

Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool SPIC-T-4ALL™ in Prisons

The SPIC-T™ helps us to look for people who are less well with one or more health problems. These people need more help and care now, and a plan for care in the future. This version is for prison health and care. Ask these questions:

Does this person have signs of poor or worsening health?

- Unplanned (emergency) admission(s) to hospital.
- General health is poor or getting worse. The person never quite recovers from being more unwell. (This can mean the person is less able to manage and often stays in bed or in a chair for more than half the day).
- Needs help from others for care due to increasing physical and/or mental health problems. (e.g. social care package or Prison Buddy, wheelchair needed to get around prison).
- Officers are worried about this person's health and welfare.
- Has lost a noticeable amount of weight over the last few months; or stays underweight.
- Has troublesome symptoms most of the time despite good treatment of their health problems.
- The person has decided not to have any more treatment or stopped treatment; or the person wishes to focus on quality of life; or asks for palliative care.

Does this person have any of these health problems?

Cancer

- Less able to manage usual activities and getting worse.
- Not well enough for cancer treatment or treatment is to help with symptoms.

Dementia/frailty

- Unable to dress, walk or eat without help.
- Eating and drinking less; difficulty with swallowing.
- Has lost control of bladder and bowel.
- Not able to communicate by speaking; not responding much to other people.
- Frequent falls; fractured hip.
- Frequent infections; pneumonia.

Nervous system problems

(eg Parkinson's disease, MS, stroke, motor neurone disease)

- Physical and mental health are getting worse.
- More problems with speaking and communicating; swallowing is getting worse.
- Chest infections or pneumonia; breathing problems.
- Severe stroke with loss of movement and ongoing disability.

Heart or circulation problems

- Heart failure or has bad attacks of chest pain. Short of breath when resting, moving or walking a few steps.
- Very poor circulation in the legs; surgery is not possible.

Lung problems

- Unwell with long term lung problems. Short of breath when resting, moving or walking a few steps even when the chest is at its best.
- Needs to use oxygen for most of the day and night.
- Has needed treatment with a breathing machine in the hospital.

Other conditions

People who are less well and may die from other health problems or complications. There is no treatment available or it will not work well.

Kidney problems

- Kidneys are failing and general health is getting poorer.
- Stopping kidney dialysis or choosing supportive care instead of starting dialysis.

Liver problems

- Worsening liver problems in the past year with complications like:
 - fluid building up in the belly
 - being confused at times
 - kidneys not working well
 - infections
 - bleeding from the gullet
- A liver transplant is not possible.

What we can do to help this person.

- Start talking with the person about why making plans for care is important. (Include family/close friend if appropriate.)
- Ask for help and advice from staff who can assess the person and plan care (e.g., nurse, doctor, social care, palliative care specialist)
- Look at the person's medicines and other treatments. Are some not helping now or needing changed? Do we need 'see to take'? Get advice if symptoms are complicated or hard to manage.
- Plan early if the person might not be able to decide things in the future. (Offer advance/future care planning)
- Record the care plan and share it with people who need to see it. (Use the correct systems and care plans for this.)