



Hospice and Palliative Care in Africa: A Review of Developments and Challenges

Michael Wright, David Clark

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800 million people live in Africa, a continent which covers 22% of the world's surface and encompasses some 50 countries. Conflict, poverty, endemic diseases, and lack of clean water pose serious challenges for the population, made worse by a rampaging A.I.D.S. pandemic. Huge loss of life has impacted dramatically on both health systems and social and family structures. As the attention of the world focused increasingly on Africa, the International Observatory on End of Life Care was commissioned to conduct a timely review of hospice and palliative care development across the continent. The Observatory undertook this review using an approach specially designed for resource poor settings. Information was collected against an agreed template to allow comparisons between countries and regions. As a result, an insight is given into the challenges, opportunities and successes faced by hospice and palliative care workers, country by country, throughout the 26 countries in Africa where a palliative care initiative is underway. Strategies and models of care are explored, and the development of palliative care is viewed from various standpoints including ethnographic, historical, ethnic, demographic and epidemiological perspectives. This is the first comprehensive reference focusing exclusively on palliative care and hospice development in Africa, and makes fascinating reading.

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