



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Centre for
Education and Research
on Aging & Health



PALLIATIVE CARE FOR FRONT-LINE WORKERS IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

CURRICULUM & WORKSHOP DELIVERY

CONTACT

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PALLIATIVE CARE FOR FRONT-LINE WORKERS IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES: EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITY CAREGIVERS



PURPOSE In response to the need for culturally relevant palliative care education for Indigenous people, CERAH, Lakehead University developed the "Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities" curriculum in collaboration with Indigenous communities. Informed by the lessons learned from the Improving End-of-Life Care in First Nations Communities research project, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, this training is designed to provide an introduction to palliative care for Indigenous health and social care providers who care for individuals with life-limiting illnesses. The curriculum is broken down into the following 8 modules:

Understanding the Palliative Approach to Care

Explores the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the palliative approach to care in an Indigenous context.

Advance Care Planning

Discusses steps for effective advance care planning according to regional legislation, highlighting important considerations for decision making when individuals cannot speak for themselves.

Working with Individuals and Families

Acknowledges the role and perspective of family and community members and provides guidance on managing difficult conversations when a loved one is seriously ill.

Pain and Other Symptoms

Introduces physiological changes and medical interventions common at end of life and offers strategies for treating the total pain experience as well as other symptoms.

Last Days and Hours in an Expected Death

Explains the dying process including signs and symptoms that signal death is near and offers resources to support the planning and management of expected death in community.

Grief and Loss

Identifies different types of grief and discusses ways to support people who are grieving.

Helping Relationships and Self-Care

Recognizes common challenges health and social care providers experience and discusses the importance of developing supportive relationships, self-compassion, and self-care in helping professions.

Community Care Teams

Explores the importance of teams in palliative care and identifies ways to strengthen local Community Care Teams and enhance communication across systems of care.

Recognizing the diversity of Indigenous communities' experiences, knowledge, and cultural teachings regarding death and dying, this curriculum is not grounded in any one community's particular traditions, values, and beliefs. Rather, the palliative approach to care combines the wholistic teaching concepts of the Indigenous Wellness Framework that focuses on health and balance.

CURRICULUM & WORKSHOP DELIVERY

EDUCATION DELIVERY

The "Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities" curriculum has been designed to be delivered in a workshop format either in-person or virtually in real-time. While both methods of delivery cover the same 8 modules, the delivery format is different:

- In-person: 15-hour workshop in community, typically delivered over two days
- Online: 12-hour workshop through Zoom, typically delivered in 4 x 3-hour weekly sessions

PRE-WORKSHOP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PLANNING

Before the workshop is delivered the CERAH education team meets with the Indigenous community or organization lead(s) to have an in-depth discussion about their strengths, challenges, and needs. This engagement focuses on introducing the education team to the community/organization as well as situating the training within the context of the larger goal of enhancing capacity. These meetings provide communities/organizations with the opportunity to discuss values, cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices, and educational needs. This in turn informs the incorporation of additional resources, tools, and strategies to tailor the education to respond to the groups' needs.

FACILITATION TEAM

The curriculum is delivered by a team of four facilitators who have experience in clinical palliative care, including at least one registered nurse, one psychosocial care provider, such as a social worker, along with a local Elder or Knowledge Carrier. The facilitators deliver the education in a "tag team" format allowing for each to present content based on their strengths. The education is also supported by a Knowledge Broker who coordinates all aspects of the education, including planning and organizing the delivery of the education and assisting with the evaluation of the workshop by collecting and analyzing data.

ELDER/KNOWLEDGE CARRIER

The community/organization will arrange to have an Elder/Knowledge Carrier present throughout the workshop. Based on local community practices, this individual could offer a prayer or blessing, facilitate any practices the group can utilize, facilitate opening and closing circles, and be available to provide support to the participants as needed. The Elder's/Knowledge Carrier's participation is recognized through financial compensation and local/traditional gifting practices.

"Participating in this training really helped Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services enhance their services to the community by adding palliative care. The palliative care program that we developed is called "Creator's Care." We would not be able to develop this program if we didn't have this training. It really helped us understand what the community needs are."

Joanna Vautour, Serpent River First Nation

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WORKSHOP DELIVERY

The maximum number of attendees for each workshop is limited to 25 participants due to the nature of the content, the sensitivity of the sharing, and the complicated grief emotions that often arise during the delivery of the curriculum. Workshop delivery includes culturally appropriate ceremonies performed by a local Elder/Knowledge Carrier, sharing circles, slide show presentations, videos, and small and large group discussions and activities to facilitate an interactive learning experience. In each workshop, participants are guided through a narrative case story about an Indigenous woman diagnosed with advanced-stage cancer which provides learners the opportunity to connect and apply teachings from each module to a relevant, realistic situation. The workshop also provides learners with additional resources to enhance the education, including:

- Preparing for the Journey: Caring for Indigenous People who are Seriously Ill, Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Lakehead University
- Developing Palliative Care Programs in First Nations Communities: A Workbook, Improving End-of-Life Care in First Nations Communities Project, Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Lakehead University
- Walking Alongside Indigenous Peoples who are Seriously Ill: Education for Community Caregivers, Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Lakehead University
- A Model to Guide Hospice Palliative Care, Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
- Indigenous Voices: Stories of Serious Illness and Grief, Canadian Virtual Hospice
- Cancer Care Ontario Practice Guidelines
- Coming Full Circle: Planning for your care, Canadian Virtual Hospice
- Local tools and resources as identified in collaboration with communities/organizations

FOR MORE INFORMATION

SCAN or VISIT

www.cerah.lakeheadu.ca/resources/indigenous-health



Preparing for the Journey: Caring for Indigenous People who are Seriously Ill

The purpose of this resource manual is to provide Indigenous health and social care providers, family, and community members with practical guidance and support on caring for people with serious illnesses. The manual is grounded in the Indigenous Wellness Framework and provides teachings and best practices around the palliative approach to care, making your wishes known, developing a care plan, last days and hours of life in an expected death, as well as emotional, mental, and physical wellness for the caregiver. The manual also contains many additional relevant and applicable handouts, brochures, tools, and other resources.

This resource manual accompanies the Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities curriculum.

