



Palliative Care ... It's all about living

Hospice Palliative Care Core Concepts 1 – Course Outline

This 30-hour program offers a basic introductory course on hospice palliative care for almost anyone. It meets the standards laid out by Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO) in the Visiting Hospice Training Manual*, and is a useful starting point for many persons, such as these groups:

- It is a requirement for all hospice volunteers, prior to participating in visiting hospice programs
- Complements the training provided to personal support workers and prepares them specifically to deliver services in hospice palliative care, through to end of life care, at home or in other locations
- Provides background training for health and social service support providers working with: seniors; those with chronic health conditions, including life limiting illnesses; and the families/ friends supporting these individuals
- Relevant for the general public who are providing care for chronically ill or aging persons, such as family, friends, and members of faith or cultural communities
- Anyone interested in understanding their own mortality and the dying process better

The course is delivered in ten 3-hour interactive modules, in a variety of formats - weekly for 10 weeks in the evening and in am and pm classes for 5 weeks during the day. There may be other variations of the module schedule from time to time. The order of sessions may vary from series to series.

*Note: This course does not include the required HPCO module for hands on “Body mechanics, lifts, transfers, positioning, and other skills” for hospice volunteers. Visiting hospice volunteers requiring this component are to contact their Volunteer Coordinator to register for this component through another provider. (For York Region Visiting Hospices, this module can be taken through either Better Living, or other hospices agencies.)

Learning Objectives

Introduction

- Get acquainted with each other
- Expectations of trainee and trainer
- Define hospice palliative care
- Origins of the hospice movement
- Overview of local hospice palliative care services
- Various delivery systems for hospice care in Ontario

- Typical trajectories of illness
- Integration of treatment and palliative care for treating life-threatening illnesses
- Define roles of various members of the care team, including volunteers personal support workers, complementary therapy providers, and other medical and non-medical care team members

Personal Perspectives

- Explore personal attitudes and feelings about death
- Recognize individual biases
- Understand hopes, fears, and losses for people living with life-limiting illnesses and those of their family/ friends
- Assist clients with emotional and psychological issues

Family Dynamics

- Gain awareness of the family as a system
- Understand possible role changes
- Learn about community resources for families
- Role of helping with family equilibrium
- Caregiver abuse and neglect

Communication

- Elements that interfere with good communication
- Active listening skills
- Value and uses of silence
- Importance of confidentiality
- Strategies for maintaining confidentiality

Pain & Symptom Management

- Common illnesses of hospice clients
- Traditional treatments and possible side effects
- Complementary treatments and possible side effects
- Particular care needs for individuals
- How illness leads to death
- How illness affects clients and families
- Learn to recognize pain
- Common symptoms of end-stage disease
- Demonstrate various comfort measures
- Signs and symptoms of approaching death
- What to do when death occurs at home

Infection Prevention and Control & Delegated Acts**

- Concept of standard procedures
- Routine infection prevention and control procedures
- Demonstrate activities that reduce infection

- Understand latest update on HIV and AIDS
 - Volunteer and staff safety visiting in homes
- ** Note: This course does not include the *practice* of these delegated acts. Boundaries for practicing these skills vary greatly from one organization to another. Visiting Hospice volunteers for the hospices in York Region who wish to practice these techniques, or are expected to demonstrate competence in these techniques for work, should contact their volunteer coordinator or supervisor regarding signing up for a course specifically on this topic another provider

Culture & Ethics

- Recognize one's own belief systems and how this may impact your role
- Basic principles of ethics
- Policies on ethics and the volunteer and staff roles
- Practice making difficult decisions
- Discuss emotional, culture, and religious aspects of nutrition
- Support for individuals' and families' choices regarding food, hydration and other procedures

Grief & Bereavement

- Be aware of personal experience with grief and impact on your role
- Understand anticipatory grief
- Responses to grief
- Understand complicated grief
- Tasks of mourning
- Community supports for grief
- Role of volunteer and staff to support client and family/ friends

Spiritual Issues

- Personal concepts and attitudes of spirituality
- Understand difference between religion and spirituality
- Respond appropriately to client's spiritual needs
- Explore personal concepts of spirituality
- Understand role of volunteer and staff in providing spiritual support to clients

Complementary Therapies & Care for the Caregiver

- Overview of examples complementary therapies
- Understand stress
- Special stressors of staff and volunteers in hospice palliative care
- Supports from hospice
- Coping strategies for handling stress