

# Who needs palliative care: a categorisation system to support identification and referral

---

Dr Claire Holmes

Makerere Palliative Care Unit

15/02/2014



# Who needs palliative care? A categorization system to support identification and referral

**Authors;** Leng M<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Namukwaya L<sup>1</sup>, Mwazi B<sup>1</sup>, Grant L<sup>2</sup>, Murray S<sup>2</sup>, Downing J<sup>1,4</sup>

1. Makerere Palliative Care Unit, Department of Medicine  
Makerere University, Kampala.
2. University of Edinburgh.
3. Cairdeas International Palliative Care Trust, UK.
4. Kings College, London.



# Introduction

- Needs assessment in Mulago Hospital has shown 45% of patients have unmet palliative care needs.
- Identifying patients in need of PC is crucial but may not be easy.
- Once identified the specialist service is at risk of becoming overwhelmed.
- Essential to develop a sustainable and accessible system.

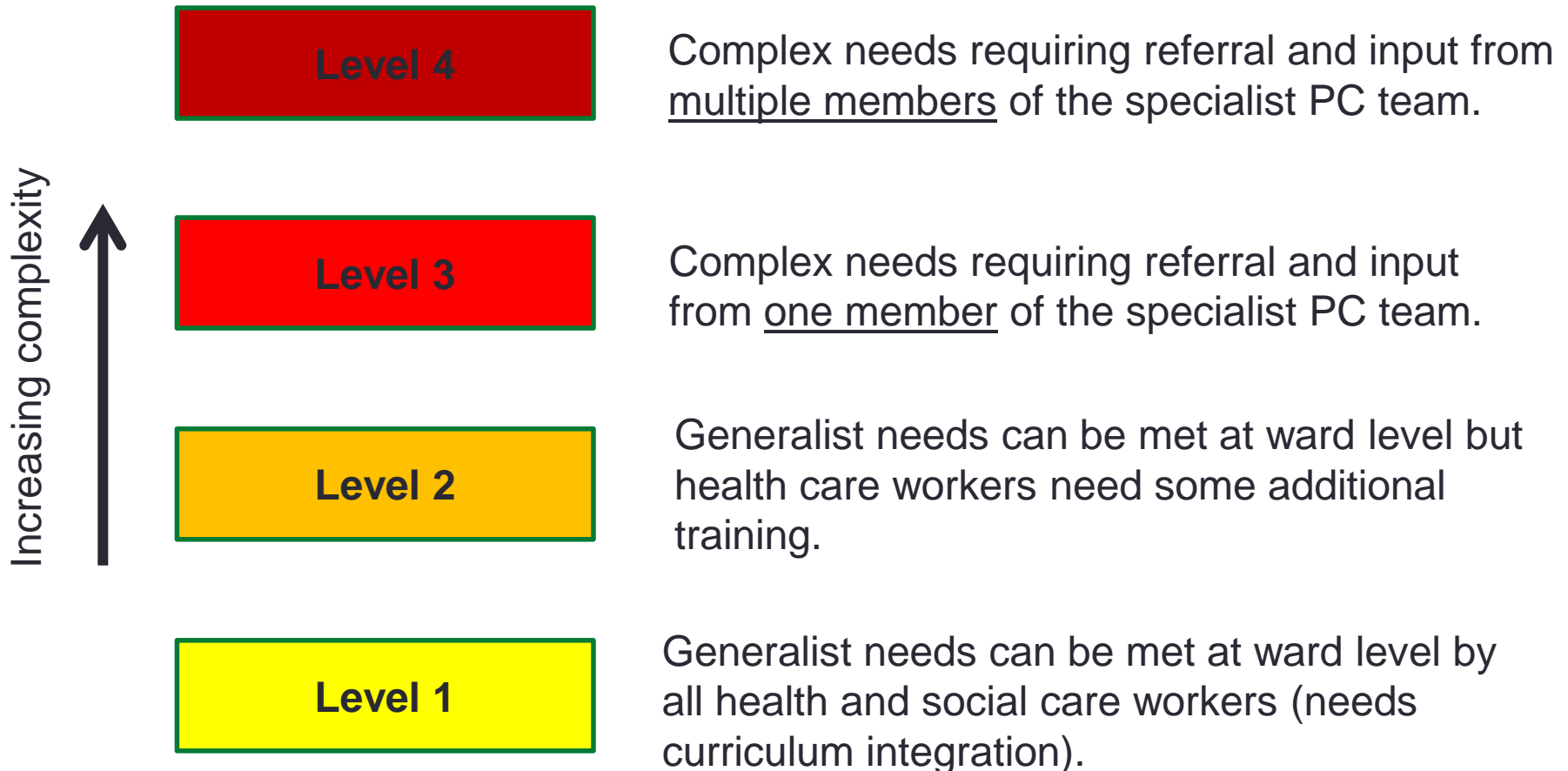


# Integrating palliative care

- Trained nurses, doctors and other health professionals.
- Developed a simple categorisation system



# Patient is categorised based on complexity of needs:



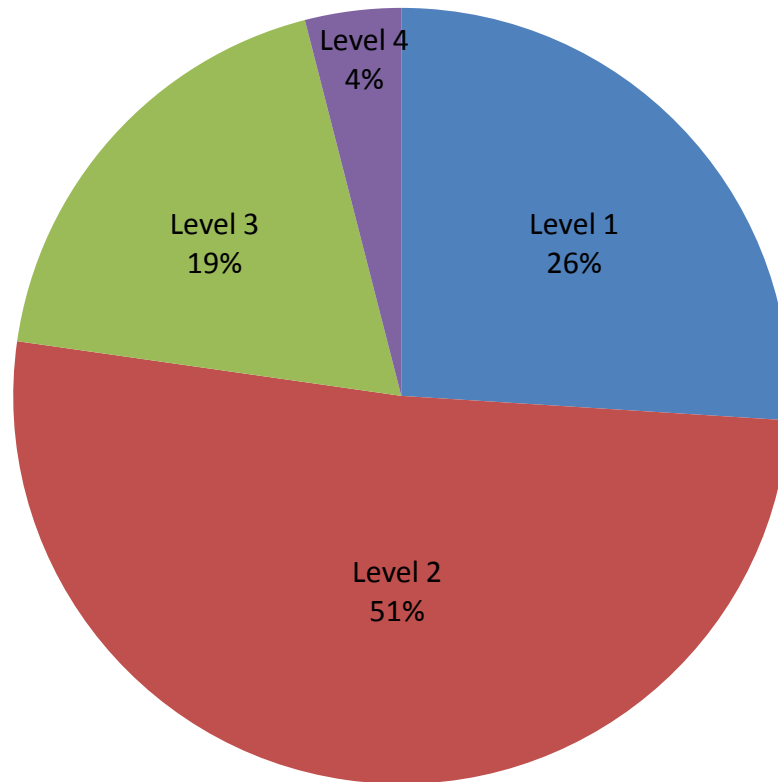
# Results

- July 2012 – December 2013
- 2447 patients identified as having palliative care needs by link nurses
  - 2113 (86 %) managed by link nurses.
  - 334 (14 %) managed by MPCU.
- A further 382 patients were referred to MPCU from other sources.



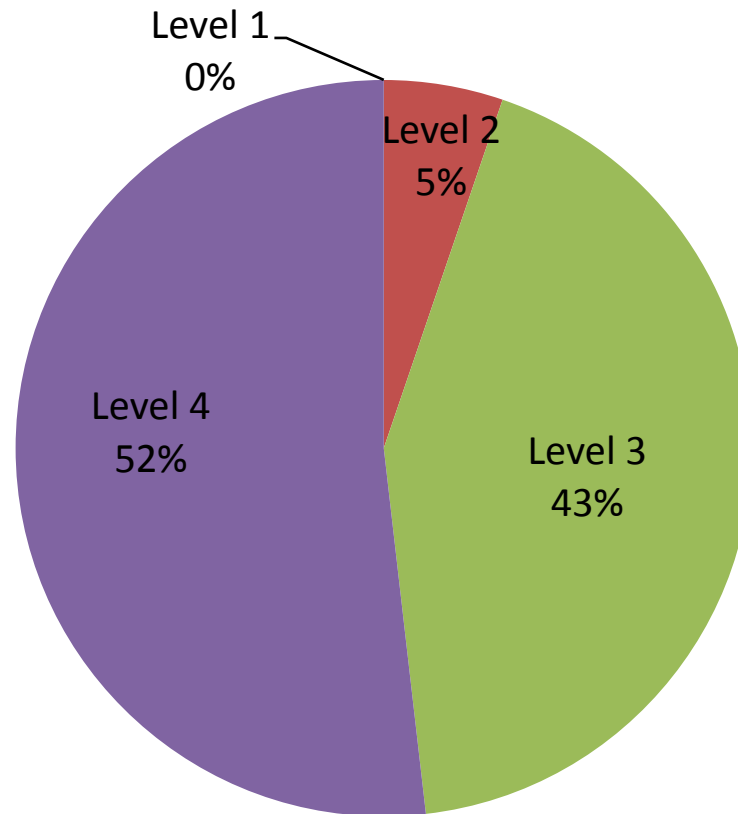
# Results

**Link Nurse Assigned Level July 12 – December 13**



# Results

## MPCU Assigned Level July 12 – December 13





# Link Nurse Story

“As a link nurse I have come to know that patients are individuals with different problems, so I handle them at the individual level.”

“Patients have become ours not theirs. This has enabled me to work with the palliative care easily than before especially because I know what they are offering to these patients.”



# Conclusion

- Training, clinical modeling and referral support has improved recognition of palliative care needs.
- Knowledge about palliative care and the services available within the hospital has increased.
- More patients have access to palliative care.
- Evaluation of data suggests that model could be utilized in other settings.



**Any Questions?**