

Evaluation of the Palliative Approach to Care (PA2Care) training package for social care workers

A 3-part co-designed training package on a palliative approach to care was built using the experiences, expertise and learning needs of workers outside of the healthcare sector in Toronto, Calgary and Victoria who support people who are homeless. We are now undertaking an evaluation to determine the acceptability and efficacy of the training package as it is delivered across Canada in a variety of settings.

Currently, we are inviting sponsor sites to implement the training package with their social care workers who support people who are homeless. Already, sponsor sites in Toronto and Calgary have agreed to pilot the implementation of the training package.

Project Overview

Many people who are homeless have chronic or life limiting conditions. However, because of social stigma, people experiencing homelessness are often unable or unwilling to access health care services, including end-of-life (EOL) services.

Workers who support people who are homeless (“social care workers”) are able to build trusting relationships and therefore have an opportunity to use these relationships to directly improve access to palliative and EOL care. However, generally, they know little about palliative care or EOL services.

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Victoria. We are now undertaking an evaluation to determine the acceptability and efficacy of the training package as it is delivered across Canada in a variety of settings.

What are we doing?

A 3-part training package on a palliative approach to care was co-designed using the experiences, expertise and learning needs of social care workers in Toronto, Calgary and Victoria. Content, delivery, and validation of the PA2Care training package is described in a separate document, “Co-Developing Training Package on a Palliative Approach to Care”.

The resulting PA2Care training package consists of the following parts:

- Part 1: E-Learning (online) module.
- Part 2: Facilitated in-person workshop.
- Part 3: On-the-job guide (website) www.pa2care.ca

The E-Learning module provides social care workers an introduction to topics related to palliative approach to care. Next, they are next invited to a facilitated in-person workshop to discuss topics and learn from other social care workers how to apply the ideas introduced in the E-Learning module. Lastly, social care workers are provided with an on-the-job guide, which is a website with consolidated information from the E-Learning and workshops as a resource.

What are our next steps?

Currently, we are inviting sponsor sites to implement the training package to their social care workers who support people who are homeless. Sponsor sites in Toronto and Calgary have agreed to pilot the implementation of the training package.

Who are our collaborators?

We are partnering with a variety of organizations who have direct contact with homeless people through their frontline social care staff.

How was the research funded?

This research is funded by SE Health through the SE Research Centre.

Researchers

Paul Holyoke, PhD, Director, SE Research Centre
 Courtney Shaw, PhD, Senior Research Associate, SE Research Centre
 Rosemary Georges, MSc, Research Associate, SE Research Centre

Innovative approach

We took a co-development approach to creating the Palliative Approach to Care (PA2Care) training package by working directly with social care workers in Toronto, Calgary and Victoria who work with a homeless persons every day. Since we know that Canada is a diverse country and local context can have a large impact on how people do their work. The training package evaluation will follow the same approach as the development by implementing the PA2Care training package in various locations across Canada to see if the course meets social care workers' expectations as learners and if their knowledge, attitudes, and skill changed before, during, and after going through the PA2Care training package.

What is the impact?

The project is following the Knowledge-as-Action Framework using six different dimensions to ensure we are moving knowledge to action. With the findings from the evaluation, we will update and revise the training package as necessary.

About the Research Centre

The SE Research Centre is funded by SE Health to conduct impact-oriented health services research and evaluation for the benefit of Canadians. We study the needs of people, their caregivers, and health care providers, to develop evidence-based solutions to tough health and social care problems. Our researchers collaborate with a wide variety of community and academic partners across Canada.

In the SE Research Centre there are four fields of research and evaluation: Aging in Society; Dying, Death and Grief; Health and Care Experiences; and Models of Care Delivery.

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