

Developing a workforce to improve health outcomes in palliative care: The National Palliative Care Curriculum for Undergraduates Project

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PALLIATIVE CARE FOR UNDERGRADUATES (PCC4U)
A learning resource for health care students

Funded by the Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

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Aim:

- to promote the delivery of quality palliative care that is accessible to all people who are dying, by educating all new graduates in the health professionals in the principles and practices of palliative care.

Objectives:

- To promote the inclusion in all health care training of the role of palliative care and its principles and practice in the care of dying people
- To support the inclusion of palliative care education as an integral part of all medical, nursing, and allied health undergraduate training, and ongoing professional development

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Phase 1 2004 – 2005

Resulted in the development of

- a set of graduate capabilities and principles for including palliative care in undergraduate curricula
- a set of learning resources
- set of recommended strategies for implementation

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Graduate Capabilities

1. Effective communication in the context of an individual's responses to loss and grief, existential challenges, uncertainty and changing goals of care.
2. Appreciation of and respect for the diverse human and clinical responses of each individual through their illness trajectory.
3. Understanding of principles for assessment and management of clinical and supportive care needs.
4. The capacity for reflection and self evaluation of one's professional and personal experiences and their curriculum and their cumulative impact on the self and others.

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Undergraduate Curriculum Resources

- A publication entitled *Principles for Including Palliative Care in Undergraduate Curricula*
- An interactive CD-ROM and accompanying facilitator guides
- A resource compendium
- A related document, "*Principles for Including a Palliative Approach to Aged Care in Undergraduate Nursing Curricula*"

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Integrated concepts

- Diversity
 - Patient needs and preferences
 - Practice settings
 - Illness conditions
 - Sociocultural contexts
- Evidence based
- Multidisciplinary perspectives
- Flexibility to enable integration in diverse curricula

Resources

- Scenarios based around patient journey
- Clinical decision making vignettes and activities
- Evidence reviews
- Reflective activities
- Expert opinions and modelling

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The screenshot shows the user interface of the PCC4U CD-ROM. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for EXIT, HIDE, MAIN MENU, VIRTUAL TOUR, MAP, GLOSSARY, and RESOURCES. Below this is a header section with the text 'PALLIATIVE CARE A learning resource for health care students' and the logo for 'THE NATIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAM'. A sidebar on the left lists the 'MODULES': 1: PRINCIPLES, 2: COMMUNICATION, 3: ASSESSMENT, and 4: OPTIMISATION. The main content area displays a 'Welcome' message, stating that the resources were created as part of the Australian Government-funded project 'The Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Palliative Care Curriculum Project'. It lists 'The 4 modules of learning' as: Module 1: Principles (Principles of palliative care), Module 2: Communication (Communicating with people with life-limiting illnesses), Module 3: Assessment (Palliative assessment & intervention), and Module 4: Optimisation (Optimising function in palliative care). A footer at the bottom of the interface reads: 'Palliative care - quality of life for people with a life-limiting illness, their families and carers. An Australian Government Initiative. © copyright Commonwealth of Australia 2006 | disclaimer | about this cd'.

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Phase 2 2005-2006

- Pilot and evaluation of resources in 3 medical, 4 nursing and 3 allied health courses
 - **Monash University:** Medicine; Nursing;
 - **University of New South Wales:** Medicine;
 - **Queensland University of Technology:** Nursing;
 - **University of Queensland:** Medicine;
 - **Charles Sturt University:** Nursing;
 - **James Cook University:** Nursing; Pharmacy;
 - **University of Newcastle:** Speech Pathology; Social Work

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Phase 2 2005-2006 Outcomes

- Positive outcomes demonstrated for all indicators, including:
 - student learning outcomes
 - academic staff involvement and abilities in developing graduate capabilities in palliative care
 - evidence of inclusion of the identified principles in curricula
 - extent of uptake of the resources in curricula
 - linkages between academic and clinical staff in developing graduate capabilities in palliative care.

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Phase 3 2007-2010

- Active promotion of the uptake of the PCC4U resources in all universities in Australia which offer medical, nursing, and allied health undergraduate training.
- Maintenance and nurturing of the networks that have developed between participating universities and their faculties;
- Extending the networks to include the universities and faculties which take up the curriculum in the future;
- Developing strategies for the ongoing sustainability of the PCC4U project;
- Maintaining the existing newsletter for stakeholders and information website.

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| Stages of Implementation | Strategies |
|--------------------------|---|
| Stage 1 Awareness | Invitation extended by email to universities to participate in the project |
| Stage 2 Informing | Universities invited to review the resources and complete a mapping exercise highlighting any barriers, concerns and a possible timetable for implementation. |
| Stage 3 Engaging | Universities visited by the Project Team Member and Project Coordinator projects; Letter of agreement to participate signed by participating sites. |
| Stage 4 Implementing | Sites implement the PCC4U resources through integration and customisation of resources. |
| Stage 5 Networking | Sites involved invited to act as mentors for new implementation sites, and to develop a series of case studies regarding implementation strategies. A shared teaching website is being developed |
| Stage 6 Evaluation | Data collection using evaluation templates to evaluate: •Learning outcomes •Curriculum outcomes •System outcomes |

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| EVALUATION HIERARCHY | What did you do? DELIVERY | How did it go? IMPACT | Can you keep going? SUSTAINABILITY | What has been learnt? CAPACITY BUILDING | Are your lessons useful for someone else? GENERALISABILITY |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Level 1 Impact on, and outcomes for, consumers (eg students; academic staff) | | | | | |
| Baseline, Process & Outcome Indicators | ▪Description of teaching/ learning strategies | ▪Evidence of student learning (knowledge, attitudes, & skills relevant to core capabilities) | ▪Evidence of student learning (knowledge, attitudes, & skills relevant to core capabilities) | ▪Resources and strategies for ongoing implementation ▪Nature and extent of academic staff involvement | ▪Significant lessons learnt (what worked well for students and academic staff; what factors facilitated and what hindered) |
| Level 2 Impact on, and outcomes for, providers (eg health care organisations; academic institutions) | | | | | |
| Baseline, Process & Outcome Indicators | ▪Description of implementation strategies employed | ▪Evidence of course improvement (application of core Principles) | ▪Evidence of course improvement (application of core Principles) | ▪Resources and strategies for ongoing implementation ▪Nature and extent of course coordinator and academic manager involvement | ▪Significant lessons learnt (what worked well for academic units; what factors facilitated and what hindered) |
| Level 3 Impact on, and outcomes for, the system (structures and processes, networks, relationships) | | | | | |
| Impact on, and outcomes for, the system (structures and processes, networks, relationships) | ▪Description of linkages with other program activities ▪Description of linkages between academic units/ committees, regulator bodies and palliative care services | ▪Extent of uptake ▪Evidence of integration ▪Nature and extent of academic-clinical partnerships | ▪Extent of uptake ▪Evidence of integration ▪Nature and extent of academic-clinical partnerships | ▪Resources and recommendations for continuing improvements | ▪Significant lessons learnt (what worked well; what factors facilitated and what hindered) |

Figure 1: Project Evaluation Framework (based on The Project Evaluation Framework developed by The University of Wollongong's Centre for Health Service Development)

PCC4U – Palliative Care for Undergraduates

Progress to-date

| Year | University | Courses | University | Courses | Year | University | Courses | University | Courses |
|---------------------------|------------|---------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| 2007 (18 universities) | CDU | 5 | UWS | 5 | 2008 -2009 (21 universities) | Bond | 4 | Ballarat | 3 |
| | CSU | 9 | RMIT | 6 | | Flinders | 8 | UNISA | 5 |
| | Curtin | 6 | Notre Dame | 6 | | La Trobe | 6 | Sydney | 8 |
| | JCU | 8 | USQ | 2 | | Adelaide | 4 | Griffith | 6 |
| | ECU | 5 | QUT | 5 | | CQU | 4 | UNE | 4 |
| | UQ | 8 | Murdoch | 2 | | ACU | 3 | Swinburne | 1 |
| | Newcastle | 7 | Melbourne | 5 | | Deakin | 6 | UTS | 1 |
| | Monash | 10 | UWA | 3 | | SCU | 3 | Tasmania | 3 |
| | UNSW | 3 | USC | 4 | | ANU | 4 | UOW | 4 |
| Total | 99 | | Invited 99 | | | Macquarie | 3 | VU | 6 |
| | | | | Canberra | | 6 | | | |
| | | | | Total | | 92 | | Invited 92 | |
| | | | | 39 Universities | | | | 191 Courses | |

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Progress to-date

Stage 1 – Contact (Completed 100%)

March 2008 39 Universities 191 Courses 191 Contacted

Stage 2 – Requests for Resources

March 2008 39 Universities 191 Courses 107 Requested

Stage 3 Site Visits or teleconference

March 2008 39 Universities 191 Courses 52 Visits

Stage 4 Sites using resources

March 2008 39 Universities 191 Courses 46 implementing

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Case Studies

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Contacting us

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The screenshot shows the PCC4U website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'PCC4U' and 'Login Register' links, along with a search bar. Below this is a header section with the text 'PALLIATIVE CARE FOR UNDERGRADUATES (PCC4U)' and 'A learning resource for health care students'. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains a sidebar menu with links such as 'Home', 'Welcome', 'About PCC4U', 'PCC4U Phase 3', 'The Project Team', 'Project Events', 'Newsletters', 'Forum', 'Documents', 'PCC4U Resources', 'Project Teams', 'Meetings', 'Documents', 'Forum', 'Project Advisory Panel', 'Meetings', and 'Documents'. The middle column features a 'Welcome' message and a 'Project Advisory Group Meeting' announcement. The right column contains a 'Announcements' section with dates for newsletters and a 'Contact Information' section listing the Project Coordinator, Dr. David Emmett, and his contact details. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the PCC4U logo and the text 'PALLIATIVE CARE FOR UNDERGRADUATES (PCC4U) A learning resource for health care students' and 'Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing'.

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