



# **Palliative Care Can Happen Anywhere: Education and Tools for Nurse Practitioners**

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# Presenter Disclosure

Sheila Killoran and Danica Hans are employees of the Covenant Health Palliative Institute.

The speakers have no current or past relationships with commercial entities.

The projects presented were funded by grants received from the Government of Alberta.

We have not received an honorarium for this learning activity.

This program has received no financial or in-kind support from any commercial or other organization.

# Bias Mitigation

We confirm that we have taken the following measures to ensure this learning activity/conference session is balanced and free from bias:

- Conducted a comprehensive review of the relevant literature
- Supported the content and recommendations within the best available current evidence from the literature
- Had an expert/peer review conducted of the learning activity

# Land Acknowledgement



## Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action

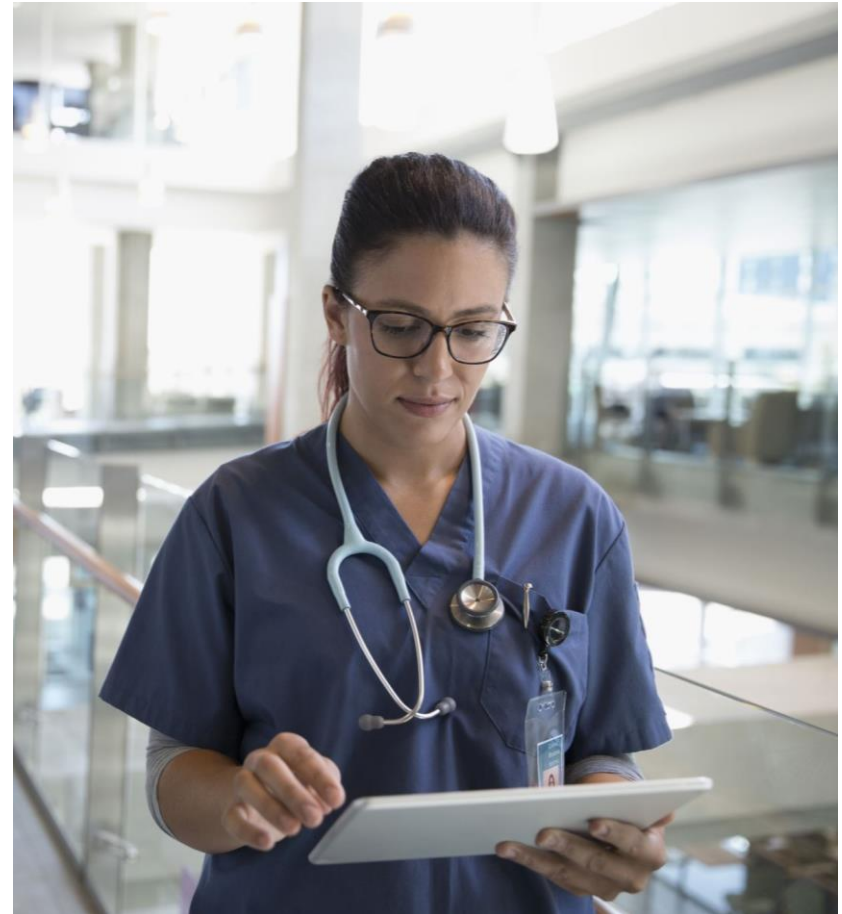
22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.



# Learning Objectives

Be the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe palliative care and the Palliative Institute.
2. Experience and know how to access free palliative care education for health care providers.
3. Identify relevant tools and how they can be used in their practice.



# Outline



1. Background
2. Education
3. Tools
4. Why it matters



# What is Palliative Care?



# So, what is palliative care?

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients (adults and children) and their families who are facing problems associated with life-threatening illness.  
(WHO, 2024)



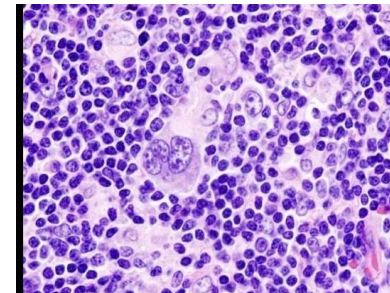
**Caring for the whole person from diagnosis to death.**



# Reflection – Lorelei Sawchuk, NP



# Story – NP Misty Zisin



# Palliative approach to care

Conversations about wishes and values (ACP);



Symptom management;

Getting to know a person;

Treatments aligned with wishes;

Caring for physical, psychosocial, spiritual, mental;

Treating everybody with dignity;

Providing care until after death.



# Early Palliative Care

How can we better support people after they've been diagnosed?

Can we improve the care being delivered in conjunction with disease treatment?

Do we acknowledge suffering and difficult emotions?

Might we look beyond the chief complaint to create space for healing, connection and relationships?





"How people die lives in the  
memories of those who live on."  
- *DAME CICELY SAUNDERS*





# Symptom Assessment

## The Edmonton Symptom Assessment System - Revised (ESAS-r)

[Symptom Assessment Tools | Alberta Health Services](#)



Affix patient label within this box

### Edmonton Symptom Assessment System Revised (ESAS-r)

Please circle the number that best describes how you feel NOW:

No Pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Pain
No Tiredness (Tiredness = lack of energy)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Tiredness
No Drowsiness (Drowsiness = feeling sleepy)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Drowsiness
No Nausea	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Nausea
No Lack of Appetite	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Lack of Appetite
No Shortness of Breath	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Shortness of Breath
No Depression (Depression = feeling sad)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Depression
No Anxiety (Anxiety = feeling nervous)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Anxiety
Best Wellbeing (Wellbeing = how you feel overall)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible Wellbeing
No _____ Other Problem (For example constipation)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Worst Possible _____

# 24/7 Palliative Physician On-call Service

Regardless of location of care in Alberta, access to 24/7 on call Specialist Palliative Care Physician support through RAAPID ([Palliative Physician On-Call Service | Alberta Health Services](#)).

**RAAPID North** (for patients north of Red Deer, Alberta)  
1-800-282-9911 (Canada ONLY)  
780-735-0811

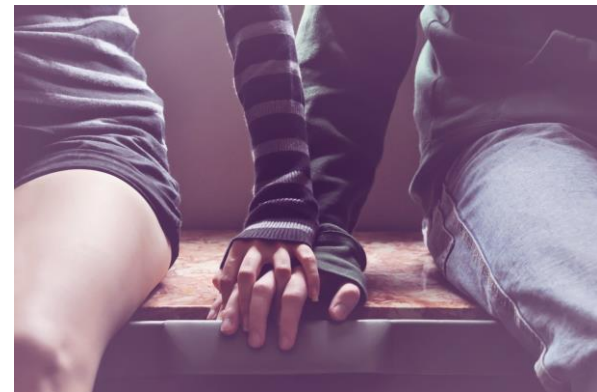
**RAAPID South** (for patients in and south of Red Deer, Alberta)  
1-800-661-1700 (Canada ONLY)  
403-944-4486

*\*If you do not have access to Palliative Consult Services at your site*

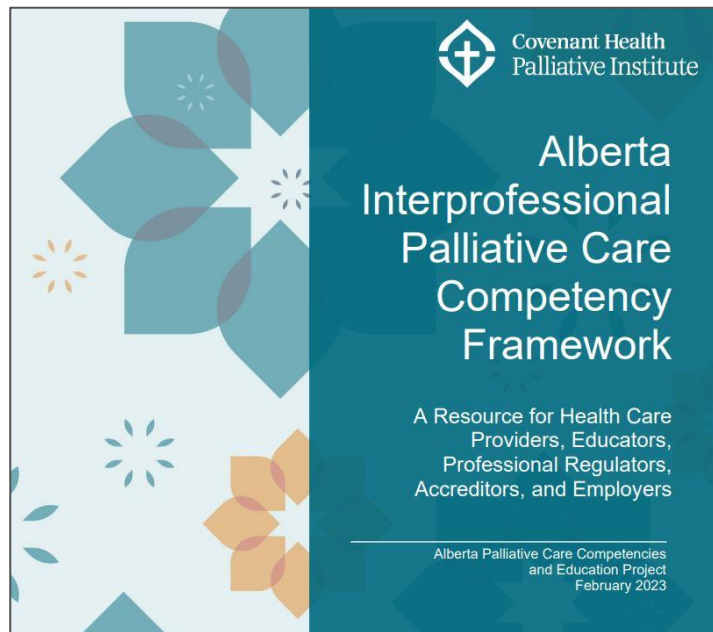
# Patient Dignity Question (PDQ)

**“What should I know about you as a person to give you the best care possible?”**

- What are the things that are most important to you, or that concern you most?
- Who (or what) else will be affected by what's happening with your health?
- Who would you like to help support you?



# Background



## Palli Pro

Palliative Care  
Interprofessional Education



## Interprofessional Competencies



## Advance Care Planning



## Continuing Education



## Learning about Palliative Care



PalliPro

My Wishes Alberta  
Workbook

ECHO hub

Understanding  
Palliative Care





# Competency Frameworks

- [Dietitians](#)
- [Emergency medical responders and paramedics](#)
- [Health care aides](#)
- [Medical radiation and imaging technologists](#)
- [Nurses](#)
- [Occupational therapists](#)
- [Pharmacists](#)
- [Psychologists](#)
- [Physiotherapists](#)
- [Respiratory therapists](#)
- [Social workers](#)
- [Speech language pathologists and audiologists](#)
- [Spiritual care](#)
- [Volunteers](#)



[Alberta Nurses Palliative Care Competency Framework](#)

# PalliPro



Self-directed,  
interactive, free, online

Based on Alberta  
Palliative Care  
Interprofessional  
Competencies

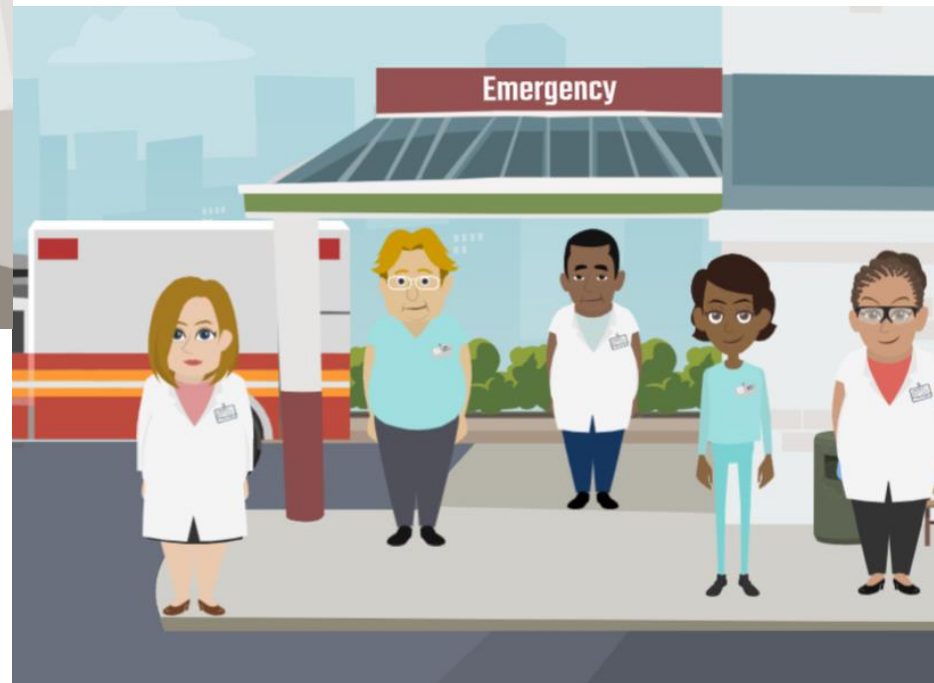
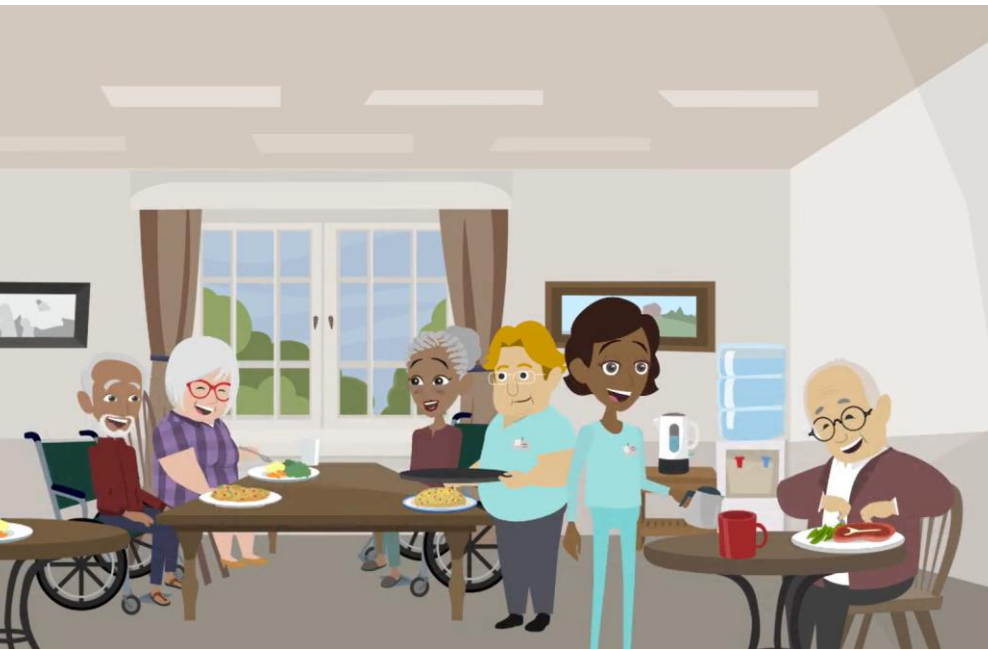
Created in consultation  
with clinicians

# Let's play PalliPro



[PalliPro: Palliative Care  
Interprofessional Education  
- Overview | Rise 360  
\(articulate.com\)](#)

# Next steps



# My Wishes Alberta

- Fillable workbook
- Adapted from *Coming Full Circle*, Canadian Virtual Hospice and Circle of Elders and Knowledge Carriers
- Print and digital versions



## My Wishes Alberta: Planning for My Care

A workbook to help you explore and  
share your health care wishes





## Thinking about your wishes for care

Next, think about your wishes for your care and what you value the most. How would you like your physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs met?

**If you were to get very sick, what would matter the most to you?**

(For example: being able to spend time with your family and friends, being in your own home, having people around you who speak your language, being pain-free, being treated with dignity)

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**If you were to get very sick, what would you be most worried about?**

(For example: being in pain, being alone, needing to leave your home or community to receive care, that the people you care for are looked after, finances)

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What would you want your care providers to know about you as a person so that they could give you the best possible care?

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*"I follow a traditional lifestyle and that would be part of my expectations in my care – that it would be incorporated into Western medical interventions. That might mean plant medicines, teas, or even ceremonies in a medical context. I would want my health care providers to support this."*

1. What matters most to you?

2. Thinking about your wishes for care.

3. Talking about your wishes.

4. Making sure your wishes are honoured.

# ECHO

- Free webinars for public and HCP
- Palliative Institute series:
  - *ACP Alberta*
  - *PalliLearn*
  - *Psychosocial Spiritual Alberta CoP*

ECHO Hub  
([covenanthealth.ca](http://covenanthealth.ca))



# Upcoming sessions

## **Psychosocial Spiritual Alberta Community of Practice**

**April 24, 2025: Dementia & Grief**

**Presenter:** Becky VanTassel BSW RSW M.Ed., Grief Education

Consider the impact of loss on both caregivers and individuals living with dementia and identify practical tools to support individuals and families.

## **Hospice Palliative Care Community of Practice**

**May 29 2025: Pain and anxiety medications at end of life from a palliative nurse consultant perspective**

**Presenter:** Luisa Arevalo, RN

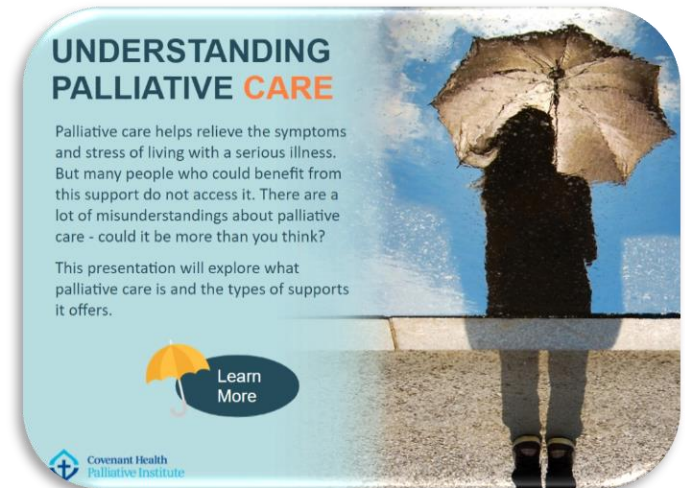
Explore pharmacological interventions to address pain and anxiety for palliative patients from a palliative nurse consultant perspective.



# Understanding Palliative Care

- Interactive
- Multimedia
- Self-directed
- Free online
- For a public audience

[Learn about palliative care  
\(covenanthealth.ca\)](http://covenanthealth.ca)





## Palliative care provides support in four areas:

Select each "+" image below to learn more.







**Patient  
centered  
care**



**Symptom  
Assessment**



**Advocating  
for patient's  
wishes**



**Dignity &  
Communication**



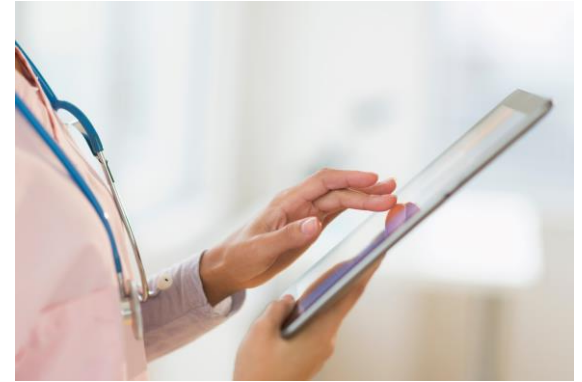
**Interdisciplinary  
team**

# Discussion

- What has been your experience supporting palliative patients?
- How can learning more about palliative care change the care you deliver?
- What could you bring to your work setting?
- What opportunities or barriers do you see?



# Thank you, Let's stay Connected



Visit [Compassionate Alberta \(covenanthealth.ca\)](https://covenanthealth.ca) to access all our tools and resources.

Please subscribe to our newsletter: [Palliative Institute | Compassionate Alberta newsletter](#)

Contact us at: [Palliative.Institute@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:Palliative.Institute@covenanthealth.ca)



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# Thank you