

# Implementing the Framework on Palliative Care in Canada: Gaps in Hospice Palliative Care Research

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## Background

- 1999 report by the Canadian (Hospice) Palliative Care Association<sup>1</sup> identified that Canadians were concerned about the care they would receive when they died;
- It highlighted a lack of research in the field and an absence of a national minimum data set/information at a population level;
- Following the completion of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's first *Palliative and End-of-Life Care Initiative*<sup>2</sup> and building on a previous environmental scan on research funding<sup>3</sup>, the Quality End-of-Life Care Coalition of Canada commissioned a scoping review of the North American literature.

## Methods

- Scoping review (April to June 2019) based on Arksey and O'Malley's Framework<sup>4</sup>;
- Electronic databases (e.g., CINAHL, Medline (Ageline)) were searched using key terms/medical subject headings (MeSH);
- Grey literature sources and hand searches included;
- Each study was reviewed by two reviewers, third reviewer was brought in to break any ties;
- English-language sources published between 2000 and 2019 included.

1 = Canadian (Hospice) Palliative Care Association (C(H)PCA). (1999). *Canadian Agenda for Research in Palliative Care*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian (Hospice) Palliative Care Association.  
2 = Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). (2009). *Palliative and End-of-Life Care Initiative*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Institutes of Health Research.



## Implications

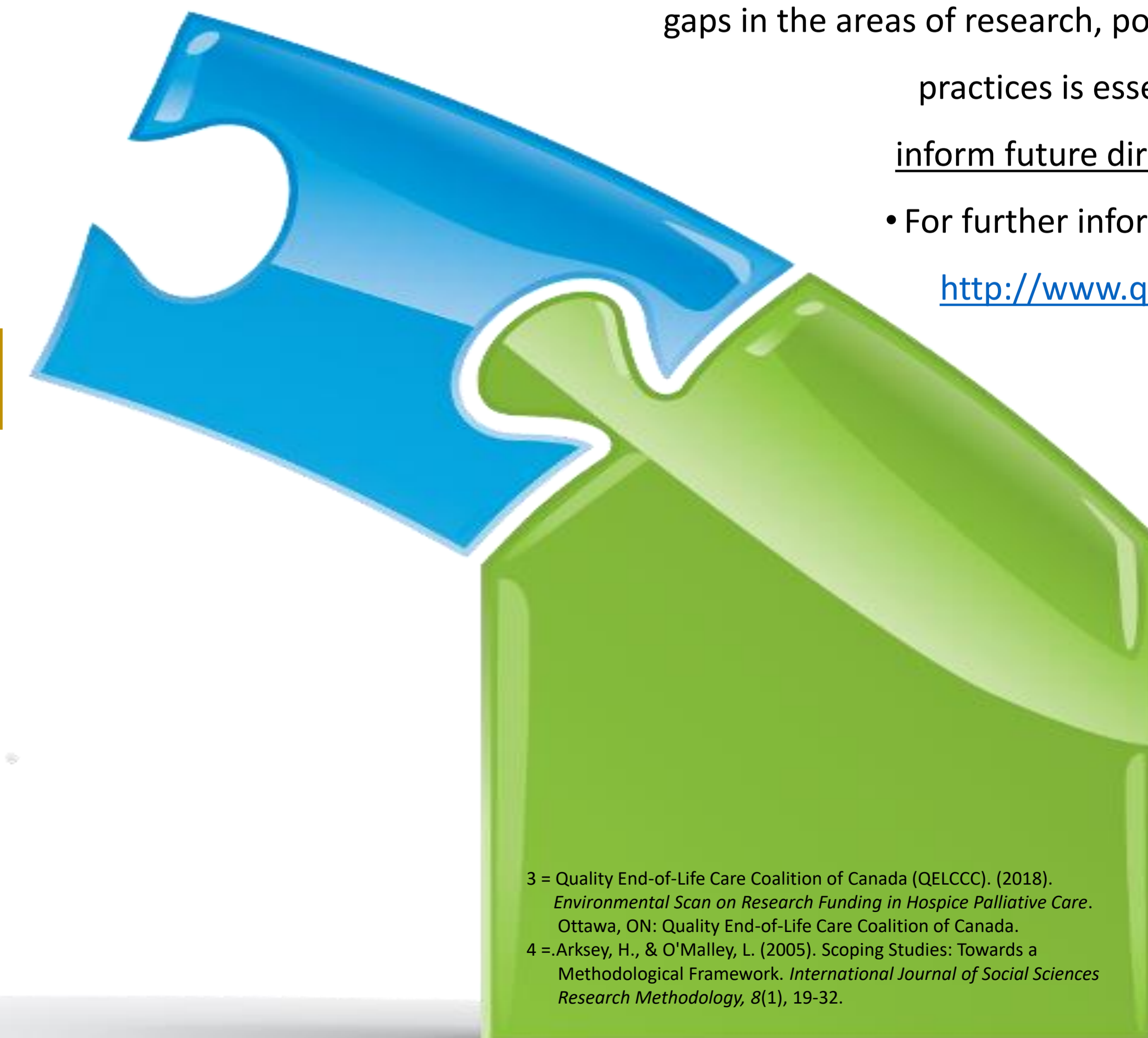
- **Research: More research needed:**
  - Access to care (including non-Western populations and on the oldest-old (80+));
  - Clinical (including better communication and interaction between clinical and research teams);
  - Caregiving;
  - Research methodology (including standardised data/national minimum data set).
- **Practice:** Areas for improvement include:
  - Culturally sensitive care, better congruency between levels of education and training of healthcare practitioners/researchers, better support for caregivers;
- **Policy: National Palliative Care Strategy:**
  - Dedicated research funding.

## Conclusion

- Reviewing and addressing targeted research gaps in the areas of research, policy and practices is essential to inform future directions.
- For further information: <http://www.qelccc.ca>

## Results

- 25 articles included (1 from the Canadian Cancer Society, 5 from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 9 from grey literature/hand searches and 10 from PubMed);
- Themes pertaining to gaps in research: 1) Access to care (subthemes: location (rural and urban), socioeconomic status and minority cultures), 2) Clinical (subthemes: cultural sensitivity, grief/bereavement, and education for healthcare workers), 3) Caregiving, and 4) Research methodology.



3 = Quality End-of-Life Care Coalition of Canada (QELCCC). (2018). *Environmental Scan on Research Funding in Hospice Palliative Care*. Ottawa, ON: Quality End-of-Life Care Coalition of Canada.  
4 = Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping Studies: Towards a Methodological Framework. *International Journal of Social Sciences Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19-32.