



National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: J471 46

Superclass: PA

Publication date: May 2020

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to develop their knowledge and understanding of palliative and end of life care. The unit aims to equip learners with the theoretical knowledge and understanding relating to holistic, multidisciplinary, evidenced based approaches to caring for the individual receiving palliative care. This includes responding to the bereavement needs of the individual's family or significant others.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Explain what palliative care is, who would benefit from it and when.
- 2 Investigate appropriate assessment and care planning models including anticipatory care planning.
- 3 Investigate relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures.
- 4 Evaluate the key dimensions of effective multidisciplinary team working.

Credit points and level

2 National Unit credits at SCQF level 6 (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6)

Recommended entry to the unit

Whilst access to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, it is recommended that learners have good communication skills, both written and oral.

National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Communication* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Numeracy* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

Context for delivery

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Explain what palliative care is, who would benefit from it and when.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the difference between palliative and end of life care.
- (b) Describe palliative care and the key concepts of a palliative care approach.
- (c) Explain the importance of early identification of people who would benefit from palliative care and the use of appropriate assessment tools.
- (d) Identify common life-limiting conditions affecting the individual and how a palliative care approach would help.

Outcome 2

Investigate appropriate assessment and care planning models including anticipatory care planning.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe care planning models.
- (b) Describe the importance of anticipatory care planning.
- (c) Explain the purpose of reviewing and evaluating care plans.
- (d) Explain the importance of effective communication with people, their families/significant others to identify and review outcomes.
- (e) Identify interventions to support wellbeing.
- (f) Describe the importance of diversity, cultural beliefs and preferences within the context of providing palliative and end of life care.
- (g) Explain the contribution of assistive technologies and equipment within care planning.

Outcome 3

Investigate relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures.

Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the legal status and implications of anticipatory care planning.
- (b) Identify professional, legal and ethical approaches to protecting and promoting people's rights and safety.
- (c) Investigate the principles of child and adult protection and identify factors that increase risk.
- (d) Describe the requirements of formal assessment of capacity.
- (e) Identify the changes in capacity and the impact on consent, choice and decision making with reference to current legislation.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Outcome 4

Evaluate the key dimensions of effective multidisciplinary team working.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify the range of services and support available to people, their families and carers, and the contribution each makes to palliative and end of life care.
- (b) Describe the purpose of multidisciplinary team working in the delivery of palliative and end of life care and the different approaches used.
- (c) Explain how and when transitions in care and support may arise between and across services, sectors and settings.

Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Evidence can be gathered in a range of ways which will assess learners' knowledge, understanding, and application across the learning outcomes and performance criteria.

A holistic approach to assessment across one or more outcomes should be taken. This could be in the form of case studies covering different palliative and end of life care situations.

Where learners have worked in a group, there should be evidence of their individual contribution.

The Assessment Support Pack for this unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

Outcome 1

To achieve outcome 1, learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ describe two key concepts of a palliative care approach.
- ◆ describe the use of one appropriate assessment tool, eg SPICT (Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool) or PPS (Palliative Performance Scale).
- ◆ identify one malignant and two non-malignant common life-limiting conditions and describe how they may affect elements of health and wellbeing.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Outcomes 2 and 3

To achieve outcome 2 and 3, learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ describe two different care planning models and explain the purpose of reviewing and evaluating care plans.
- ◆ identify one legal status and the implications of anticipatory care planning.
- ◆ with reference to current legislation describe three elements of formal assessment of capacity and how changes in capacity affect consent, choice and decision making.
- ◆ investigate the principles of child and adult protection and identify three factors that increase risk.
- ◆ with reference to one professional Code of Conduct, describe one professional, one legal and one ethical approach to protecting and promoting people's rights and safety.
- ◆ identify two interventions to support wellbeing, describing the importance of recognising diversity, cultural beliefs and preferences when providing palliative and end of life care.
- ◆ explain the contribution of one assistive technology and one piece of equipment the carer/individual could use within the care planning process to maintain function and independence.

Outcome 4

To achieve outcome 4, learners must produce evidence to show they can:

- ◆ identify one statutory and two non-statutory services available to people, their families and carers, and the role each makes to palliative and end of life care and support.
- ◆ describe the purpose of multidisciplinary team working in palliative and end of life care and describe three roles within the team.
- ◆ explain one transition in care and support identifying the services, sector and settings involved.
- ◆ explain four approaches used by the multidisciplinary team and how they maintain independence and enhance quality of life.



National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit is a mandatory unit in the National Progression Award (NPA) Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6. The unit can also be studied on a stand-alone basis.

The purpose of the unit is to enable learners to develop their knowledge and understanding of palliative and end of life care. The unit aims to equip learners with the theoretical knowledge and understanding relating to holistic, multidisciplinary, evidenced based approaches to caring for the individual receiving palliative care. This includes responding to the bereavement needs of the individual's family or significant others.

Outcome 1

Learners should be encouraged to refer to the WHO definition and principles of palliative and end of life care (2017) and explain these in their own words.

'Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual' (World Health Organisation, 2017).

Palliative care principles:

- ◆ provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms
- ◆ affirms life and regards dying as a normal process
- ◆ intends neither to hasten or postpone death
- ◆ integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care
- ◆ offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death
- ◆ offers a support system to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement
- ◆ uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated
- ◆ will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness
- ◆ is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Definition of End of Life Care — Strategic Framework for Action 2015 (Scot Gov)
<https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/12/4053/0>

'End of life care addresses the medical, social, emotional, spiritual and accommodation needs of people thought to have less than one year to live. It includes a range of health and social services and disease specific interventions as well as palliative and hospice care for those with advanced conditions who are nearing the end of life'.

People often think that palliative care is only for those diagnosed with cancer, however, the approach is also appropriate for anyone living with a life-limiting illness or condition, eg advanced lung or heart conditions, advanced neurological conditions such as dementia, motor neurone disease or multiple sclerosis and childhood life-shortening illness such as muscular dystrophy.

Learners should recognise and explain the advantages of early identification of people who would benefit from a palliative approach to their care. Learners should refer to SPECCS (Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, Cultural and Spiritual) to demonstrate an understanding of holistic assessment. Early identification can improve quality of life by allowing informed choices about medical care and treatment to be made. Additionally, people can prioritise things that are important to them when length of life may be short, or when irreversible illness has altered their life.

Learners should be introduced to the 'Palliative care identification tools comparator' available on the ihub living well in communities website. The tools comparator is a list of assessment tools designed to help care professionals identify people earlier who would benefit from a palliative approach to care regardless of their condition. It summarises who each tool is aimed at and how it should be used.

<https://ihub.scot/media/2079/palliative-care-identification-tools-comparator.pdf>

Outcomes 2 and 3

Learners should understand the importance of effective communication and describe the importance of equality and diversity, cultural beliefs and personal preferences when planning holistic, person-centred care.

Interventions that support wellbeing could include meeting physical needs whilst maintaining privacy and dignity, symptom management, participating in meaningful and enjoyable activities that enhance wellbeing, such as a hobby, or something which meets the cultural/spiritual aspects of the person's life.

Learners should explain the importance of reviewing the care plan and when this should occur.

Learners will be introduced to 'Anticipatory Care Plans' (ACP) and be able to state the benefits for people and their family, eg facilitate clear discussions about care and treatment wishes in anticipation of future changes in health, feeling more in control, prevent a crisis, reduce stress and help decision making.

Learners should be able to explain the legal status of an ACP, and when it is appropriate to update/change it.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Learners will investigate the principles of child and adult protection and identify risk factors for abuse, eg lack of mental capacity, increasing age, physical dependence on others, low self-esteem, previous history of abuse, social isolation, lack of access to health and social services or high-quality information.

During their investigation, learners should be encouraged to refer to relevant professional codes of conduct and legislation to explain professional, legal and ethical approaches to protecting and promoting people's rights and safety including formal assessment of capacity and the principles of child/adult protection. This could include:

- ◆ NMC: The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives 2015
- ◆ SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers 2016
- ◆ The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- ◆ The Carer (Scotland) Act 2016
- ◆ The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- ◆ Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- ◆ Scottish Human Rights Commission — <http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/>

Assistive technology refers to equipment and systems that help people with functional capabilities, eg wheelchairs, walking frames, hoists, telehealthcare, etc. Learners should explain the role of assistive technologies within the context of planning care.
<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/staying-independent/what-assistive-technology>

Outcome 4

Learners should identify and explain the role of statutory and non-statutory organisations in palliative and end of life care, eg acute care, primary care, hospice services, third sector (voluntary) organisations. Charities could include local/national charities relevant to a specific condition or one that offers wider support, eg information, signposting to other agencies.

Learners should explain the importance and challenges of managing smooth and seamless transitions in care between different services, settings and sectors, such as:

- ◆ discharge home from hospital where care and support is required from a range of organisations such as local authority/primary care teams and a voluntary organisation
- ◆ the importance of communication
- ◆ understanding of roles and responsibilities
- ◆ sharing of information
- ◆ access to and return of resources

Learners should identify members of the multidisciplinary team and how they work collaboratively to provide effective palliative and end of life care, respecting an individual's needs, wants and wishes.

Learners should explain how re-ablement, rehabilitation and self-management approaches can be implemented by the multidisciplinary team according to a person's abilities in order to maintain their independence, manage risk and enhance quality of life.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Teachers/lecturers should be mindful of the sensitive and emotive nature of palliative care and how it may affect learners, especially those who have had a past bereavement or involvement with palliative care services. Relevant and appropriate support should be sought if required.

Palliative care is for people of all ages and delivered in all areas of health and social care. It is important that the teacher/lecturer directs learners to relevant statutory, non-statutory and third sector organisations to ensure learning is focused and comprehensive.

The use of the internet and appropriate reading materials should be encouraged to offer current thinking in relation to palliative and end of life care.

In delivering this unit, there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer led presentation and learner centred learning. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers/lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning and enable learners to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching.

Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners, for example:

- ◆ group exercises
- ◆ group discussion
- ◆ use of case studies
- ◆ individual and/or group research
- ◆ use of videos
- ◆ lectures
- ◆ use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as web-based material
- ◆ external speakers from specialist teams

Learners should be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

The Assessment Support Pack for this unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

An integrated approach to assessment is recommended.

Outcome 1 could be assessed by completing a written account, such as a report.

Outcomes 2 and 3 could be integrated and assessed by completing a written account such as an investigative report and producing an information leaflet or flyer.

Outcome 4 could be assessed by an individual or group PowerPoint presentation.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at:

www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Communication* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Numeracy* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

Communication — may be evidenced via the learner's work with individuals and groups as well as within written assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — may be evidenced by the learner's ability to accessing, processing, and presenting information.

Numeracy— may be evidenced by the learner's ability to use graphical information to support research, presentations as well as within written assessments.

Problem Solving — may be evidenced through facilitated group discussion about the most appropriate course of action for care delivery.

Working with Others — may be evidenced in the learner's ability to interact, communicate and negotiate with those with whom they come into contact, and to work collaboratively with other professionals and individuals, recognition of professional boundaries and professional conduct in practice.

History of changes to unit

| Version | Description of change | Date |
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General information for learners

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This unit will provide you with a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of palliative and end of life care. You will learn how this holistic, multidisciplinary, evidenced based approach to caring can be applied in practice.

In Scotland, around 54,000 people die each year and over 200,000 people are significantly affected by the death of a loved one. We are dying at older ages, and may also have frailty, dementia and multiple other conditions. Due to the growth in our population, the number of people dying each year will begin to rise from 2015. It is thought that up to 8 out of 10 people who die will have palliative care needs; however not everyone will receive it.

Palliative care is an approach delivered in any setting that improves the quality of life of people of all ages facing problems associated with life-limiting conditions. Early identification, assessment and treatment of pain and other physical, psychological, social or spiritual problems is key to good quality palliative care.

The need for palliative care is growing with the ageing population and is a human rights, public health and equalities issue.

This unit is a mandatory unit in the National Progression Award (NPA) Palliative and End of Life Care at SCQF level 6. The unit can also be studied on a stand-alone basis. The unit is suitable for care students and or individuals employed in the care sector.

This unit consists of four outcomes. On successful completion of these, you will be able to:

- 1 Explain what palliative care is, who would benefit from it and when.
- 2 Investigate appropriate assessment and care planning models including anticipatory care planning.
- 3 Investigate relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures.
- 4 Evaluate the key dimensions of effective multidisciplinary team working.

A variety of learning and teaching methods may be used, for example:

- ◆ Individual and/or group discussions/research
- ◆ Use of case studies/videos and/or external guest speakers
- ◆ Lectures
- ◆ Use of ICT such as web-based material

Where possible, outcomes will be integrated and you may be assessed using a range of assessment instruments, for example:

- ◆ Investigative report
- ◆ Information leaflet or flyer
- ◆ Individual or group presentation

General information for learners (cont)

Unit title: Fundamentals of Palliative Care (SCQF level 6)

You will be introduced to the government frameworks and policy guidance including palliative and end of life care; enriching and improving experiences.

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/2450/palliative-and-end-of-life-care-enriching-and-improving-experience>

The framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development on palliative and end of life care for the health and social service workforce. It is aspirational and values workers' previous learning, and existing knowledge and skills. It acknowledges the place of informal and formal learning in supporting the workforce to develop knowledge and skills, and recognises sector and discipline-specific standards and frameworks, such as National Occupational Standards and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The framework's flexibility enables it to be used in different ways to support learning and development at individual, service-provider and organisational levels.

You will have the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of:

Communication at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your work with individuals and groups as well as within written assessments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) — may be evidenced by accessing, processing, and presenting information.

Numeracy — may be evidenced by the use of graphical information to support research, presentations as well as within written assessments.

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced through facilitated group discussion about the most appropriate course of action for care delivery.

Working with Others at SCQF level 6 — may be evidenced by your ability to interact, communicate and negotiate with those with whom you come into contact, and to work collaboratively with other professionals and individuals, recognition of professional boundaries and professional conduct in practice.

The unit will facilitate the development of citizenship and includes; concern for others; being aware of rights and responsibilities; being aware of the democratic society; being outward-looking towards society; being able to recognise one's personal role in this context, and of acting responsibly. You will develop employability skills including the development of care specific knowledge and also an understanding of employment skills such as appropriate attitudes and behaviours.