



Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Care

July 2023

Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Innovations Steering Committee

Over the last few months the Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Innovations Steering Committee (PPAL/EOL ISC) has been planning, mapping, and reviewing priorities for the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The annual work plan prioritizes the initiatives to be completed for the upcoming fiscal year and identifies other key priority work for the team. The 2023/2024 annual prioritized work plan was endorsed at the May 18th PPAL/EOL ISC meeting. We are looking forward to participating in and leading many exciting projects in the months to come!

As part of National Hospice Palliative Care Week, the Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Care (PEOLC) team also celebrated some of the wonderful health care professionals that work in PEOLC across the province and support provincial work. The Provincial PEOLC team wanted to extend their appreciation and thanks to all of the passionate people whose work promotes access to high quality PEOLC across the province and country!



<https://pixabay.com/photos/sunflower-flowers-flower-bed-3696960/>

National Advance Care Planning Day



April 16th was National Advance Care Planning (ACP) Day! This year's theme was "If not you, who?". Several activities occurred provincially, including an interview with Dr. Charlie Chen that aired on Global News Calgary to highlight the importance of ACP. To view this interview, please click [here](#). The Provincial team would also like to highlight one of the stories that was shared across AHS's social media platforms and have included it below:

"Back in the 1960's when Helen Whitaker worked as a nurse, it was rare to see a patient document wishes for their health care if they become too sick to make decisions for themselves. Families were left guessing about their desired healthcare decisions, creating even more stress at an already stressful time. But conversation has changed a lot since she last worked the frontlines and she's thrilled that talking about advance care plans has become more common. "My patient's and clients and now my friends and neighbours have all told me that it is a very positive step, to be engaged in one's own health care decision making. Every person that has done an advance care plan state that they experienced a sense of satisfaction, and relief. They felt better," Whitaker said. "Families and friends and loved ones learn about the important wishes of the person they may be caring for or supporting during an illness. Having conversations is the starting point, having the right documentation is a real gift to the family and caregivers". Whitaker is encouraging all Albertans, no matter their age or health, to have a conversation today with their loved ones and develop an advance care plan."

Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Care Grand Rounds

Please join the Provincial PEOLC Team on **July 11 from 08:00-09:00** for the summer Provincial PEOLC Grand Rounds session.

Title: Beyond the ‘buzz’ word: Equity and its importance for palliative and end-of-life care

Description: In this presentation, **Dr. Cara Bablitz** (PCOAT, Indigenous Wellness Clinic) and **Ashley Mollison** (University of Victoria) will provide a brief overview of barriers to palliative and end-of-life care for people facing health and social inequities in contexts of poverty, homelessness, colonization, racialization, and stigma. They will share findings from research and practice as well as projects underway to improve access to quality palliative and end-of-life care.

Instructions on how to attend:

Instructions for Webinar (Visual) and Teleconference Dial-in (Audio) Step 1,2,3		
Step 1	If you have never attended a meeting in Zoom before please test your connection	<i>Please test your connection (below) at least 1 day in advance of the session. For help joining a meeting from your computer visit Joining a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support</i>
Link to test connection	Test your connection: https://zoom.us/test Note: this is the testing provided by the application provider, Zoom, not AHS.	
Step 2	To enter the meeting room in Zoom please click on the meeting room URL	Enter the meeting ID 675 4084 7434 and your display name.
Meeting room URL	https://albertahealthservices.zoom.us/j/63368128213?pwd=b1VQa0JSNlhid1VvQStHNIFEQTN1QT09 <i>Group attendees – if you are entering the meeting room as a group, kindly change the display name to your group name and include the number of attendees participating - i.e. Site Name - 8</i>	
Step 3	Teleconferencing is used in conjunction with webinars if you are not able to attend via a computer –AUDIO ONLY	
Teleconference Access	Toll Free: 1- 587-328-1099	Meeting ID: 675 4084 7434 Passcode: 208673

Save the date for the fall Provincial Palliative and End-of-Life Care Grand Round session on **October 17, 2023 from 8:00-9:00** for a co-presentation by **Drs Lyle Galloway and Hayden Rubensohn** on the application of **psychedelics** in PEOLC. More information will be shared in the next education bulletin!

Calgary Zone Grief Support Program How to Care What to Say: Conversations about Death, Dying, and Grief

The Calgary Grief Support program is excited to be offering their “*How to Care What to Say*” workshop online via zoom provincially. This workshop has been offered in-person in the Calgary area since 2005, and because of the generous support of the Government of Alberta, they are now able to expand this offering provincially both through online zoom sessions and our new “Train the Trainer” model.

The purpose of the workshop is to provide education to healthcare providers about the experience of bereavement for families and individuals, and how to better deal with those emotionally charged moments after a death has occurred. Current research indicates that healthcare providers continue to have issues discussing death and bereavement with clients and patients. Three main barriers have been identified which include: a fear that they lack the capacity to adequately discuss death and dying, an erroneous belief that individuals do not want to talk about the loss they have experienced, and fear that they will not be able to respond to grief reactions well (Fan & Lin, 2022). This workshop offering is designed to enhance the comfort and skill of healthcare providers to provide compassionate and caring bereavement support. AHS staff can register for this workshop, by visiting MyLearningLink and searching “grief”.

The program is also thrilled to announce that they are expanding in-person offerings of this workshop provincially by offering training to facilitators outside of the Calgary zone to deliver the workshop in-person in their local community. They will begin their “Train the Trainer” program in fall 2023. If you are interested in participating in or learning more about the program, please email becky.vantassel@albertahealthservices.ca for more information.

Provincial Education Online Opportunities! Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative Care (LEAP)



Funded by:



The Palliative and End-of-Life Care (PEOLC) portfolios and the Provincial PEOLC team within AHS are excited to partner with Pallium Canada to deliver LEAP training to health care providers across the province until March 31, 2024.

The following will benefit from this LEAP PEOLC education **at no cost** to the learners:

- AHS Continuing Care Programs: Home Care, Palliative Home Care, Palliative Pediatric Acute / Home Care / Hospice and Supportive Living
- Cancer Care Alberta (Oncology Health Care Professionals)
- Health Care Providers working with patients who have Heart Failure and Lung Disease
- AHS Continuing Care Contracted Providers: Covenant Health, Hospices, Contracted Agencies (Home Care), Long Term Care, Supportive and Facility Living
- AHS Partners in Palliative Care: EMS, Community and Front-line Paramedics, Allied Health (Pharmacists, Social Workers, Physiotherapists, Spiritual Care, Acute Care & Emergency Staff and Physicians, Outpatient specialty clinics, Indigenous Programs and Partners, Community programs serving marginalized and homeless populations, Primary Care Networks (PCNs), etc.
- AHS and Continuing Care Contract Provider Health Care Aids and / or Personal Support Workers

Pallium's award-winning LEAP courses are considered the gold standard for PEOLC education for health care organizations and professionals in Canada. LEAP courses provide health care professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to help provide palliative care to patients and families facing life-limiting illnesses.

Funded by an Alberta Health Grant the following **Online Pallium's courses** are being offered provincially **at no cost** to learners:

LEAP Core	LEAP Indigenous Cultural Safety Module (later in 2023)	LEAP Paramedic
LEAP Heart	LEAP Long Term Care	LEAP Pediatric (Available in September 2023)
LEAP Home Care	LEAP Lung	LEAP Personal Support Worker
LEAP Hospital	LEAP Oncology (Available in August 2023)	

For more information about the eligibility to participate in this opportunity, please contact your AHS Zone Coordinator as listed below and provide them with where you are located and which course you would like to enroll in.

Please note that seats are limited in each session.

Zone	Email Contact
Calgary	palliative.education@ahs.ca
Central	CentralZoneLEAPRegistration@albertahealthservices.ca
Edmonton	EZPCP@albertahealthservices.ca
North	NorthZoneLEAPRegistration@albertahealthservices.ca
South	SZSHSupportReporting@ahs.ca

If you are interested in the LEAP Oncology course (Available in August), please contact LEAP.Oncology@ahs.ca

If you require additional information, please email palliative.care@ahs.ca

Covenant Health's Palliative Institute

Thanks to all in PEOLC for your collaboration in Palliative Institute work.

The Palliative Institute has three new resources:

- The [Plan Ahead Toolkit](#) is designed to help community organizations create impactful initiatives for the public on health and personal, financial and estate planning. It covers topics like advance care planning, enduring power of attorney, wills and more. It also includes practical tips for facilitators, an advance care planning quiz, a checklist, and an evaluation survey.
- [Understanding Palliative Care](#) is an interactive multimedia learning module featuring video clips of three Albertans who have benefitted from palliative care, in which they share their experience and [what they think everyone should know](#). We invite you to use this module with anyone who might benefit from a better understanding of palliative care.
- [My Wishes Alberta](#) aims to help Albertans identify what matters most to them in their life, health and personal care. This fillable workbook guides the “think” step of advance care planning, prompts conversations with health care providers and loved ones, and leads to additional Alberta ACP resources. It is based on Canadian Virtual Hospice’s *Coming Full Circle* and developed in collaboration with Canadian Virtual Hospice and a national Circle of Elders Knowledge Carriers.

Thank you to the palliative care experts and public partners who contributed to the development of these resources by serving as [working group members](#). The Palliative Institute appreciates your time and expertise!

The Palliative Care Competency and Education grant team is developing education resources for Alberta health care providers. They are in the early stages of engagement with clinicians to support this work.

The Palliative Institute will host the 34th Palliative Care Education and Research Conference on October 23. This **virtual** event features plenary speakers, Drs. Hsien Seow and Linda Watson. Details are on the [conference website](#).

Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA)

CHPCA invites you to attend the CHPCA Conference on October 12-14 in Ottawa, Ontario! Join hundreds of hospice palliative care professionals, health care workers, academics, advocates, volunteers, and students from across the country to learn, share, and connect.

We are coming together to delve into new paradigms in palliative care, to explore this year’s Conference theme: *A Palliative Revolution*. If we are bold enough, loud enough, and beholden only to compassion and care, can we give birth to a palliative revolution?

Plenary Speakers:

- Dr. Harvey Max Chochinov
- Drs. Hsien Seow and Sammy Winemaker, co-hosts of The Waiting Room Revolution podcast
- Dr. Kathryn Mannix

Discounts are available for CHPCA and provincial association members, groups, volunteers, and students.

Register and find out more about the program at www.chpca.ca/conference.



CHPCA CONFERENCE
OCT. 12-14, 2023 | OTTAWA, ON



Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) Continued

New Project Improves Access to Advance Care Planning for Persons with Disabilities

The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) is excited to announce a new project to make Advance Care Planning (ACP) resources more universally accessible.

The Ministry of Health announced \$1.4 million in funding for the two-year project during National AccessAbility Week. The project, *Making ACP More Accessible for Canadian with Disabilities*, will identify accessibility gaps and information needs for persons with disabilities, their caregivers and the organizations that support them. It also aims to develop and disseminate accessible ACP tools and resources aimed at addressing barriers faced by disability communities and increase their awareness of ACP. For more information, read the [news release](#).



Pain and Mood Toolkit Feature Impacts of Prescribing Cascades on Pain and Mood in Older Adults Clinical Innovation and Practice Supports, Provincial Seniors Health and Continuing Care



A [prescribing cascade](#) is when an adverse drug effect is misinterpreted as a new medical condition, and a new drug is prescribed. Medication side effects are treated with new medications, as described by Dusty in [How Much is Too Much?](#)

An example of a prescribing cascade is when a blood pressure medication has a side-effect of edema, resulting in a new diagnosis of heart failure, and a diuretic.

- Swollen limbs feel tight and heavy and are at risk for painful wounds.
- Treating this edema with a diuretic can worsen dehydration and constipation, and contribute to confusion, urinary tract infections and delirium.
- Lower blood pressure can contribute to falls, painful injuries and hesitance to walk independently. Loss of mobility increases risk of depression.

Any intervention must be re-assessed to determine:

Is it indicated? Treatments that may no longer be therapeutic are described in [Choosing Wisely in Long Term Care](#) and [AHS Deprescribing Resource Guide](#). [Medicine check-ups for older adults](#) supports shared decision-making conversations.

Is it safe? What is the impact on falls and cognition? E.g., Check blood pressure sitting, standing, and after meals, to identify postural/post-prandial hypotension.

Is it effective? Do your assessments show improvements in pain and/or mood?

Is the person able (and willing) to take the medications? Do they have difficulty swallowing, or attempt to decline medications?

Looking for more resources? Check out:

- [Deprescribing in LTC Framework](#)
- [Resources](#) to share with patients, families, and healthcare professionals

For more information, visit ahs.ca/painmoodtool

Rotary Flames House

On May 25th 2023, the families of the Children's Hospice and Palliative Care Service (Rotary Flames House) were invited to an in-person Carnival. This event was exciting for many reasons, not the least of which was that it gave families and staff a chance to come together, something that has been sorely missed over the past two plus years. Their wonderful team of Child Life and Recreational Therapists, along with an enthusiastic group of volunteers planned and manned a series of stations, all with the focus on supporting these remarkable children and their families. There was face painting (imagine the work to make that "covid proof!"), a bowling pitch (which quickly became a soccer field), a scavenger hunt (complete with teddy bear prizes), snacks (a given!) and so much more. Over 50 people took part in the afternoon event that ran from 4 – 6 pm.

The feedback from the families was wonderful. "It was so great to see my son so interested in decorating my daughter's wheelchair. I am going to help him with that again at Halloween". Another parent stated, "We don't often get to go out with Z, but this is so fantastic." Another mom said "It is so great to come to a place where everyone knows E". All these comments speak to the power of connection and belonging.

This was a kick off event to our summer programming, which will be offered to both our inpatient and outpatient families. They will hope for sunny skies and excited people.



Contacts

General questions or comments email: palliative.care@ahs.ca



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