

Erin Bolton



Macmillan End of Life Care Lead
East Lancashire Hospitals Trust.

Erin Bolton in association with Catherine Hargreaves has developed an innovative education tool in the form of a play which demonstrates the importance of the use of end of life care tools and the benefit of holding discussions with loved ones before death.

This short play is humorous, informative and has real impact on the audience. Macmillan supported the production of this play on DVD for use as a national teaching aid for end of life care facilitators. Performance of the play to different audiences, live or over the media and via the CD has raised awareness of key issues in relation to end of life and end of life care amongst both the public and care professionals.

How it supports the strategy

The play supports the local and national policy of improving end of life care for all and actively promotes the three nationally recognised end of life tools:

- Gold Standard Framework,
- Preferred Priorities for Care
- Liverpool Care Pathway.

Erin's play encourages other to engage in dialogue about death and dying, strongly supporting the aims of [Dying Matters](#). It also promotes early detection to reduce preventable deaths.

“Perhaps the key lesson learned has been that in addressing long-standing challenges or issues, sometimes taking a quite different and innovative approach can really move things forward.”

- Erin Bolton

The play has been performed on many occasions to different groups: this includes the end of life facilitators conference, social services, health care professionals, care home staff, GPs and commissioners. There has been a high degree of engagement across East Lancashire and the Lancashire and South Cumbria Cancer Network. The DVD was launched at the national end of life care facilitators conference in 2011, and Erin has actively engaged with numerous stakeholders.

The play inspired a local volunteer group who promote early detection of cancer (Communities against Cancer). With Erin's help and support they adapted the play to promote early detection of [lung](#), [bowel](#) and [breast cancer](#) to engage with the wider community and regularly perform the play to spearhead communities where the incidence of late presentation is high.

The DVD has been launched nationally for use by end of life facilitators. There is still the demand for the play to be performed locally. The team is willing to continue to perform the play to a wide range of groups across organisational boundaries. Adapted versions of the play are used in different media as part of the

Macmillan specialist palliative care / end of life team's annual contribution to Dying Matters week. The messages within the play are serious yet are delivered in an innovative, entertaining manner which enables engagement at differing levels.

If you have any questions about Erin's case study please email Macmillan development manager Jeremy Such JSuch@macmillan.org.uk.