



Palliative Care Nursing

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing Degree
Department of Nursing and Midwifery
Faculty of Allied Health Sciences
University of Sri Jayewardenepura



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Palliative Care Nursing

Introduction

Palliative care is an urgent humanitarian need worldwide for people with cancer and other chronic fatal diseases. Palliative care is particularly needed in places where a high proportion of patients present in advanced stages and there is little chance of cure (WHO).

The module will explore the physical, psychosocial, spiritual and social aspects of caring for patients with life-limiting illness and their families. The historical and philosophical origins of palliative care and the principles of palliative care are included in the module.

This elective subject will focus on the role of a palliative care nurse as a member of palliative care team who is providing care to the patients (including children) with cancer, other chronic fatal diseases considering their families. It will provide a framework for palliative care nursing practice to develop knowledge and skills in the holistic care of patients with life-limiting illness and their families. The course also includes evidence-based practice with research to develop palliative care service among nurses.

Subject description:

Credits: 06

Placement: Term 12 (4th year)

Prerequisites: None

Teaching Unit: Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Apeksha Hospital Maharagama

Teaching Personnel: Nursing lecturers specialized in palliative care

Medical professionals specialized in palliative care

Oncologists

Specialized palliative care nurses

Contact Hours: - Tutorials/Fixed learning modules – 15 hrs,
 - Nursing Practice –300 hrs

Table 01: Structure of Teaching and Learning

Subject	Lecture/ Tutorial	Lec. credits	Lab Hrs	Lab. credits	Practice Hrs	Prac. credi ts	Tot al Hrs	Tot al cred its
Palliative Care Nursing	15	01	-	-	300 (8 weeks)	05	315	06

Course objectives

At the end of the course the students will be able to;

1. Understand the influence of socio-cultural health practices and behaviors related to patients with life-limiting illness and their families
2. Identify the holistic integrative therapies can be used by the nurse, client, and family.
3. Develop skills in collaborating with an interdisciplinary team
4. Appreciate the need of conceptual framework of “whole-person” suffering, which includes the physical, psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions
5. Develop skills in line with advances in science in health care delivery of palliative care.
6. Identify the Ethical considerations in Palliative Care Nursing
7. Identify the difference between Hospice and Palliative care
8. Apply strategies to stay healthy in a palliative care setting / as a palliative care nurse/Self-care
9. Identify the specific concerns in paediatric palliative care
10. Integrate evidence-based practice into palliative care

Table 02: Main content areas

Main Content Area	Lecture Discussion/ Tutorial (Hours)	Clinical /Practical (Hours)	Assessments and self-study	Tutorials /SGD/ PBL No. of (1/2hrs) sessions
1. Introduction to Palliative Care	02 hours	30 hours	02 hours	02 hours
2. Development of the Specialty of Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing	02 hours	30 hours	03 hours	
3. Symptom Assessment and Management	03 hours	30 hours	02 hours	03 hours
4. Psychosocial and Spiritual Support	02 hours	30 hours	03 hours	
5. Advanced Care Planning	01 hours	30 hours	02 hours	02 hours
6. Ethical Aspects of Palliative Care	02 hours	30 hours	03 hours	
7. Strategies to Stay Healthy in a palliative care setting	01 hours	30 hours	02 hours	02 hours
8. Paediatric Palliative Care	02 hours	30 hours	03 hours	
9. Professional and Reflective practice	01 hour	30 hours	10 hours	
10. Total	15	270	30	09

1.Introduction to Palliative Care

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
1.1.To define the palliative-care. 1.2. To explain the advantages of a hospital in developing a palliative care program. 1.3.To articulate values and practices within contemporary health care that are contrary to palliative goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The definition of palliative care - Palliative care and suffering: interprofessional care - Integration of palliative care into clinical care - Professional boundaries - The goals of palliative care 	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	02 hours/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/ Apeksha Hospital

2. Development of a Specialty of Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
2.1. To Explain the reasons for the palliative-care movement. 2.2. To Identify the social forces that led to the hospice movement 2.3. To Explain the effects of hospice on individual patient experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need for palliative care - Hospice movement/care - Care by nurse and physician/Care by a palliative care team 	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	2 hrs/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital

3. Symptom Assessment and Management

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
3.1. To develop skills in pain management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirements for a good pain control - Types of pain - Factors that modify the perception of pain - Pain measurement tools. - General principles of treatment for acute pain - General principles of treatment in incident pai - General principles of treatment in chronic pain - Principles of using analgesics for chronic pain- WHO Analgesic Ladder - Opioid / Non-Opioid Analgesics/ Adjuvant Analgesics 	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	3hrs/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
3.2. To develop skills in symptom control related to the respiratory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes & treatments for breathlessness or dyspnoea - Causes & treatments for cough - Causes & treatments terminal respiratory congestion - Death Rattle 			

3.3. To develop skills in symptom control related to the gastrointestinal system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes and treatments for Nausea and Vomiting/ Bowel Obstruction/ Constipation /Neurogenic Bowel - Antiemetics/Laxatives 			
3.4. To develop skills in symptom control related to the nervous system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes and treatments for acute confusion or delirium - Causes and treatments for terminal restlessness 			
3.5. To develop skills in control of constitutional symptom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes and treatments for anorexia - Causes and treatments for weight loss & cachexia - Causes and treatments for weakness and fatigue 			

4. Psychosocial and Spiritual Support

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
4.1. To identify the psychological distress with any life-limiting illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Factors Predisposing to Psychological Distress - Examples of Psychological Distress - Clinical Features of Psychological distress 	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	2hrs/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
4.2. To develop skills in caring patients with psychological distress and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General supportive counselling - Support groups - Relaxation therapy - Stress management techniques - Coping skills training - Cognitive therapy 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anxiolytics, antidepressants (as a last resort) - Supportive psychotherapy 			
<p>4.3. To identify indicators of depression in terminally ill patients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators of depression in terminally ill patients - Drug therapy for the patients with depression -Antidepressants 			
<p>4.4. To identify indicators of anxiety in terminally ill patients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators of anxiety in terminally ill patients - Drug therapy for the patients with Anxiety -Anxiolytics 			
<p>4.5. To Explain the impact of illness on the entire family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Common family relationship patterns that will impact family coping with a dying member - Strategies to teach stressed family caregivers how to care for their dying family member. - How nurses can promote communication between family members. - The nurse's limitations in being able to strengthen the family - Community palliative care 			
<p>4.6. To develop skills in bereavement support after the patient's death</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bereavement care 			

5. Advanced Care Planning

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
5.1. To Appreciate Advanced care planning	- Advance care planning process	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	1hr/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
5.2. To identify the importance of advanced care planning in palliative care nursing	- The importance of advanced care planning in palliative care nursing			

6. Ethical Aspects of Palliative Care

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
6.1.To state principles of ethics in palliative care	- Beneficence - Non-Maleficence - Autonomy - Justice	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	2hrs/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
6.2.To explain communication and disclosure in palliative care	- Patient's right to have an honest and full explanation of their situation Communication about sensitive matters			
6.3.To describe withholding and withdrawing treatments	- Importance of maintaining the quality of life while neither hastening nor postponing death - Futile therapy			
6.4.To discuss euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide	- Euthanasia and physician assisted suicide - Reasons for requesting or advocating euthanasia			

	- Risks associated with legalization of euthanasia			
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7. Strategies to Stay Healthy in a palliative care setting

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
7.1. To explain the importance of knowing yourself in order to practice healthy caring.	- Reflect about your own feelings and experiences related to death and dying and self - care - Identify sources of stress as a result of working with dying patients and their families.	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	1hr/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
7.2. To apply strategies of fostering a healthy work environment.	- Identify sources of stress due to problems within the work environment - How to deal with stress in palliative care?			

8. Paediatric Palliative Care

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
8.1 To understand what parents need from healthcare providers	- Nurses can support parents and families in the hospital and at home	Lecture/Tutorial /Clinical Practice	2hrs/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
8.2 To develop skills in pain and other symptoms management in a pediatric palliative care setting	- Assessment of pain in children - Pharmacological and non-pharmacological methods of managing pain			

9. Professional and Reflective practice in palliative care

Intermediate Objectives	Broad Content Areas	Activity	Duration	Department
8.1 To identify tacit knowledge as well as gaps in that knowledge.	- Inquiring mind in practicing palliative care	Lecture /Tutorial	1hr/ 30hrs	Nursing & Midwifery/Apeksha Hospital
8.2 To develop skills as a working professional.	- Evidence-based practice in palliative care - Research in palliative care	/Clinical Practice		

Teaching/Learning activities:

Lecture discussions

Tutorials

Small group discussions, Group presentation

Clinical practice

Self-study

Scenario based learning

Assessments

Bachelor of Science Honours in Nursing - Part IV Examination

Subject/Course Unit	Component of assessment	Time Allocation	Marks Allocated	
Nursing Elective Palliative care	Clinical Case	20 minutes	40%	100%
	Viva	15 minutes	20%	
	Case Study Report		40%	

Recommended Reading Materials:

Ferrell, B. R., Coyle, N., & Paice, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Oxford textbook of palliative nursing*. Oxford University Press

Hanks, G., Cherny, N. I., Christakis, N. A., & Kaasa, S. (Eds.). (2011). *Oxford textbook of palliative medicine*. Oxford university press.

O'Connor, M. M., & Aranda, S. (Eds.). (2003). *Palliative care nursing: a guide to practice*. Radcliffe Publishing.

Payne, S., Seymour, J., & Ingleton, C. (2008). *Palliative care nursing: Principles and evidence for practice: Principles and evidence for practice*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Watson, M., Campbell, R., Vallath, N., Ward, S., & Wells, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Oxford handbook of palliative care*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Zerwekh, J. V. (2005). *Nursing care at the end of life: palliative care for patient and families*. FA Davis.

References

BSc Nursing (Hons) (2018) Curriculum, Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

