Comprehensive Palliative Care Skills for Medical Students

This Learning Pathway contains comprehensive clinical skills training to help medical students understand the needs of patients with serious illness and how palliative care can help. Topics include an introduction to the principles and practices of palliative care, communication techniques for effective conversations with patients and caregivers, and pain and symptom management. This Pathway contains approximately 6.5 hours of learning activities.

Understanding Palliative Care

Introduction to Palliative Care

An introduction to palliative care, how it is delivered, its impact on quality of life, and the growing population of patients who need it.

Communicating Effectively During Serious Illness

Discussing Serious News

Learn best practices for having patient-centered conversations about a serious illness diagnosis.

Discussing Prognosis With Patients and Caregivers

Learn how to effectively discuss prognosis with patients and their caregivers.

Clarifying Patient Goals of Care

Learn best practices for building trust, eliciting patient values, and having patient-centered conversations about goals of care.

Goals of Care Conversation: Role Play

In this video, Kacey Boyle, RN, MSPC, leads us through an example of a goals of care conversation between a clinician and a patient.

Leading a Patient and Caregiver Meeting

Learn to effectively lead meetings that help patients and caregivers become aligned around the patient's goals.

Care Planning
Learn techniques to help patients and their caregivers plan for the future, both during the early stages of a serious illness and as a disease progresses.

"I Don't See Color" Means You Don't See Me
Why clinicians must unlearn well-intentioned but ultimately harmful conventions about race and ethnicity—and strategies to move forward.

Managing Pain and Symptoms

Course 1: Pain and its Impact on Our Patients
Learn to define and characterize pain, recognize the prevalence of pain, understand disparities in pain management based on race, ethnicity, and gender.

Course 2: How to Perform a Comprehensive Pain Assessment
Learn the components of a comprehensive pain assessment and its importance in safe and effective pain management.

Course 3: Matching Treatment to Pain Type
Gain an overview of pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic pain treatments, including risks and benefits, and learn how to match the analgesic to pain type.

Course 4: Prescribing an Opioid
Learn how to decide on an appropriate opioid, route of delivery, and dose, and understand how to prescribe for incident and breakthrough pain.

Course 5: Practice Prescribing an Opioid
Practice prescribing initial opioid doses for different pain types and characteristics. Learn to adjust dosing as needed to manage pain effectively.

Course 6: Creating a Pain Treatment Plan and Monitoring Effectiveness
Learn to develop a pain treatment plan with realistic goals and proper documentation, and implement universal precautions to help with the risk of opioid use disorder.

Anxiety
After completing this course, learners will be equipped with evidence-based strategies to identify and treat anxiety in patients living with a serious illness.

Preventing Avoidable Crises

Reducing Risks for Older Adults

This course provides context and best practices for identifying older adults at risk for poor outcomes, including falls, delirium, and caregiving challenges.

A Delirium Whodunit: Understanding the Causes of Delirium

This interactive whodunit game challenges learners to conduct a thorough clinical investigation of a patient with delirium to diagnose the cause(s).

Deprescribing Escape Room: Reducing Medication-Related Harm

This interactive escape room game challenges learners to conduct a thorough assessment of a patient whose multiple medications may be causing adverse effects, and determine which one(s) are candidates for deprescribing.

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