

NEWS RELEASE

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New version of end of life care quality assessment tool launched

The National End of Life Care Intelligence Network (NEoLCIN) has released the new version of its End of Life Care Quality Assessment (ELCQuA) tool, which is now structured around the NICE Quality Standard for end of life care for adults.

ELCQuA is a free, online self-assessment tool designed to support local service improvement and the commissioning of end of life care services. It can be used by any organisation caring for people at the end of life, across the health, social care, voluntary and private sectors.

The enhanced tool enables users to:

- Electronically self-assess and track progress against the NICE Quality Standard for end of life care.
- Plan priorities for end of life care.
- Share good practice with other organisations.
- Make the best investment decisions to enable the delivery of high quality care for people at the end of life.
- Gather the information needed to complete Care Quality Commission (CQC) and other assessments.

The initial version of ELCQuA was launched in May 2011, and users include commissioners, local authorities, social care services, acute hospitals, primary care, community, palliative care and ambulance services.

"The tool allows you to measure your progress against national standards for end of life care, see at a glance where your 'hotspots' or priority areas are and demonstrate your progress over time," said Julia Chisnell, former Programme Manager Cancer, End of Life Care and Urgent Care at NHS South of England.

"You can produce reports which can be used to inform your board, commissioners or CQC assessments, and the tool encourage you to work together as a locality to monitor progress and identify priorities for end of life care."

Feedback from users has been incorporated into the revised version, ensuring it remains relevant to end of life care planning and delivery, easy to use and aligned to key quality standards. These include the Department of Health quality markers and measures for end of life care (2009), Care Quality Commission regulations, NHS, social care and public health outcomes frameworks and the National Cancer Peer Review Programme's Specialist Palliative Care Measures. The tool links to the NHS Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention Challenge (QIPP), and the metrics for the National End of Life Care Programme's Transforming End of Life Care in Acute Hospitals (2012).

The new version of ELCQuA includes:

- 42 quality measures across the 16 NICE quality statements, plus a section on raising public awareness of death, dying and end of life care.
- Alignment of all measures to the NICE quality standard for end of life care.

- Alignment of quality measures, performance indicators and the red/amber/green (RAG) ratings for each.
- A mix of outcomes and process/structure indicators such the proportion of people approaching the end of life reporting that they are adequately supported to live independently and to maintain social participation.
- Specific quality measures for groups such as care homes, ambulance services and acute hospital trusts.
- Measures for patient reported outcomes.

The tool also has easier to navigate web pages and a new facility to download reports.

"The revised version of ELCQuA is designed to help a wide range of end of life care commissioners, providers and other stakeholders," said Katie Lindsey, Project Manager at the National End of Life Care Programme. "It brings together all the relevant standards for end of life care, and supports users to commission and deliver services efficiently and in a collaborative way.

"The NHS Mandate identifies standards of care at the end of people's lives as a priority area for improvement. ELCQuA is a valuable resource for assessing needs and tracking progress in meeting this key requirement."

To access ELCQuA and register as a user, please go to: <http://www.elcqua.nhs.uk/>

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Notes to Editors:

1) For further information and to arrange interviews please contact Communications Lead Kate Henry on 07795 684 897 or kate.henry@eolc.nhs.uk.

2) The National End of Life Care Intelligence Network collates and analyses data and information on end of life care and related issues in England. Further information can be found at: www.endoflifecare-intelligence.org.uk

3) The National End of Life Care Programme is an NHS organisation working across health and social care to improve end of life care for adults by implementing the Department of Health's End of Life Care Strategy. Further information can be found at: www.endoflifecareforadults.nhs.uk.