Palliative care for children in Ireland

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Palliative care in Ireland...

- Religious orders
  - St Patricks Hospital, Cork (1870)
  - Our Lady’s Hospice, Dublin (1879)
  - Milford (1928)
- Care of the dying
A Palliative Care Needs Assessment for Children

The Irish Hospice Foundation

Department of Health and Children
Incidence and mortality

• 491 childhood deaths per year
• 354 childhood deaths from life-limiting conditions
• Majority of deaths occur in the first year of life and are caused by congenital abnormalities
• An estimated 1400 children living with life-limiting conditions
Children’s palliative care needs assessment - key findings

• Accurate data children with LLC
• Location of care - family home
• Education and development of healthcare professionals
• Services inequitable (diagnosis and geographic location)
PALLIATIVE CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH LIFE-LIMITING CONDITIONS IN IRELAND

- A National Policy
Recommendations

1. Appointment of a consultant paediatrician with a special interest in palliative medicine
2. Appointment of 8 Regionally based outreach nurses
3. The development of Children’s Hospice-at-home teams
4. The development of a range of locally based in-patient beds and services providing respite care
Recommendations (2)

5. Hospitals will provide an appropriate environment to care for children with life-limiting conditions
6. The consultant will provide support to maternity hospitals and neonatologists
7. Development of bereavement support services
8. Education of healthcare professionals
9. A National development committee on children’s palliative care
10. Development of a National Database of children with life-limiting conditions
The good news...

• A consultant paediatrician has been appointed
• 3 regionally based outreach nurses are in post and a further 4 are the process of being appointed
• A National Development Committee on Children’s Palliative Care has been established and work has begun
Level A - Participant Profile, 2007 - 2011

- Neonates: 148
- Childrens: 593
- Community: 152
- Palliative Care: 177
- Education: 28
- Other: 308
- PHN: 97
- Intellectual Disability: 420
Level B Programmes, 2007-2011
Participant Profile

- Community, 25
- PHN, 15
- Intellectual Disability, 60
- Neonates, 17
- Palliative Care, 36
- Childrens, 69
A children's palliative care respite needs assessment for Ireland is now complete...
Ireland's first children's hospice