

Palliative Care Provider (MD, PA, and NP) Onboarding Curriculum

This Learning Pathway contains recommended clinical training for new providers on the specialty palliative care team.

Introduction to Palliative Care for Health Professionals

An introduction to palliative care, how it is delivered, its impact on quality of life, and the growing population of patients who need it.

Pain Management

Course 1: Comprehensive Pain Assessment

Conducting a comprehensive pain assessment to guide safe and effective treatment.

Course 2: Matching the Drug Class to the Pain

Selecting a safe and appropriate analgesic for patients with serious illness based on the pain assessment.

Course 3: Patient Factors that Influence Prescribing Decisions

Patient and family factors that influence prescribing decisions for patients with serious illness.

Course 4: Assessing Risk for Opioid Substance Use Disorder

Integrating routine risk assessment for substance use disorder when considering or using opioid therapy.

Course 5: Opioid Trials: Determining Design, Efficacy, and Safety

Designing a safe and effective opioid trial for the patient with serious illness.

Course 6: Prescribing An Opioid

Safe and appropriate opioid prescribing for the opioid-naïve patient with serious illness.

Course 7: Prescribing Short-Acting Opioids: Four Case Studies

Four indications for using short-acting opioids.

Course 8: Monitoring for Opioid Efficacy, Side Effects, and Substance Use Disorder

Ongoing evaluation of opioid benefits, risks, and side effects for the patient with serious illness.

Course 9: Converting from Short-Acting to Long-Acting Opioids

Guidance on safe conversion to long-acting opioids for patients with serious illness.

Course 10: Prescribing Practice and Opioid Conversions

Prescribing practice for long half-life opioids, converting from one opioid to another, and accounting for incomplete cross-tolerance.

Course 11: Advanced Conversions and Opioid Side Effects

Changing the route of opioid delivery, rotating opioids, advanced opioid conversions, and tapering opioids.

Course 12: Special Populations And Patient-Controlled Analgesia

Safe opioid prescribing in older adults, cognitively impaired patients, children, and the imminently dying, including patient-controlled analgesia.

Course 13: Managing Pain in Patients At Risk for Substance Use Disorder

Pain management for patients with serious illness and high risk for substance use disorder, including risk assessment, monitoring, and when to refer for safe pain management.

Course 14: Pain Management: Putting it All Together

Safe opioid prescribing for patients with serious illness, using the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) Guidelines for the Chronic Use of Opioid Analgesics.

Symptom Management Communication Skills

Anxiety

After completing this course, learners will be equipped with evidence-based strategies to identify and treat anxiety in patients living with a serious illness.

Constipation

Constipation occurs in at least 70% of patients living with a serious illness and often goes unrecognized. After completing this course, learners will have the tools to successfully identify and manage the impact of constipation.

Depression

After completing this course, learners will have the tools to accurately identify and treat depression in patients living with a serious illness.

Dyspnea

After completing this course, learners will have the tools they need to manage dyspnea, including the physical causes of shortness of breath and the emotional impact on the patient.

Nausea/Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting are common symptoms of serious illness and can cause dangerous complications. After completing this course, learners will be equipped with practical skills to identify, manage, and reduce these symptoms.

Discussing Serious News

Learn best practices for having patient-centered conversations about a serious illness diagnosis.

Discussing Prognosis With Patients and Caregivers

Learn how to effectively discuss prognosis with patients and their caregivers.

Clarifying Patient Goals of Care

Learn best practices for building trust, eliciting patient values, and having patient-centered conversations about goals of care.

Leading a Patient and Caregiver Meeting

Learn to effectively lead meetings that help patients and caregivers become aligned around the patient's goals.

Care Planning

Learn techniques to help patients and their caregivers plan for the future, both during the early stages of a serious illness and as a disease progresses.

Best Practices in Dementia Care and Caregiver Support

Relieving Distress in People Living With Dementia and Their Caregivers

Gain an overview of the experience of living with dementia and learn how to relieve distress for patients with dementia, and their caregivers.

Discussing a Diagnosis of Dementia With Your Patient

Learn how to discuss a dementia diagnosis with patients and caregivers in a way that is sensitive, clear, and supportive.

Communicating What to Expect Throughout the Trajectory of Dementia

Learn techniques for supportive communication with people living with dementia, and their caregivers, to help them prepare for the challenges they may face as dementia progresses.

Planning for the Future After a Dementia Diagnosis

Learn how to facilitate future planning discussions with people living with dementia, and their caregivers.

Caring for Caregivers of People Living With Dementia

Learn how to assess caregiver burden and connect caregivers with needed support systems.

Behaviors as a Form of Communication in People Living With Dementia

Learn about the sources of behavioral symptoms for people living with dementia and how to respond to them.

Managing Mood and Sleep Disturbances in People Living With Dementia

Learn how to relieve suffering from common mood and sleep disturbances in order to improve quality of life for people living with dementia, and caregivers.

Managing Complications in Advanced Dementia

Learn about common health complications for people living with advanced dementia and how to support patients and caregivers.

Managing Gaps in Care: Discipline-Specific Approaches

A Palliative Approach to Care for Direct Care Workers

The role of the direct care worker in observing and reporting suffering in patients with serious illness.

Preventing Crises Through Whole-Patient Care

Supporting the Family Caregiver: The Burden of Serious Illness

Assessing and supporting caregivers of people with serious illness.

Care Coordination

Guidance for all clinicians on improving communication and ensuring smooth transitions of care for patients living with serious illness.

Reducing Risks for Older Adults

This course provides context and best practices for identifying older adults at risk for poor outcomes, including falls, delirium, and caregiving challenges.

Building Physician Skills in Basic Advance Care Planning

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