

# Research Methods in Palliative Care



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Palliative and end of life care are concerned with the physical, social, psychological and spiritual care of people with advanced disease. It currently has a poorly developed research base, but the need to improve this is increasingly recognised. One of the reasons for the lack of research - and the variable quality of the research that is undertaken - is the difficulty of conducting research with very ill and bereaved people. Standard and well-established research methods may need to be adapted to work in this context. This means that existing research methods textbooks may be of limited use to palliative care practitioners seeking to do research for the first time, or to more experienced researchers wanting to apply their knowledge in palliative care settings. This research methods textbook is the first to be written specifically for palliative care. It has been edited by four experienced palliative care academics with acknowledged expertise and international reputations in this field. It encompasses methods used in both clinical and health services research in palliative care, with sections on clinical, epidemiological, survey and qualitative research, as well as a section covering skills needed in any research project. Each chapter provides readers with an up to date overview of the research method in question, an understanding of its applicability to palliative care and of the particular challenges of using it in this setting. It is essential reading for all palliative care researchers.

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