



Focus on palliative care

Description

Themed “Palliative Care is Everyone’s Business” and attended by stakeholders from the public and private sector as well as NGOs, the recent Palliative Care Conference was the largest, most diverse gathering of its kind ever seen in South Africa.

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Dr Jenni Noble-Luckhoff, Dr Mari Gildenhuis and Sarah Bennett of Medscheme attended the Palliative Care Conference in Cape Town from 26 to 29 April 2023. This first-of-its-kind conference was a collaboration between Palliative Care for Children South Africa (PatchSA), the Association of Palliative Care Practitioners of South Africa (PalPrac) and the Hospice Palliative Care Association of South Africa (HPCA). It was attended by 400-plus delegates from a broad spectrum of related and allied healthcare disciplines, including integrative therapists, counsellors, social workers, doctors, nurses and specialists, among others.

Dr Mari and Sarah established a brand presence by hosting a sponsored table, which also offered an excellent opportunity to interact with the many experts at the conference and show our support of this often-overlooked area of specialised care. Medscheme, as part of its innovative and progressive managed care strategy, has a partnership with Aligned, which provides focused care for those with advanced cancer.

What is palliative care?

Palliative care is the physical, psychological, social and spiritual care provided by a multidisciplinary team of experts to patients of any age diagnosed with a life-threatening or life-limiting illness, and their families, ideally from the point of diagnosis.

The early delivery of palliative care reduces unnecessary hospital admissions and use of health services. Research by the South African Medical Research Council, published in a 2017 paper titled “[Saving lives, saving costs: Investment Case for Community Health Workers in South Africa](#)”, shows that the public health sector could save as much as R3.3 billion per year if only 50% of those who require palliative care were cared for at home, rather than in hospitals.

The conference theme, Palliative Care is Everyone’s Business, emphasised that palliative care is not just the domain of the specialist or dedicated NGOs, but something that can and should be implemented at all levels and in all healthcare settings.

To read more about the conference, click [here](#).

Category

1. Our Business