

NEWSLETTER

PCC4U

PALLIATIVE CARE
CURRICULUM FOR
UNDERGRADUATES

Funded by the Australian Government
Department of Health

The PCC4U project directly articulates with goals one, two and five of the National Palliative Care Strategy 2010. Find out more about the strategy at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-npcs-2010-toc>

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Welcome...

Welcome to the Palliative Care Curriculum for Undergraduates (PCC4U) newsletter. The PCC4U project aims to improve the skill and confidence of the health workforce to support people with palliative care needs. These aims are being achieved through promoting the integration of palliative care training within all health undergraduate and entry to practice courses in Australia. At 30 June 2016, 77% of entry to practice courses are implementing or reviewing the PCC4U learning resources.

Earlier this year, the PCC4U team participated in the Palliative Care Projects Forum, coordinated by Palliative Care Australia. The forum aimed to improve knowledge about the range of projects funded by the National Palliative Care program. At this meeting actions to support collaboration between the project teams were identified and strategies to ensure sustainable delivery of high quality palliative care in Australia was considered. The PCC4U team has formed a number of collaborative partnerships with program partners interested in palliative care workforce development.

The PCC4U team continues to work with the CareSearch team to redevelop the CareSearch Education Section and ensure that it reflects the National Palliative Care Workforce Development Framework. The PCC4U team is also working closely with the Advance Care Planning Australia (ACPA) team as they undertake a scoping study to investigate learning and teaching in entry to practice courses in Australia. We are continuing our collaboration with the Quality of Care Collaborative Australia (QuoCCA) team to improve teaching and learning opportunities in paediatric palliative care. A number of these activities are described in this newsletter. We encourage you to participate in this work.

Over the past few months, the PCC4U team has extended its work with industry partners to develop palliative care capacity amongst graduates from the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. The focus to date has been on programs preparing Enrolled Nurses for entry to practice. A workshop is planned in December 2016 to showcase developments. The team has commenced discussions with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify opportunities to support learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners.

The PCC4U project is led by Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in conjunction with the Queensland Government, Flinders University and Curtin University of Technology.

More information about the project team, project advisory group and project governance is at www.pcc4u.org

Palliative Care Workforce Development



A National Palliative Care Workforce Development Framework has been developed to provide guidance for individual health care providers, education providers, health service managers and policy makers to ensure all health care providers are equipped with capabilities relevant to their context to provide care for people who are dying. The ultimate aim of this Framework is to enhance the quality of palliative care service delivery and increase support for people affected by life limiting illnesses in all care contexts.

The Palliative Care Education and Training Collaborative (the Collaborative) has developed the Framework and has been working with the CareSearch team to incorporate its principles and approaches within the Education section of the CareSearch website. The draft Framework includes a palliative care workforce development model (Figure 1). Table 1 outlines the characteristics of the palliative care health workforce. This work continues to be refined following feedback from stakeholders. For further information on the Framework, or if you would like to participate in the peer review of this work, please contact the PCC4U team pcc4u@qut.edu.au

Figure 1: Palliative care workforce development model



Table 1: Defining characteristics of the palliative care health workforce

Whole of Workforce	
<p>The palliative care workforce includes both the specialist workforce as well as all other health care providers in health, aged or community care settings who support people who are dying. Key features of the workforce include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery of care which is person centred and holistic ▪ Provision of care which reflects palliative care core values ▪ Collaborative practice, incorporating partnerships between a range of health care providers and individuals with palliative needs and their family and community ▪ Provision of care which reflects specialist or graduate capabilities in palliative care within the context of their scope of practice 	
Essential Workforce	Specialist Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health care providers do not provide palliative care as the main focus of their work. They may work in other areas of speciality such as oncology, aged care or general practice. Health care providers' core activity can be in primary health care, acute care settings or community settings. ▪ Knowledge and skills are required to provide care applying the principles of palliative care, although specialist level knowledge is not required. ▪ Capability achieved through development of graduate capabilities in palliative care within entry to practice learning and updated through postgraduate learning, professional experience, and ongoing professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health care providers' primary activity is provision of palliative care and professional support for the essential workforce. ▪ Higher level knowledge and more advanced application of palliative care skills is required reflecting specialist capabilities in palliative care. ▪ Capability is achieved through formal qualifications achieved through postgraduate learning, and continually updated through ongoing professional development. ▪ Discipline specific specialist palliative care capabilities underpin practice, education and training.
	

How prepared is the health workforce to participate in advance care planning?

Advance Care Planning Australia (ACPA) has been collaborating with the PCC4U project team to investigate the prevalence of advance care planning education within nursing, medical and allied health curricula in Australia. The project is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

An online scoping survey was circulated to relevant university staff in order to gain a greater understanding of the current level of advance care planning education within tertiary institutions. It is anticipated that outcomes will identify opportunities to improve teaching and learning on this topic.

The survey focused on:

- Prevalence of ACP teaching and learning in current course curriculum
- Barriers to incorporating ACP into course curriculum
- Enablers and preferred strategies to support teaching and learning related to ACP

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to learn more about the curriculum at your institution. If you would be interested in participating, please contact the PCC4U team to ensure your institution is represented.

ACPA looks to build awareness about advance care planning and encourages people to consider their wishes for future health and personal care. Delivering an extensive range of programs, services, training and education, ACPA works to foster innovation and research in this important field.



Focus on Module 3: Palliative assessment and intervention

Module 3 explores the principles of assessment and intervention while working with people with a life-limiting illness and their families. By working through this module, learners will gain a better understanding of a person's symptoms and be able to identify appropriate intervention strategies through a comprehensive, multidimensional approach to assessment.

This module provides learning opportunities relevant for all health disciplines. Activities assist the learner to gain a better understanding of illness trajectories of specific life-limiting

illnesses, and principles of assessment and management of common symptoms and health concerns associated with life-limiting illnesses.

The case study within Module 3 follows Herbert, a man diagnosed with systolic heart failure five years ago. His heart failure worsens, stopping him from spending time doing what he enjoys. Symptoms such as fatigue, breathing problems and appetite are addressed by members of the palliative care team.

Key discipline specific learning opportunities within this module are presented in the table below.

Discipline	Herbert's Story – content and suggestions
Medicine	Symptom assessment and management of systolic heart failure; difficult conversations with people with a life-limiting illness; management of chronic fatigue. Ongoing management of coexisting chronic illnesses such as diabetes.
Nursing	Assistance and support with activities of daily living; coordination of interdisciplinary team and palliative care support; assessment and management of fatigue; education with the use of oxygenation, continued support and monitoring of diabetes and blood glucose levels.
Nutrition and Dietetics	Diet and nutrition advice for hypertension; lack of appetite; diabetes education; swallowing difficulties associated with breathlessness.
Pharmacy	Pharmacological management of diabetes, hypertension, oxygenation and pain; schedule 8 medication.
Physiotherapy	Exercise and activity for patients in early stages of systolic heart failure; management of breathlessness.
Psychology	Stress management; situational anxiety; loss of control and independence.
Social Work	Financial support; carer / partner support.
Speech Pathology	Swallowing difficulties associated with breathlessness.



PCC4U Learning Resources

PCC4U supports the inclusion of palliative care into health care training through the provision of a suite of evidence-based learning resources.

The core modules articulate with the graduate capabilities in palliative care:

- **Module 1:** Principles of palliative care
- **Module 2:** Communicating with people with life-limiting illnesses
- **Module 3:** Palliative assessment & intervention
- **Module 4:** Optimising function in palliative care

The focus topics aim to support the care of specific populations with life-limiting illness and the provision of palliative care in a variety of contexts:

- **Topic 1.** A multidisciplinary approach in palliative care
- **Topic 2.** Caring for Aboriginal people with life-limiting conditions
- **Topic 3.** Caring for children with life-limiting conditions
- **Topic 4.** Cultural diversity and palliative care

All PCC4U learning modules and topics are freely available on the project website, along with a palliative care simulation scenario, a multi-professional case study and palliative care teaching and learning resources. Materials to support use of the resources across a variety of disciplines and learning contexts include:







- an Implementation Guide, with all the module and topic learning content
- a Curriculum Blueprint, that provides a snapshot of module and topic content
- a workbook, with all module and topic thinking points
- a DVD of all video content from the modules, topics and the case scenario
- a USB containing the module and topic videos, guides and supporting documents.

Contact us to discuss implementation of the PCC4U resources and to receive copies of the supporting materials - pcc4u@qut.edu.au.



Supporting health professionals to have difficult conversations

PCC4U provides learning opportunities related to key components of palliative care. The following table highlights the teaching and learning resources available to build capacity in health professionals to have difficult conversations with people affected by life-limiting illnesses.

PCC4U module	Teaching and learning resource	Content
Module 2 Communicating with people with life-limiting illnesses	Activity 3: Communication principles Activity 4: Receiving distressing news 	Breaking bad news to patients and their families
	Activity 7: How to communicate with children Activity 8: Raising concerns 	How to communicate with and support children of parents with life-limiting illnesses
	Activity 11: Understanding spiritual needs Activity 12: Spiritual conversations	Understanding patient's wishes and acknowledging spiritual concerns in conversations with patients nearing end of life
	Activity 13: End-of-life concerns Activity 14: Preparing for Michelle's death 	Approaches for discussing how it will be at end of life with carers; the process of dying and what to expect
Focus topic 2: Caring for Aboriginal people with life limiting illnesses	Activity 4: Communication principles when caring for Aboriginal people Activity 5: Communicating with Tom's family 	Strategies and considerations when communicating with Aboriginal people and their families
Focus topic 3: Caring for children	Activity 5: Communication with children and their families Activity 6: Emily's review 	Strategies and considerations when communicating with children with a life-limiting illness
Focus topic 4: Culture-centred care	Activity 4: Intercultural communication principles Activity 5: Decision making and care planning Activity 6: Amy is admitted to an aged care facility 	Strategies and considerations when communicating with people with a life-limiting condition from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. Explore use of professional interpreters and resources to assist communication.