

Curriculum Blueprint

Core Modules and Focus Topics

2020

PCC4U

PALLIATIVE CARE
CURRICULUM FOR
UNDERGRADUATES

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Department of Health



Module 1
Principles



Module 2
Communication



Module 3
Assessment



Module 4
Optimisation



Topic 1
Multidisciplinary
care



Topic 2
Aboriginal
populations



Topic 3
Caring for
children



Topic 4
Culture-centred
care

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WILLIAM'S STORY: William is a 60-year-old man with stage IV colorectal cancer with liver metastases. He has worsening liver function and his prognosis is poor. His care involves the GP and community team.

Module 1

Principles of palliative care



To provide healthcare that is relevant to community needs, you need to understand the experiences, preferences and care requirements of people affected by life-limiting illness.

Module 1: Principles of palliative care will help you develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality care to people affected by life-limiting illness.

Graduate Capabilities: 1, 2, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Dying and death in contemporary society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dying and death in 21st century Australia 2. Individual factors influencing dying and death 3. Diverse experiences of dying and death 4. Indigenous Australians 5. William's Story 	1 min 32 sec
2 Caring for people with life-limiting illnesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What is palliative care? 7. Who needs palliative care? 8. Understanding people's needs 9. Personalising palliative care 10. Advance care planning 11. William's illness progresses 12. Legal and ethical issues and end of life 	2 min 50 sec 2 min 29 sec
3 Ensuring quality palliative care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Quality palliative care in Australia 14. Evidence-based palliative care 	
4 Reflections on what you have learnt		

Module 2

Communicating with people affected by life-limiting illness



Providing support for people affected by life-limiting illness requires an understanding of the meaning of their illness and its effects on all involved. Open conversations about the illness, associated symptoms, goals of care and clinical management can provide considerable relief to people affected by life-limiting illness.

Module 2: Communicating with people affected by life-limiting illness will help you develop your communication skills with people in this area.

Graduate Capabilities: 1, 2, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 The experience of being diagnosed with a life-limiting illness	1. The challenges faced 2. Michelle's story	1 min 28 sec
2 Supportive communication	3. Providing supportive communication in palliative care 4. Communication principles 5. The need for effective communication 6. Communication among health professionals and between services 7. Introducing specialist palliative care	3 min 04 sec 2 min 35 sec 3 min 50 sec
3 Communicating with children	8. How to communicate with children	4 min 20 sec
4 Providing person-centred support	9. Understanding sources of distress 10. Responding to loss	5 min 21 sec
5 The spiritual dimension of care	11. Understanding spiritual needs 12. Spiritual conversations	5 min 16 sec
6 Support for people at the end stages of life	13. End-of-life concerns 14. Preparing for Michelle's death	4 min 24 sec
7 Self-care for healthcare professionals	15. Impact of caring 16. Adopting self-care strategies 17. Reflective practice	
8 Reflections on what you have learnt		



MICHELLE'S STORY: Michelle is 38-years-old and lives with her partner Peter and two children. She has a recurrence of breast cancer with metastatic deposits on her spine, managed with palliative radiation therapy and palliative chemotherapy. As Michelle's condition deteriorates, palliative care is introduced by the cancer care team, with support from the palliative care nurse to help prepare and support Michelle and Peter for Michelle's end-of-life care at home.



HERBERT'S STORY: Herbert is a retiree with a history of systolic heart failure. His heart failure has progressed to Class III heart failure and continues to worsen, requiring assessment and symptom management. Following admission to hospital with pulmonary oedema, he is referred to the local specialist palliative care team.

Module 3

Assessing and managing symptoms



Palliative care symptoms should be identified early and through impeccable assessment. Initial and ongoing assessment incorporates the person's physical, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual experiences and needs.

Module 3: Assessing and managing symptoms will help you develop the knowledge and skills required to identify the health needs of people affected by life-limiting illness, and develop an understanding of the principles for managing common symptoms.

Graduate Capabilities: 2, 3, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Palliative care symptoms	1. Life-limiting illnesses 2. Understanding symptoms in palliative care	1 min 37 sec
2 Principles of assessment	3. Principles of assessment 4. Assessment tools 5. Symptom assessment	2 min 28 sec
3 Evidence-based symptom management	6. Principles of palliative symptom management 7. Herbert's illness progresses 8. Expert opinion	2 min 16 sec
4 Applying symptom assessment and management – Pain	9. Assessing and managing pain in palliative care	
5 Reflections on what you have learnt		

Module 4

Optimising function in palliative care



Within palliative care, the absence of illness or infirmity is no longer the focus of treatment. Ensuring improved quality of life by optimising function – encompassing physical, spiritual, psychosocial and cultural functioning – becomes the main goal.

Module 4: Optimising function in palliative care will help you develop your understanding of how to provide support for people affected by life-limiting illness to live as fully as possible, for as long as possible.

Graduate Capabilities: 2, 3, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Living with a life-limiting illness – experiencing loss	1. Responses to losses 2. Bob's Story	2 min 27 sec
2 Goals of care	3. Goals of care 4. Bob's story: Three months later 5. The role of family meetings and goals of care 6. Advance care planning and goals of care	1 min 11 sec
3 Optimising physical and social function	7. Assessing and maintaining function 8. Role of allied health professionals in supporting function	1 min 42 sec
4 Supporting communities and carers	9. Optimising community care 10. Carer needs 11. Bereavement	5 min 16 sec
5 Reflections on what you have learnt		



BOB'S STORY: Bob was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease 12 months ago. As Bob's illness progresses a physiotherapist and occupational therapist become involved in his care. As his condition deteriorates and day-to-day activities are increasingly difficult the GP explores the options for care and respite with Bob and his wife.



BETTY'S STORY: Betty is a 79-year-old woman with Stage 3 chronic kidney disease and multiple comorbidities who has been managed by her GP in conjunction with the multidisciplinary team at the Renal Clinic. The team continues to meet as Betty's kidney disease progresses, establishing and implementing a management plan to support Betty and her family at home.

Topic 1

Multidisciplinary care



To provide care that is responsive to the complex and multifaceted needs of individuals with a life-limiting illness, it is important to understand the functions and processes associated with a multidisciplinary approach to care.

Topic 1: Multidisciplinary care will help you develop the skills needed to work effectively within the context of a multidisciplinary team when providing care to people with life-limiting illnesses and their families.

Graduate Capabilities: 2, 3, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Principles of a multidisciplinary approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a multidisciplinary approach to care? 2. Betty's story 3. Principles of multidisciplinary care 	1 min 31 sec
2 Planning multidisciplinary care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Patient-centred care planning 5. The multidisciplinary team 6. The team meeting 7. Ongoing information and communication 	4 min 31 sec 3 min 36 sec
3 Providing multidisciplinary care at the end of life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Betty's disease progresses 9. The team implements an end-of-life care plan 10. Standards of care 11. Alan's perspective 	1 min 29 sec 2 min 04 sec 2 min 48 sec
4 Reflections on what you have learnt		

Topic 2

Caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses



To provide quality care for people with life-limiting illnesses and their families, you need to be able to respond effectively to their specific needs.

Topic 3: Caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses will help you develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality care, across various healthcare settings, to Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses and their families.

Graduate Capabilities: 1, 2, 3, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses	1. Tom's story	2 min 16 sec
	2. Engaging with Aboriginal communities in providing palliative care	
	3. Acknowledging specific needs	1 min 40 sec
	4. Communication principles when caring for Aboriginal people	
	5. Communicating with Tom's family	3 min 40 sec
	6. Building capacity	
2 Reflections on what you have learnt		



TOM'S STORY: Tom is a 55-year-old Aboriginal man with advanced lung cancer and multiple metastases who collapses at home. Discussion between the nurse and the hospital Aboriginal Liaison Officer highlights several key issues to consider when caring for an Aboriginal family.



EMILY'S STORY: Emily is a 10-year-old girl with congenital hypoplastic left heart syndrome who lives in a rural location with her family. Emily is not suitable for a heart transplant and, as her illness progresses, her GP introduces the concept of palliative care to support Emily and her family. A telehealth consultation is arranged with the metropolitan cardiology and paediatric palliative care teams to plan Emily's care.

Topic 3

Caring for children with life-limiting illnesses



To provide care that is responsive to the specific needs of children with life-limiting illnesses and their families, it is important to understand the social, personal and illness experience of individuals facing such a condition and how the principles of palliative care can be applied to support children and their families.

Topic 3: Caring for children with life-limiting illnesses will help you develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide care, across various healthcare settings, to children with life-limiting illnesses and their families.

Graduate Capabilities: 1, 2, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Understanding needs of children with life-limiting illnesses and their families	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impact of life-limiting illnesses 2. The family's experience of their child's life-limiting illness 3. Emily's story 4. Paediatric palliative care concepts 	1 min 34 sec
2 Principles of care for children with a life-limiting illness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Communication with children and their families 6. Emily's review 7. Collaborative approaches to care 	3 min 44 sec
3 Supportive care interventions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Supportive approaches to care 9. Emily's case conference 10. Psychosocial and spiritual support for children 11. Psychosocial and spiritual support for families and community 12. Emily's progression 13. Self-care for health professionals 	6 min 30 sec
4 Reflections on what you have learnt		1 min 02 sec

Topic 4

Culture-centred care of people with life-limiting illnesses

To provide appropriate care that responds to the specific needs of people with life-limiting illnesses, it is important to recognise cultural considerations associated with end of life and bereavement.

Topic 4: Culture-centred care of people with life-limiting illnesses will provide an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills associated with providing culturally appropriate care for people with life-limiting illnesses.

Graduate Capabilities: 1, 2, 4

SECTION	ACTIVITY	VIDEO
1 Diversity in contemporary Australian society	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Diversity in Australian healthcare2. Culturally diverse populations in Australia3. Amy's story	3 min 01 sec
2 Culture-centred communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Intercultural communication principles5. Decision-making and care planning6. Amy is admitted to an aged care facility	2 min 52 sec
3 Providing person-centred care	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Access to services and care8. Symptom management9. Cultural and individual differences10. Understanding spiritual needs and sources of distress	4 min 18 sec
4 Support for people from culturally diverse backgrounds at end stages of life	<ol style="list-style-type: none">11. End-of-life care12. Support for Amy's family at end of life	1 min 18 sec
5 Reflections on what you have learnt		



AMY'S STORY: Amy is a 59-year-old woman who lives with her mother Mei and son Eric. Amy and Mei speak English as a second language. Amy has early onset probable Alzheimer's disease. Mei and Eric care for Amy in their home until she requires a higher level of care than they can provide. On admission to the aged care facility, a medical interpreter is engaged to translate information to Amy and her family. The multidisciplinary team at the aged care facility provide end-of-life care for Amy and her family.





PCC4U Graduate capabilities in palliative care

The learning outcomes defined in the PCC4U Project describe the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes of graduates in the health professions in the context of caring for people affected by life-limiting illness. Four graduate capabilities have been identified as being integral for health professionals to provide care for people affected by life-limiting illness.

Courses should aim to develop graduates who, within the scope of practice of their profession, are able to demonstrate the capabilities outlined below in the context of caring for a person with a life-limiting illness:

1. Effective communication in the context of an individual's responses to loss and grief, existential challenges, uncertainty and changing goals of care.
2. Appreciation of and respect for the diverse human and clinical responses of each individual throughout their illness trajectory.
3. Understanding of principles for assessment and management of clinical and supportive care needs.
4. The capacity for reflection and self-evaluation of one's professional and personal experiences and their cumulative impact on the self and others.

Source: Palliative Care Curriculum for Undergraduates (PCC4U) Project Team. 2012. *Principles for including palliative care in undergraduate curricula*. Brisbane: QUT

