

BC Centre for Palliative Care

Inter-professional palliative competency framework

Review of educational resources for
Nurses and Health Care Assistants

May 3, 2019

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Purpose

The original intent of this resource review was to assess the current state of education resources available in British Columbia to address palliative competencies for nurses and health care assistants (HCAs). Core and discipline-specific competencies have been described in the [Inter-Professional Palliative Competency Framework \(BC Centre for Palliative Care, 2018\)](#). These competencies outline recommended standards of practice for health care providers working in any B.C. care setting with people with life-limiting conditions.

The purpose of this current document is to share the results of the review with other Canadian provinces seeking to choose education resources for use with their competencies. It should be noted that there may be other Canadian resources available that this project did not review. Also, the review was based on the B.C. competencies, which are similar but not identical to those adopted in other provinces. This review includes resources intended for nursing and health care assistant audiences only. A similar review will be done for physician and social worker / counsellor competencies. Details about the methods of data collection, assessment and analysis may be requested from the BC Centre for Palliative Care.

The intent is not to endorse or recommend individual resources; rather, it is to provide objective information to assist with decision making when choosing palliative education resources.

Objectives

1. Inform the decision process for policy – makers, educators, operational leaders and health care providers when choosing palliative education resources.
2. Identify gaps in the resources presently available to decide if additional resources are needed.
3. Create an assessment and analysis process that can be replicated in the future.

Review process

1. Data collection – compiling information such as cost, credits granted, and instructor requirements
2. Resource Assessment – identifying the presence of material addressing each competency
3. Resource Analysis – calculating the percentage of competencies addressed (Intensity Effect – IE) by each resource and identifying common gaps

Education resources

The resources are presented in alphabetical order by name of the publishing organization.

Resources for Nurses (RN, LPN, RPN, NP)	Resources for Health Care Assistants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Institute of Technology: Palliative Approach in Nursing³ • de Souza Institute: CNA Hospice Palliative Care Study Group^{**5} • de Souza Institute: Interprofessional Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care- Oncology (iEPEC-O)⁶ • de Souza Institute: Introduction to Hospice Palliative Care⁷ • Life and Death Matters: Essentials in hospice and palliative care: A practical resource for every nurse⁸ • Pallium Canada: Learning Essential Approaches in Palliative care (LEAP) - Core¹⁰ • Pallium Canada: Learning Essential Approaches in Palliative care (LEAP) - Mini¹² • Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive^{13 -14} <p><small>** While the de Souza – CNA preparation was included originally in the assessment and analysis, it was removed after the initial review because of the large volume of required readings. The course content explicitly addresses each of the CNA certification exam competencies, which were included in our nurse-specific competency statements in the Specialist-FEW category. We therefore assume that the B.C. nurse-specific competencies are very likely addressed in this course for both the Enhanced practice-SOME and Specialist-FEW categories</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers⁴ • Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹ • Pallium Canada: Learning Essential Approaches in Palliative care (LEAP)-LTC¹¹

Limitations of the review process

- The resources included in the review were
 - Canadian,
 - reviewed in their current state as of May 2018,
 - anticipated to address all the competency domains and
 - available to any Nurse or HCA in B.C., which was defined by the fact that enrollment is not limited by region or organization.
- The content was assessed on a present/absent basis; the quality of content related to each competency was not assessed.
- The use of adult and on-line learning principles was not assessed. Utilization of these principles would likely be an area of distinction for some resources.
- Some of the resources had a large volume of required readings, accompanying learning activities and additional resources. Some of these were reviewed, but not all. Since time did not permit reviewing entire courses in as much depth as a learner or facilitator would, it is possible that relevant content may have been missed by the Assessors and Project Lead.
- The assessment focused on instructor's materials. An assumption was made that course facilitators include all content in the facilitator's notes.
- The achievement of stated learning objectives by the learners themselves was not assessed, but the process of learning assessment was noted.
- While every attempt was made to ensure consistency, the nature of the analysis was still subjective.
- Course delivery issues such as preparation time for instructors, audiovisual or technical requirements were not assessed.

Summary of findings:

- Information has been provided to aid in deciding which resource is most appropriate for a given situation (See Appendix A – Summary of Nursing Resources and Appendix B - Summary of Health Care Assistant Resources)
- Several comparable options exist for both Nurses and HCAs in the three categories (See Appendix C -Options for education)
- Gaps in the reviewed resources could likely be filled using supplementary material that already exists
- The review process could be replicated by using a detailed account of the process, which can be requested by contacting the BC Centre for Palliative Care.

Description of each resource for the Nurse audience (alphabetical order)

BCIT: Palliative Approach in Nursing³

The unique feature of this on-line course is the application to many settings of care. At the beginning, the learners decide on the setting most applicable to their work. Then, they can choose case studies relevant for their individual contexts throughout the rest of the course. Settings include medical wards, long term care homes, critical care, home and community, pediatrics and neonatal. There are numerous innovative self-reflection exercises and the learner keeps a journal throughout the course. The symptom management content is covered mainly by links to the RNAO (Registered Nurses Association of Ontario) and Fraser Health palliative symptom guidelines. This is the only nursing resource that scored high in both the Generalist-ALL and Enhanced practice-SOME categories.

de Souza: CNA Study Group⁵

This course is for registered nurses intending to take the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) certification exam for hospice palliative care nursing. The content explicitly addresses each CNA competency in a methodical way. There are on-line discussion forums, webinars, a mock exam and optional in-person or video-linked review session. As previously mentioned, rather than reviewing this course, we have assumed that it covers all or most of the B.C competencies for Specialist-FEW and many of the Enhanced practice-SOME. The CNA is reviewing these competencies and will be releasing a new version within the next year to reflect current trends in policy, language and practice. de Souza will update their course content to reflect those changes.

de Souza: Introduction to Hospice Palliative Care⁷

This online course offers an introduction to palliative care and is open to many health disciplines. The course content covers all 8 domains of challenging issues associated with illness and bereavement highlighted by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (A Model to guide hospice palliative care, 2013). Because it is an introductory course, compared with other in-depth courses, it has relatively low scores for the Generalist-ALL category.

de Souza: Interprofessional Education in Palliative and End of Life Care (iEPEC-O)⁶

This course offers an on-line CME accredited inter-professional learning environment, with access to course materials anytime across all provinces. Learning experiences are enhanced by online graphic illustration, interactive learning activities and video demonstrations of palliative care best practices. Course participants are required to complete the core modules for competency relevant to all professions. Participants from medicine and nursing also complete optional modules on assessment and management of symptoms tailored to their specialized clinical practices.

The course is based on the Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care course funded by the National Cancer Institute in USA, and includes pre-and post- knowledge and confidence assessments and an exit exam.

Life and Death Matters: Essentials in Hospice and palliative care: A practical resource for every nurse⁸

This resource includes a textbook, facilitator's materials, participant workbook, PowerPoint presentations with learning activities and discussion points, as well as podcasts and videos. The text is thorough, colorfully illustrated and easy to read. There are "ethics touchstones" and self-reflective activities throughout, to provoke the learner to critically reflect on various clinical situation. Delivery of the content is guided by the PowerPoints to increase consistency between educators.

Pallium Canada: LEAP-Core¹⁰

Pallium Canada: LEAP-Core¹⁰ offers CME credits in an inter-professional learning environment, with pre-and post- knowledge and attitude assessments as well as a 4-month commitment for change. Courses are offered in many regions of Canada, facilitated by local educators who must be certified through Pallium. Time is allotted for discussion of local resources and policies. This course has the advantage of presenting all content during the in-person course, without requiring additional independent study.

Pallium Canada: LEAP-Mini¹²

Pallium Canada: LEAP-Mini¹² offers CME credits, pre and post evaluation of learning and an inter-professional environment. It is a single day course, so may be more manageable for participants to attend but does not cover as many of the competencies as longer courses.

Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive ¹³⁻¹⁴

Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive ¹³⁻¹⁴ is offered in an inter-professional environment with faculty that are largely practicing clinicians as well as educators. This is the only resource that scored high in both the Enhanced practice – SOME and Specialist-FEW categories. This is largely due to the very thorough accompanying textbook. The text was published in 2006, so some of the information may not reflect the most current knowledge. As with other courses' required readings, the responsibility lies with the learner to seek out some of the content, as it is not all presented during the in-person course.

Description of each resource for the Health Care Assistant audience (alphabetical order)

Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers⁴

This resource includes power point lecture slides with teaching tips and explanations for every slide as well as participant handouts of all slides. It includes suggestions for how to set up a comfortable learning environment and encouragement to share stories of the instructor's experience in palliative care. It is intended to be used with home support workers but is applicable for health care assistants working in many settings. There is emphasis on communicating with a supervising nurse, participating in care planning and independent problem-solving, when appropriate within the HCAs scope of practice. The curriculum is resourced with many academic and grey literature sources cited, the references however, are not current (almost all were published before 2011 and many were from the 1990s) and need to be updated to represent the recent research occurring in the field of palliative care.

Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹

The instructor guide equips the facilitator with many resources to present the material. Power Point presentations, videos, podcasts, and ideas for discussion, individual and group exercises are all explained thoroughly. The conversational tone of the textbook provides learners with foundational concepts for palliative care in a way that is easy to understand and interesting to read. The text is colorfully illustrated and includes many personal stories from patients, families and healthcare workers to bring the material to life. Self-reflection activities are threaded throughout the text, learning activities and participant workbook. This resource contains detailed interventions appropriate for an HCA, to support both the person and their family in a variety of care settings.

Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹

This course is designed to be given as an interdisciplinary workshop for healthcare professionals within a long-term care setting. Some sessions are done as a group, and other sessions have two versions: one for HCAs and one for other care providers. There is a group section on leading organizational change, and this is the only resource which includes leadership competencies for HCAs. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the course it includes more medical information and has a more clinical tone than the other two resources. Concepts related to psychosocial, spiritual and emotional needs are threaded throughout the content.

Summary of findings for the Nurse-specific competencies

Generalist – ALL

- Pallium Canada: LEAP-Core¹⁰, Life and Death Matters: Essentials in palliative care: A practical resource for every nurse⁸, and BCIT Palliative Approach in Nursing³ are in the high range for every domain
- de Souza iEPEC-O⁶ is in the high range for every domain except Domain 7 – Professional and ethical practice (moderate range)
- de Souza CNA Study Group⁵ and Victoria Hospice: Medical Intensive¹³⁻¹⁴ were only reviewed for competencies in the Enhanced practice – SOME and Specialist – FEW, since they are not intended for audiences in the Generalist – ALL category.

Enhanced practice – SOME

- Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive¹³⁻¹⁴ is in the high range for every domain except Domain 7 – Professional and ethical practice (moderate range)
- BCIT Palliative Approach in Nursing's³ average is within the high range. However, it scored in the moderate or low range for some individual domains
- de Souza CNA Study Group⁵ is likely in the high range for every domain

Specialist – FEW

- de Souza CNA Study Group⁵ is assumed to be in the high range for every domain
- Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive¹³⁻¹⁴ is in the high range for half of the domains and has an average Intensity Effect (IE) of 69%
- None of the other resources are in the high range for average IE

Summary of findings for the HCA-specific competencies

Generalist / ALL

- Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹ rated high in every domain

- Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹ and Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers⁴ rated high in every domain except for Domain 7 – Professional and ethical practice

Enhanced practice – SOME

- Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹ and Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹ were rated high on average
- Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers⁴ was moderate on average

Specialist – FEW

- Domain 7 – Professional and ethical practice was the only domain with competencies for the Specialist-FEW. This group of competencies focused on leadership. Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹ was the only resource that scored high for this group of competencies, at 100%.

Next steps for B.C.

1. Compile a registry of resources to address the identified gaps
2. Develop an education plan for health care professionals in all categories
3. Develop similar documents outlining palliative competencies for Social Workers / Counselors and Physicians with an accompanying resource review (anticipated release Spring 2019).
4. Participate in a Pan-Canadian initiative to create national, inter-professional palliative competencies

Conclusion

This review has provided information to assist with the decision about which palliative education resource to choose and has identified gaps in current resources. The existing resources provide good coverage of competencies in general. We commend the diligence and creativity of all the resource developers and recognize their efforts to remain current, evidence-informed and flexible for today's adult learner.

References

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Appendix A - Summary of Nursing Resources

Information provided is accurate up to May 2018, please contact organizations directly to confirm. Results in the table below are provided only for the audience for which the resource was created (ALL, SOME and/or FEW).

	< 30	31-64%	> 65%	BCIT Palliative Approach in Nursing ³			de Souza CNA Study Group ⁵	de Souza iEPEC-O ⁶			Life and Death Matters Essentials in Hospice and palliative care: A practical resource for every nurse ⁸		Pallium Canada: LEAP-Core ¹⁰		Pallium Canada: LEAP-Mini ¹²	Victoria Hospice Palliative Care: Medical Intensive ¹³⁻¹⁴	
				ALL	SOME	FEW	**Is assumed to include material addressing most, if not all of the competencies for the enhanced practice and specialist nurse.	ALL	SOME	FEW	ALL	SOME	ALL	SOME	ALL	SOME	FEW
% of nursing competencies addressed																	
Nurses				83%	65%	35%		83%	58%	40%	81%	51%	81%	43%	71%	90%	69%
Cost per participant (may vary with host organization or bulk purchase)				\$827			\$399	\$699		\$130 - \$199 (depending on resources purchased) + facilitator time. Includes text and access to online resources (2017)		\$115 + facilitator time (\$1600 rec.) Includes Pallium pocketbook (2016)		95 + facilitator (\$800 rec.) includes Pallium pocketbook (2016)		\$1135 includes textbook (2006)	
Time				12 weeks - estimation of hours not provided			16.5 hours over 11 weeks	35 hours over 10 weeks		Flexible to meet the organizations' needs		2 days (14 hours)		1 day (8.5 hours)		5 days	
Facilitator training and cost				On-line, included in course cost			On-line, included in course cost	On-line, included in course cost		Instructors' package is free when student materials purchased. May use local educators in combination with staff of Life and Death Matters		Facilitators must be certified by Pallium (certified facilitators in most regions of B.C.) \$200 for facilitator training workshop.		Facilitators must be certified by Pallium (certified facilitators in most regions of B.C.) \$200 for facilitator training workshop.		Faculty are all practicing palliative care clinicians - included in course cost	
Credits				3 BCIT credits			None. Certificate awarded. (Must take CNA exam for CHPCN certification)	13 Mainpro+ /CME credits; 1 de Souza credit		None		26.5 Mainpro+ credits		16.5 Mainpro+ credits		Credits pending approval by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the BC Chapter	
Assessment of learning				Baseline competency self-assessment and 3 assignments			Mock CNA exam - not a requirement for course completion	Baseline assessment. Case studies and learning activities for all required modules. Exam requiring an 80% pass.		Learning and self-reflective activities, quizzes, testing of knowledge and skills		Pre and post course: quizzes on comfort with palliative care, knowledge and attitudes. Post course: evaluation of the course, commitment to change. 4 months post course: Commitment to change reflection		Pre and post course: quizzes on comfort with palliative care, knowledge and attitudes. Post course: evaluation of the course, commitment to change. 4 months post course: Commitment to change reflection		Survey sent out 3 months post-course asking how they have incorporated learning into practice	
Delivery method				Online			Online and final workshop via webinar or in-person	Online		In-person, other delivery methods may be available		In-person, other delivery methods may be available		In-person, other delivery methods may be available		In-person, other delivery methods may be available	
Content features				The course offers case studies unique for a variety of care settings, including pediatrics, critical care, and medical wards. Many opportunities for self-reflection.			Explicit and thorough links to each CNA competency. Includes online group discussions, a mock exam and review session that can be attended in person or via webinar. The course will be updated when the new CNA competencies are released in the next year.	Although original course was for oncology, the content now includes other serious illnesses. Some competencies are contained in the optional modules.		Colorful illustrations. "Ethics touchstones" throughout offer space for critical reflection.		Inter-professional learning environment. Case studies. No required reading outside of in-person course time.		Inter-professional learning environment. Case studies. No required reading outside of in-person course time.		Inter-professional learning environment. Case studies are very interactive, breaking into small groups.	
Links				https://www.bcit.ca/study/courses/nssc7000			http://www.desouzainstitute.com/chpc	https://www.desouzainstitute.com/iepeco/ or http://iepeco.ca		https://www.lifeanddeathmatters.ca/palliative-care-practical-resource-for-nurses/		https://pallium.ca/equip-yourself/courses/		https://pallium.ca/equip-yourself/courses/		https://www.victoriahospice.org/courses/palliative-care-medical-intensive	

Appendix B - Summary of Health Care Assistant Resources

Information provided is accurate up to May 2018, please contact organizations directly to confirm. Results in the table below are provided only for the audience for which the resource was created (ALL, SOME and/or FEW).

	< 30	31-64%	> 65%	Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers ⁴	Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers ⁹	Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC ¹¹			
				ALL	SOME	ALL	SOME	ALL	SOME
% of competencies addressed									
Health Care Assistants		83%	51%		91%	89%	90%	74%	100%
Cost per HCA (may vary with host organization or bulk purchase)	\$0 + cost of printing + facilitator time			\$80 - \$112 (depending on resources purchased) + facilitator time. Includes text (2016)		\$95 + facilitator time (\$1600 rec.)			
Time	6 -12 hours			Flexible to meet the organizations' needs		2 days (14 hours)			
Facilitator training and cost	\$50 for the manual with all training materials included (electronic- printing not included), unlimited participants covered for this price. Facilitator should be a clinician with palliative care experience			Instructors' package is free when student materials purchased. May use local educators in combination with staff of Life and Death Matters		Facilitators must be certified by Pallium (certified facilitators in most regions of B.C.) \$200 for facilitator training workshop.			
Credits	None			None		26 certified group learning credits (BCCFPC)			
Assessment of learning	Seeking feedback such as, "what did you learn today?" Self-reflective activities			Learning and self-reflective activities, quizzes, testing of knowledge and skills		Pre and post course: quizzes on comfort with palliative care, knowledge and attitudes. Post course: evaluation of the course, commitment to change. 4 months post course: Commitment to change reflection			
Delivery method	In-person			In-person, other delivery methods may be available		In-person, other delivery methods may be available			
Content features	Easy to pick up and deliver the course content. A second version is also available for First Nations communities. The references are very outdated, with only 2 of 121 references published after 2011.			Colorful illustrations, easy to read. Many self-reflection activities.		All features of LEAP-Core with content tailored for LTC environment. HCAs have separate break-out sessions for symptom management and leadership.			
Links	https://market-marche.chpca.net/training-manual-for-home-support-workers-online			https://www.lifeanddeathmatters.ca/integrating-a-palliative-approach-essentials-for-personal-support-workers/		https://pallium.ca/equip-yourself/courses/			

Appendix C - Options for education

Nurses	Health Care Assistants
<p>Generalist / ALL</p> <p>The following educational resources would be comparable in terms of addressing competencies (all addressed more than 80% of the competencies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BCIT Palliative Approach in Nursing³• de Souza iEPEC-O⁶• Life and Death Matters: Essentials in Hospice and palliative care: A practical resource for every nurse⁸• Pallium Canada: LEAP-Core¹⁰ <p>Enhanced practice - SOME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• de Souza CNA Study Group⁵ (assumed to have a highscore)• BCIT Palliative Approach in Nursing³ (65% of competencies) + possible supplementary materials• Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive ¹³⁻¹⁴ (90% of competencies) <p>Specialist - FEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• de Souza CNA Study Group⁵ (assumed to have a highscore)• Victoria Hospice: Palliative Care: Medical Intensive ¹³⁻¹⁴ (69% of competencies) + possible supplementary materials	<p>Generalist / ALL</p> <p>The following educational resources would be comparable in terms of addressing competencies (all addressed more than 82% of the competencies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association: Training manual for home support workers⁴• Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹• Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹ <p>Enhanced practice - SOME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life and Death Matters: Integrating a palliative approach: Essentials for personal support workers⁹ (89% of the competences)• Pallium Canada: LEAP-LTC¹¹ (71% of competencies)

