

Topic 2: Workbook

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.

Overview

Topic 2: 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.

Aims and objectives

This focus topic is based on the core principles of palliative care and is designed to supplement the learning activities in Module 1: Principles of palliative care.

After completing this focus topic, you should be able to:

- Identify the practice principles of caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses.



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Section 1: Caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting illnesses

Activity 1: Tom's story

Thinking Points

1. What are some of the communication issues illustrated in the video?
2. Think about your own discipline and identify actions you could take to ensure that the care you will provide to Tom and his family is culturally safe.

Activity 2: Engaging with Aboriginal communities in providing palliative care

Thinking Points

1. Consider how each of these factors – historical, social, physical and environmental, mortality and morbidity – can impact on the provision of palliative care for Aboriginal people.

Activity 3: Acknowledging specific needs

Thinking Points

1. Nancy says: "We need to take our cues from the family". What does this mean?
2. Nancy mentions to Sarah that the local Aboriginal Medical Service might be a good resource in terms of locating a traditional healer.
3. Go to the website [Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet](http://www.australianindigenoushealthinfonet.net.au) and move through the sections about health systems / health workers / organisations and find your local Aboriginal Medical Service on the map.
4. Identify the key elements of their service.

Activity 4: Communication principles when caring for Aboriginal people

Thinking Points

1. 'Yarning' allows the longer narrative to be told.

- What is your understanding of 'yarning'?

- What is its relevance in end-of-life care?

2. Access the [CareSearch "Talking Together" page](#). Outline specific strategies you might use to apply these principles in practice.

Activity 5: Communicating with Tom's family

Thinking Points

1. What strategies are demonstrated by Nancy at the beginning of the scene to facilitate effective communication with Tom?
2. What recommendations would you make to improve communication by Nancy and Sarah?
3. What are the key needs and concerns likely to be for Tom and his family as they face Tom's imminent death in the hospital? Provide evidence for your answer.

 **Thinking Points** *continued*

4. Jimmy states that "Dad knows he's not going to make it back to country to die." Based on this scene, what are some of the reasons that Tom may want to return to country to die?

Activity 6: Building capacity

Thinking Points

1. What resources are available to support health professionals to maintain a culturally safe environment when caring for Aboriginal people?

2. How do you determine if the care you are providing is culturally safe?

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Section 2: Reflections on what you have learnt



It is essential for all healthcare professionals to develop the capacity for reflection and self-evaluation of their professional and personal experiences, and to consider how this can impact on themselves and others.

Consider the focus topic you have just completed and reflect on the following questions to assist with your ongoing development:

1. What key points have you learnt from the activities in this module that will help you in providing care for people with life-limiting illnesses and their families?

2. What specific strategies do you plan to incorporate as a graduate healthcare professional?

3. Do you see any difficulties using what you've learnt here as part of your practice as a healthcare professional? If so, what strategies might you use to address these difficulties?