Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool (SPICT™)

The SPICT™ is a guide to identifying people at risk of deteriorating health and dying. Assess these people for unmet supportive and palliative care needs.

### Look for two or more general indicators of deteriorating health.
- Performance status is poor or deteriorating (the person is in bed or a chair for 50% or more of the day); reversibility is limited.
- Dependent on others for most care needs due to physical and/or mental health problems.
- Two or more unplanned hospital admissions in the past 6 months.
- Significant weight loss (5-10%) over the past 3-6 months, and/ or a low body mass index.
- Persistent, troublesome symptoms despite optimal treatment of underlying condition(s).
- Patient asks for supportive and palliative care, or treatment withdrawal.

### Look for any clinical indicators of one or more advanced conditions

#### Cancer
- Functional ability deteriorating due to progressive metastatic cancer.
- Too frail for oncology treatment or treatment is for symptom control.

#### Dementia/ Frailty
- Unable to dress, walk or eat without help.
- Eating and drinking less; swallowing difficulties.
- Urinary and faecal incontinence.
- No longer able to communicate using verbal language; little social interaction.
- Fractured femur; multiple falls.
- Recurrent febrile episodes or infections; aspiration pneumonia.

#### Neurological disease
- Progressive deterioration in physical and/or cognitive function despite optimal therapy.
- Speech problems with increasing difficulty communicating and/ or progressive swallowing difficulties.
- Recurrent aspiration pneumonia; breathless or respiratory failure.

#### Heart/ vascular disease
- NYHA Class III/IV heart failure, or extensive, untreatable coronary artery disease with:
  - breathlessness or chest pain at rest or on minimal exertion.
- Severe, inoperable peripheral vascular disease.

#### Respiratory disease
- Severe chronic lung disease with:
  - breathlessness at rest or on minimal exertion between exacerbations.
- Needs long term oxygen therapy.
- Has needed ventilation for respiratory failure or ventilation is contraindicated.

#### Kidney disease
- Stage 4 or 5 chronic kidney disease (eGFR < 30ml/min) with deteriorating health.
- Kidney failure complicating other life limiting conditions or treatments.
- Stopping dialysis.

#### Liver disease
- Advanced cirrhosis with one or more complications in past year:
  - diuretic resistant ascites
  - hepatic encephalopathy
  - hepatorenal syndrome
  - bacterial peritonitis
  - recurrent variceal bleeds
- Liver transplant is contraindicated.

### Review supportive and palliative care and care planning
- Review current treatment and medication so the patient receives optimal care.
- Consider referral for specialist assessment if symptoms or needs are complex and difficult to manage.
- Agree current and future care goals, and a care plan with the patient and family.
- Plan ahead if the patient is at risk of loss of capacity.
- Record, communicate and coordinate the care plan.