

4.15.1 CONTEXT

Prior learning and experience

Postgraduate terms in Adult Internal Medicine and Surgery, medical school studies in Pharmacology

Concurrent learning and experience

Rural/Remote hospital and generalist posts

Associated areas of study

Adult Internal Medicine, Surgery, Anaesthetics, Psychiatry, Principles of Rural and Remote General Practice

4.15.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The candidate will have:

- Developed the clinical and evaluation skills necessary to ensure the best quality of life for patient and family
- Gained an understanding of the principles of the palliative approach and experience in the physical, psychosocial, cultural, practical, ethical and professional aspects of palliative care.
- Gained an understanding of the importance of and need for teamwork and the role of other health professionals and individuals in providing palliative care.

4.15.3 CONTENT OUTLINE

1. Principles of Palliative Medicine
2. Pain
3. Symptom Control
4. Psychosocial and Spiritual Support
5. Organisational Aspects of Care
 - 6.1 Ethical Responsibilities
 - 6.2 Professional Considerations

4.15 PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

4.15.4 CONTENT

Each of the 6 major topics of this program are expressed through 'General Instructional Objectives'. General Instructional Objectives are essentially broad statements of competencies to be acquired. These are then defined according to 'Required Abilities and Skills'. These abilities and skills are examples of behaviours, which indicate the objective has been achieved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	REQUIRED ABILITIES AND SKILLS
<p>1 Principles of Palliative Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the philosophy of palliative care and the role of the rural/remote doctor in providing palliative care • demonstrate an understanding of the disease process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the aims of palliative medicine • acknowledge that a patient's comfort and dignity is the ultimate priority of care provision • integrate a supportive component into all aspects of providing palliative care • know the natural history, markers of progression and range of treatments available at each stage of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - malignant diseases - non-malignant conditions • anticipate likely potential problems caused either by the disease or by treatments • be skilled in the diagnosis and management of common recurrent conditions
<p>2 Pain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a comprehensive pain assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the definitions, physiology and concept of pain • assess the pain experienced by a patient by gathering information on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - site of pain - quality of pain - exacerbating and relieving factors - its temporal onset - its exact onset - the associated symptoms and signs - interference with activities of daily living - impact on psychological state - response to previous and current analgesic therapies • be familiar with the use of pain charts to measure pain • assess the type/s of pain experienced by a patient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nociceptive - non nociceptive - acute - chronic

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the various modes of pain treatment and their appropriate applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the range of pharmacological treatment options and their use including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - non opioid analgesics - opioids - adjuvants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NSAIDS - antidepressants - local anaesthetic agents - corticosteroids - antispasmodics - anticonvulsants - antiarrhythmics - Anxiolytics • demonstrate an awareness of the pharmacokinetic considerations of drug treatment • understand the range of non-pharmacological treatment options and their use including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - radiotherapy - chemotherapy - nerve blocking procedures - epidural/spinal injections - ventriculostomy - other neurological techniques - transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulators (TENS) - physiotherapy - occupational therapy - complementary medicine/therapy • understand emotional issues involved in pain management • set realistic pain management goals in consultation with patient and family
<p>3 Symptom Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the ability to determine the cause of, and manage gastrointestinal tract problems experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - oesophageal problems - dyspepsia - ascites - nausea and vomiting - constipation - bowel obstruction - diarrhoea - stomas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rectal discharge - squashed stomach syndrome - oral candidiasis - dry mouth - dysphagia - cachexia • demonstrate the ability to determine the cause of, and manage respiratory system problems experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cough - dyspnoea - superior vena cava obstruction - death rattles - choking - tracheostomy - hiccoughs • demonstrate the ability to determine the cause of, and manage genito-urinary system problems experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dysuria - haematuria - urinary tract infection - incontinence - fistulae - uraemia - contraception - decreased urine output - vaginal bleeding and discharge - bladder innervation - urinary frequency and urgency - bladder spasms • demonstrate the ability to determine the cause of, and manage neurological disturbances experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - convulsions - spinal cord compression - twitching - confusion - delerium - hypercalcaemia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain relevant non pharmacological treatment options and their appropriate uses • demonstrate knowledge of relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects - explain relevant non pharmacological treatment options and their appropriate uses • understand relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects - explain relevant non pharmacological treatment options and their appropriate uses • understand relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects - explain relevant non pharmacological

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the ability to manage psychological disturbances experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anxiety/panic attacks - insomnia - depression - suicide risk - terminal restlessness • demonstrate the ability to determine the cause of and manage musculoskeletal system and skin problems experienced by patients including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deep vein thromboses - pathological fractures - wounds and pressure areas - pressure areas - pruritus - dry skin - lymphoedema 	<p style="text-align: center;">treatment options and their appropriate uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects - explain relevant non pharmacological treatment options and their appropriate uses • understand relevant anatomy and physiology • undertake appropriate assessment of symptoms • undertake appropriate examination and investigations • provide appropriate treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand relevant pharmacology ie which drugs are commonly used for the control of symptoms, usual frequency of administration, typical doses and common adverse effects - explain relevant non pharmacological treatment options and their appropriate uses
<p>4 Psychosocial and Spiritual Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise and provide support for the psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients and their family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide accurate and comprehensible information about diagnosis and/or deterioration to patients and carers in a sensitive manner • be skilled in active listening • be aware of the range of and differing psychological reactions to chronic illness, grief and loss experienced by patients and carers and ways to provide support • be aware of the impact of a terminal illness on patients and carers in particular: the loss of independence, role, appearance, sexuality and perceived self worth • help patients and families and friends deal with practical, financial and legal issues where appropriate

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be aware of the importance of seeking appropriate help in responding to the spiritual needs and questions of the patient • be aware of the impact of family dynamics, cultural, social, and religious differences on all aspects of palliative care
<p>5 Organisational Aspects of Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide practical support for the patient and family • understand the duties and responsibilities of the rural/remote doctor after death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be familiar with the range and quality of palliative care resources in the community eg home care, hospital, hospice and how to access this care including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appliances - physiotherapy - community support services eg community nursing, meals on wheels • understand the range of medico-legal and statutory responsibilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - certification of death - cremation regulations - liaison with coroners office - the role of the undertaker
<p>6.1 Ethical Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to provide the highest possible quality of life for the patient and carers through the palliative care process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect the need for maintenance of autonomy by giving the patient and family a central role in determining treatment • respect the right of patients and carers to have his/her beliefs, needs and wishes recognised and respected • understand the issues surrounding requests for euthanasia • demonstrate respect for life and acceptance of death as a natural part of living • weigh up the benefits and burdens of treatment • assess the risks versus the benefits of each clinical decision • evaluate the decisions involved in the allocation and use of resources

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	REQUIRED ABILITIES AND SKILLS
<p>6.2 Professional Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appreciate the particular need and difficulty in maintaining confidentiality in rural/remote communities • collaborate and work effectively with other team members, other health care providers and volunteers to provide optimal patient care • demonstrate an ability to recognise one's own limitations and appropriately determine when to refer • outline strategies for self care and self reliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the importance of establishing protocols which outline confidentiality and integrity requirements to staff • appreciate the skills and contributions of others both medical and non-medical to palliative care • understand the concept of teamwork • demonstrate the ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team, understanding boundaries and professional rivalries • demonstrate an awareness of local issues which impact on the decision to treat or refer • demonstrate awareness of the effects and boundaries of working as a health professional in small communities • develop a peer, professional and personal support network

4.15.5 RESOURCES/READINGS

Ipswich and West Moreton Division of General Practice. (1995) *The Blue Book of Palliative Care: A Handbook for General Practitioners*. Ipswich and West Moreton Division of General Practice.

4.15.6 REFERENCES

The composition of this content area is based on material sourced from the following publications:

1. Ipswich and West Moreton Division of General Practice. (1995) *The Blue Book of Palliative Care: A Handbook for General Practitioners*. Ipswich and West Moreton Division of General Practice.
2. Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland. *Palliative Medicine Curriculum*. Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland.
3. Australian and New Zealand Society for Palliative Medicine. *Undergraduate Curriculum*. <http://www.anzspm.org.au/education/ugc/> (12 January 2000).

4.15.7 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Dr Will Cairns, President, Australian and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine, Townsville, QLD