

# Enhancing End-of-Life Care in New Brunswick

An interdisciplinary collaboration





*You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.*

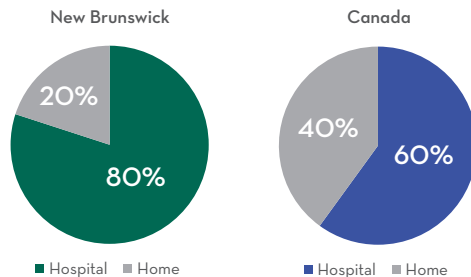
*- Dame Cicely Saunders, nurse, physician, writer, and founder of hospice movement (1918 - 2005).*

New Brunswick is currently facing significant healthcare challenges due to an aging population and increasing numbers of people with complex health needs.

Improving access to care at home is vital not only to the quality of life for these patients, but also to the sustainability of our healthcare system and a shift away from acute care provided in hospitals towards primary care in communities.

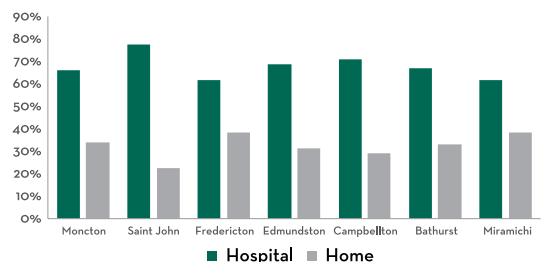
According to the NB Health Council, our province has the highest rate of in-hospital deaths in Canada, with 80 per cent of end-stage cancer patients being admitted to hospital for the last two weeks of their life. The majority of Canadians would prefer to die at home. Because location of death is considered to be a strong indicator of quality of care, the focus of this project is to provide Ambulance New Brunswick (ANB) paramedics with training enabling them to support Extra-Mural Program (EMP) palliative care patients in fulfilling their choices.

### Location of Death



Source: NBHC

### 2018 Location of EMP Palliative Deaths (%)





Under the current system, ANB paramedics respond to 911 calls from palliative patients and typically transport them to hospital.

This innovative and inter-disciplinary solution will provide ANB paramedics with the knowledge and skills to provide palliative care at home, as well as a mechanism to collaborate with EMP practitioners in the seamless delivery of person-centric care. While this level of patient care integration between EMP and ANB will break new ground, its success will be realized in that providers within both areas consistently place patient and family needs first and foremost.

This approach to the provision of palliative care is aligned with *Palliative Care in New Brunswick: A person-centered care and integrated services framework* and the *Framework on Palliative Care in Canada*.

Similar models have been successfully implemented in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Alberta, resulting in increased access to care and support in the home for palliative patients. In addition, patients experienced fewer unnecessary Emergency Department visits and hospitalizations along with reduced time on task for paramedics, thereby improving system efficiency.



“ I think the program is absolutely fantastic. It really covers an important patient need, and relieves strain from an emergency system, especially when patients do not require, nor want a trip to the emergency department. I think the more that paramedics can do for this patient type, the better.

- Paramedic



ANB paramedics will begin providing palliative care in New Brunswick homes in early 2020. As a provincial workforce of approximately 975 paramedics providing 24/7 coverage, ANB paramedics are well positioned to work alongside the EMP healthcare professionals to provide palliative care.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this program, contact us online here:



[ambulancenb.ca/en/contact/](http://ambulancenb.ca/en/contact/)



[extramuralnb.ca/en/contact/](http://extramuralnb.ca/en/contact/)

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