

Dementia and Specialist Palliative Care



Eastern Palliative Care

Jeanette Liebelt (Dementia Project Officer)

Kylie Draper (Manager Nursing & Medical Services)

Eastern Palliative Care Association Incorporated acknowledges
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Jack

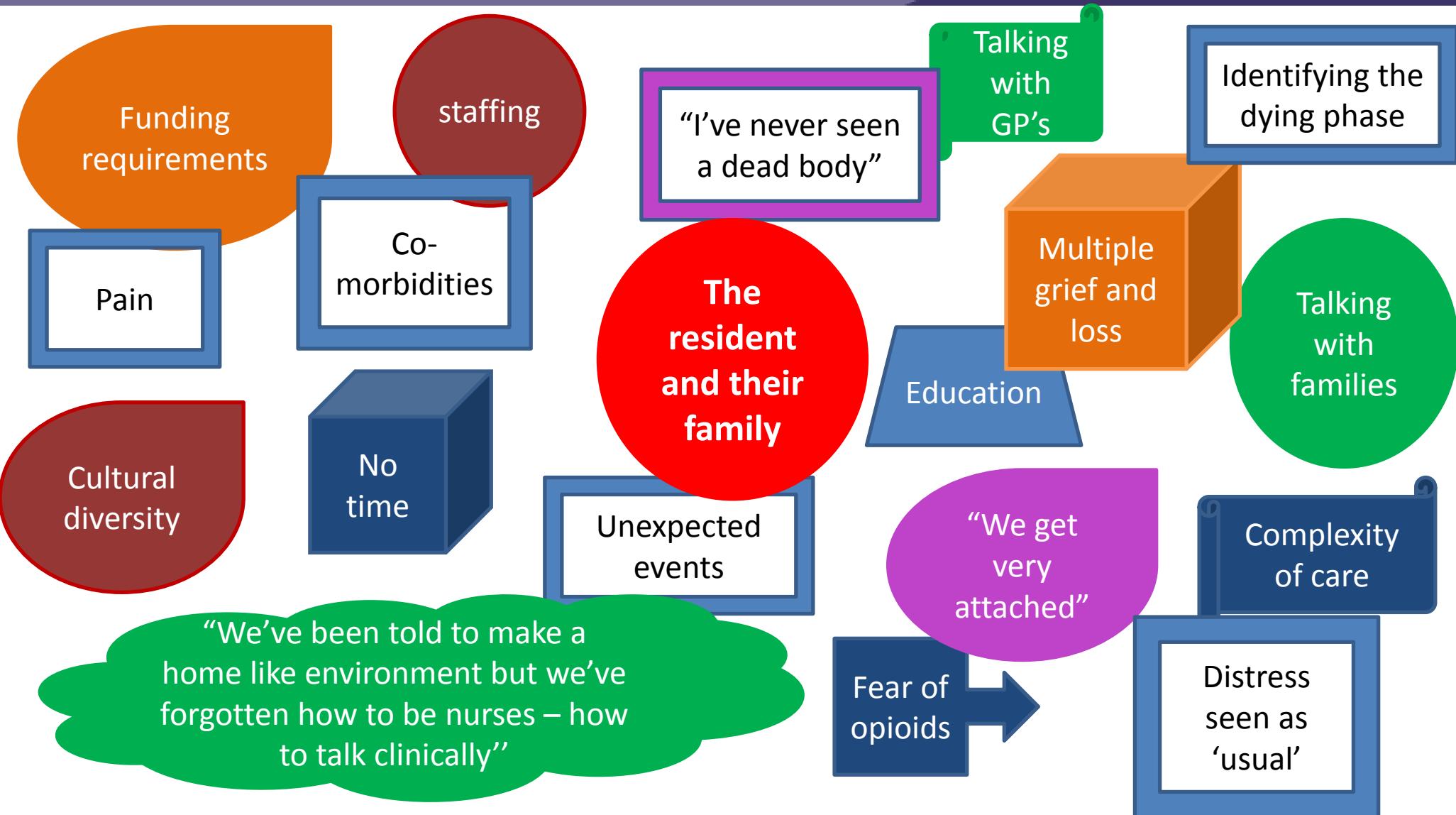


The project aimed to

Build capacity for aged care staff to:

- Recognise clients with dementia predicted to die within 12 months
- Help staff to recognise symptoms including pain, dyspnoea and swallowing difficulties which may impact on a person's quality of life.
- Build on prior learning using the concept of 'modeling'

Working in Aged Care is tough!



Carer burden and grief

- '*heavy bonds*'
- '*painful connections*'
- '*fear of speaking out*'
- '*being labeled as a difficult family*'
- '*I didn't want to tell the nurse Dad needed Morphine*'

'Poor, or non-existent staff-family carer communication combined with a lack of knowledge or understanding about the end of life process in dementia, resulted in family carers constructing palliative care as being 'sub-optimal' and as 'giving up'

(Hennings et al, 2010)

What does 'deteriorating' look like?

- Family members of people who have been living with dementia for years are often shocked, upset and confused when medical conversations begin to converge on end-of-life and dying'

(Rees, 2012)

- 'A focus on the small day to changes rather than the big picture'

(Hennings et al, 2010)



What now?

- Where is the intersect between supportive care, a palliative approach to care and specialist palliative care?
- Let's challenge our paradigms
- Be open to every opportunity for education, modelling, mentoring and supporting
- Let's work in partnership

So - what happened to Jack and Andrew?



References

Hennings J, Froggatt K & Keady J 2010, 'Approaching the end of life and dying with dementia in care homes: the accounts of family carers', *Reviews in Clinical Gerontology*, No. 20, pp. 114-127

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Rees G, 'A New Approach to End of Life Dementia Care' 2012 (fightdementia.org.au)

