of life
- Use nursing and social resources to ensure patients die in their place of choice
- Ensure 30% of all patients known to the service die at home
- Ensure patients will receive nursing and psychological support to prevent acute hospital admissions.

Age UK Northamptonshire were subcontracted to deliver 550 hours of low level support weekly to patients and carers at the end of life, through their Extra Help Team. These services are accessible by any health professional and are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This care includes:

- Domiciliary support for patients to enable them to be cared for and to die at home
- Flexible, patient-centred care individually tailored to patient/carer needs including night sitting, day sitting and 24-hour care.

- Although care packages would not normally exceed eight weeks, flexibility to meet the needs of patients and carers.

These packages of care include, but are not limited to manual handling, personal care, domestic work, carer and other support.

The aims of the End of Life contract by 2013 are to:

- Increase the proportion of deaths at home by 9.34%
- Reduce the rate of hospital deaths in Northamptonshire by 9.7%
- Improve end of life patient choice.

In December 2011, the Extra Help Team celebrated its' first year in operation, providing a high quality source of much needed care, where, if its capacity allowed, it provided immediate support without a wait for funding approval.

In the first year, the team were able to accept 261 of the 586 referrals they received, working with approximately 20 patients at any one time. During the period, 131 patients died at home, who might otherwise have died in hospital.

The Extra Help Team staff come from a variety of backgrounds, bringing a wealth of experience, whilst continuing to develop and improve their skills during the contract. This has included:

- Three members commencing a QCF (qualifications and credit framework) in Health & Social Care and one in Management
- The whole team assessed against a competency framework, including

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- learning modules provided by Skills for Care and the University of Gloucester
- Nestor Primicare advanced nurse practitioners undertaking the assessment process, identifying good practice and learning needs
 - Team members receiving regular supervision from the assistant team manager, and an open-door policy, encouraging staff to raise issues and concerns at any time.
 - In compliance with CQC (Care Quality Commission) registration and the Primicare contract, a schedule of mandatory training is in place.

For further information on Age UK Northamptonshire visit www.acnorthants.org.uk, email northamptonshire@acnorthants.org.uk or telephone 01604 611200.

“Morale amongst team members is high, and although the job is stressful at times each has the satisfaction of knowing that they are making a positive impact into people’s lives.”

Sue Watts,
Business Development
Manager, AGE UK
Northamptonshire