



1 (c) The Rhode Island palliative care and quality of life interdisciplinary advisory council  
2 shall consult with and advise the department of health on matters related to the establishment,  
3 maintenance, operation, and outcomes evaluation of palliative care initiatives in the state.

4 **23-89-2. Establishment of palliative care consumer and professional information**  
5 **and education program. -- (a) There is hereby created and established a statewide "Palliative**  
6 **Care Consumer and Professional Information and Education Program" within the department of**  
7 **health.**

8 (b) The purpose of the palliative care consumer and professional information and  
9 education program shall be to maximize the effectiveness of palliative care initiatives in the state  
10 by ensuring that comprehensive and accurate information and education about palliative care is  
11 available to the public, healthcare providers, and healthcare facilities.

12 (c) The department of health shall publish on its website information and resources,  
13 including links to external resources, about palliative care delivery for the public, healthcare  
14 providers, and healthcare facilities. This shall include, but not limited to, continuing educational  
15 opportunities for healthcare providers; information about palliative care delivery in the home,  
16 primary, secondary, and tertiary environments; best practices for palliative care delivery; and  
17 consumer educational materials and referral information for palliative care, including hospice.

18 (d) The department of health may develop and implement any other initiatives regarding  
19 palliative care services and education that the director determines would further the purposes of  
20 this subsection.

21 (e) The department shall consult with the palliative care and quality of life  
22 interdisciplinary advisory council in implementing this section.

23 **23-89-3. Access to palliative care. -- (a) As used in this section, the following terms**  
24 **shall have the following meanings:**

25 (1) "Appropriate" means consistent with applicable legal, health and professional  
26 standards, the patient's clinical and other circumstances, and the patient's reasonably known  
27 wishes and beliefs.

28 (2) "Medical care" means services provided, requested, or supervised by a physician or  
29 advanced practice nurse.

30 (3) "Palliative care" means patient and family centered medical care that optimizes  
31 quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering caused by serious illness.  
32 Palliative care throughout the continuum of illness involves addressing physical, emotional,  
33 social, and spiritual needs and facilitating patient autonomy, access to information, and choice.  
34 Palliative care includes, but is not limited to, discussions of the patient's goals for treatment;

1 discussion of treatment options appropriate to the patient, including, where appropriate, hospice  
2 care; and comprehensive pain and symptom management.

3 (4) "Serious illness" means any medical illness or physical injury or condition that  
4 substantially impacts quality of life for more than a short period of time. Serious illness includes,  
5 but is not limited to, cancer; heart, renal or liver failure; lung disease; and Alzheimer's disease  
6 and related dementias.

7 (b) On or before January 1, 2015, all healthcare organizations which required a license to  
8 operate shall:

9 (1) Consult with the organization's physicians to educate them on how to provide  
10 information about appropriate palliative care services for those patients or residents with serious  
11 illnesses, who, in their professional medical opinion, would benefit from them.

12 (c) The department shall carry out this section with the consultation of the palliative care  
13 and quality of life interdisciplinary advisory council.

14 (d) In carrying out this section, the department shall take into account factors that may  
15 impact the development of such a system and its ability to facilitate access to palliative care,  
16 including the size of the healthcare organization; access and proximity to palliative care services,  
17 including the availability of hospice and palliative care board-certified practitioners and related  
18 workforce staff; and geographic factors.

19 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - STATE PALLIATIVE CARE AND QUALITY OF  
LIFE ACT

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1           This act would establish the "Rhode Island Palliative Care and Quality of Life  
2 Interdisciplinary Advisory Council" within the department of health and would require healthcare  
3 organizations to provide information about palliative care to appropriate patients.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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