



What is the Pallium Project?

Since 2001, The Pallium Project has become recognized¹ as a leading strategic partner for facilitating improved local supports in service of the seriously-ill and dying. The Project has enabled demonstrable improvements in access, quality and new service delivery capacity from within existing systems, in collaboration with Canada's 13 provinces and territories and areas of Federal service responsibility (i.e., First Nations and Inuit Health, Corrections Canada, Veterans Affairs). It has facilitated improvement and change through the purposeful use of collaboration, innovation and knowledge-management strategies, leading to a rapid scaling-up of local learning and development improvements and service delivery transformations².

Successfully implementing two, one-time public investments totaling \$4.56 million, the Pallium Project remains the Government of Canada's, single-largest proven executing partner to-date in pan-Canadian Hospice Palliative Care (HPC) capacity-building.

Working through purpose-specific teams of academic health experts, local community service delivery champions and other leaders, the Pallium Project's unique collaborative project portfolio model has leveraged more than \$12 million in cash and in-kind contributions. This has led to evidence-informed professional development and point-of-care decision-making tools, service/program transformation supports and applied knowledge transfer. These are used daily. The result has been focused initiatives that empower local leaders, accelerate change, vitalize communities and add new value for sustaining Canada's health delivery systems during profound societal demographic change.

Drawing upon established Canadian co-operative traditions pioneered in the prairie and maritime provinces and Quebec, the Pallium Project is guided by the basic idea of joint contribution to common goals in a spirit exemplified as *many hands make light work*.

The Pallium Project has been recognized as one of Canada's premiere Communities of Practice (CoPS)² – a self-organized, deliberate collaboration of people who share common practices, interests and aims and work cooperatively to advance their specific domain of knowledge in Canada's broader public interest. Transforming from an applied health human resources (HHR) research project (2001-03), the Project served as Health Canada's key strategic national capacity-building partner for Hospice Palliative Care through the *Primary Health Care Renewal Fund* (PHCTF) process (2004-07).

Working with local partners, the Pallium Project weaves together a range of teaching-learning, service and policy development, knowledge management, change management and other collaborative capacity-building responses.³ These have become essential building blocks to sustain quality care of the seriously-ill and dying. Collaborators are committed to building on a shared vision of health-promoting *Quality End-of-Life Care*, where persons can live with well-being and dignity until death, at (or closer to) home, as free of undue pain and suffering as possible, with reasonable supports for sustained health of all touched by declining health, dying and death.

Following project legacy 'evergreening' and strategic renewal (2007-09), the Project is now repositioned for leadership at the local, provincial/territorial and regional levels throughout Canada. Operating through a new *Pallium Foundation of Canada*, it will pioneer a 'next generation' health-affirming, community-integrated care model. This will support the progressively-ill and dying using a *determinants of health* approach. Building on social innovation concepts and cross-sectoral strategic partnerships, the Project aims to purposefully contribute to Canadian socioeconomic infrastructure renewal.

¹ The Pallium Project received the prestigious *Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Leadership Award* by unanimous approval of the Canadian Hospice Palliative Association, Board of Directors five years following Project inception.

² See Aherne, M., & Pereira, J. (2008). Learning and development dimensions of a pan-Canadian primary health care capacity-building project. *Leadership in Health Service*, 21(4), 229-266.

³ For examples, see *Pallium Project (Phase II) Operations Summary Report* at www.pallium.ca/infoware/PalliumPhIIopsfinal2007.pdf