

# Referral Guidelines: Ambulatory Outpatient Palliative Care and Symptom Improvement Clinic (PaCSI)

Clinic fax number: 416-530-6007



## Introduction to PaCSI

Our ambulatory outpatient Palliative Care and Symptom Improvement Clinic (PaCSI) provides comprehensive, patient-centered care aimed at improving the **quality of life** for patients with serious or life-limiting illnesses. We focus on symptom management, care coordination, and psychosocial support **in collaboration with primary care providers (PCPs) and specialists**.



## Services We Provide

### Clinical services

- **Symptom Management:** Address complex pain and aim for symptom improvement (dyspnea, nausea, anxiety, etc.)
- **Care Coordination:** Work with PCPs, specialists, and the hospital teams to provide continuity of care and avoid unnecessary hospitalizations.
- **Advance Care Planning:** Facilitate discussions around goals of care, values, advanced directives, and decision-making about treatment preferences.
- **Access to Specialized Medical Services:** IV fluids, para/thoracentesis, drain and wound care, etc.
- **Facilitate Direct Admission:** Work to smooth transitions from clinic to inpatient admission in cases of medical crisis.

### Non-clinical services

- **Psychosocial Support:** Supportive counselling from a multidisciplinary team, tailored to the needs of the patient/family.
- **Education:** Provide educational resources for patients and families on disease processes, symptom management, disease trajectory, and available support services.
- **Support for Families and Caregivers:** Support for: caregiver burden, grief and bereavement and referral to counselling resources as needed.
- **Support for Daily Life Activities:** Arrange supports and referrals to community partners to help patients maintain their independence and to support their care preference in their communities.



## Who to Refer to PaCSI

Patients with **any** life-limiting illness such as cancer, organ disease (COPD, CHF, ESRD, dementia, Parkinson's) at **any stage** of their illness, **concurrently** with life-prolonging therapies.

- Patients requiring complex pain and symptom management from a **life-limiting diagnosis** (dyspnea, anxiety, nausea, etc.).
- Patients who would benefit from holistic care to address physical, psychosocial, & spiritual needs.
- Patients wanting information about their illness trajectory & support with advance care planning.
- Patients who may benefit from methadone for pain (not for opiate replacement) or cannabis for symptom control.
- Patients requesting more information about Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD).



## When Referral to Home Visiting Palliative Care Team May be Preferable

- An individual who is homebound (ex. bedbound, completely dependent).
- An individual who requires urgent end-of-life care. Please make referral and call home visiting palliative service to ensure prioritization.
- An individual at home who you anticipate will have a rapid or acute clinical decline.