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# Comfort Care Bags *Communication Tool*

## Quality Palliative Care in Long Term Care Alliance (QPC-LTC)



[www.palliativealliance.ca](http://www.palliativealliance.ca)

## Acknowledgements

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Please copy and share this document. We would appreciate you referencing the source of this work as

Comfort Care Bags, Quality Palliative Care in Long Term Care, Version 1, [www.palliativealliance.ca](http://www.palliativealliance.ca)



## Appendix C: Donation Handout

### LTC HOME NAME

The Palliative Care Resource Team would like to personalize a 'Comfort Basket' for families who spend time in our home when their family member is at End of Life. We would like to provide two baskets. Some of the items like Kleenex would need to be continually replaced, so if you can contribute more than one of an item, or if more than one person would like to purchase an item, that would be great. This is a wish list of items;

Kleenex packets	CD's	Stuart MacLean book- or similar humour
Travel size lotions	Rosary	Chicken Soup for the Soul booklets
Toothbrush/paste	Pen/paper	Inspirational books
Flameless candle/s	Candies/mints	OTHER
Deck of cards		

Any staff that wish to contribute to the basket by donating an item/s, please sign and list item.

NAME	ITEM

Thank you for your support,  
From the Palliative Care Resource Team







## Appendix B: Data Indicator Sheet

**Quality Palliative Care in Long Term Care**  
A Community-University Research Alliance

Family Comfort Baskets  
Tracking Sheet

Sign out date	Staff retrieving basket	Resident receiving basket	Comments and/or items to be replenished

## Introduction

Communication around palliative and end-of-life care with families can be difficult for front line staff. Staff members have described their relationship with residents as “family like” and a resident’s transition to end of life can be equally emotional for staff members.

The comfort care bags were an initiative developed by the Personal Support Workers on the Palliative Care Teams. Providing a comfort care bag to the family or caregiver of a resident who is at the end of life is one way staff can offer support and let the family or caregiver know that the staff are thinking of them. The bags contain personal items the family member or caregiver.

## What Can You Put in the Bag?

Your organization can customize the bag as you see fit. Some items that you may consider including are:

- candies / mints /gum
- Kleenex box
- mouthwash
- mouth swabs
- bar of soap
- reading material
- personalized memento (example: butterfly, angel or Rosary)
- paper and pen
- pamphlets



## Tips for Success

1. Ensure that all staff are educated on comfort care bags and the process they would use to provide a family with a bag (see appendix A for a sample purpose and protocol)
2. Have staff record when and who received a bag to prevent a family being missed or a family receiving multiple bags (see appendix B for sample documentation sheet). This sheet is filled by the staff giving the bag and kept with the comfort bag contents rather than a different location within the home
3. Many of the items beneficial to families or caregivers are already available in the long term care home and can supplement the donated items (examples: lotions, Kleenex, a pen, etc.)
4. During the comfort bag pilot many staff expressed interest in donation items for the comfort care bags. The LTC homes had specific mini donation “drives” when items could be given (see appendix C for donation handout).
5. Keep in mind infection control policies within your home. The pilot sites both chose bags over baskets and items within the bag were non reusable or disposable. Comfort bags are given to the main family member or caregiver.
6. Community partners like pain and symptom management consultants or hospice volunteer programs can provide pamphlets and resource

## Appendix A: Sample Purpose and Protocol

### Purpose

A Palliative Comfort Care Bag is a supportive practice that can be offered to family members of a resident who is at the end of life. The bag is provided to family members in an attempt to make their visit more comfortable.

### Examples of Content

- Resources material on end of life care
- Books
- Lotion
- Flameless candle
- Note pad and pen
- Mouth swabs

### Process

