

NSMHPCN COMFORT & CARE CHRONICLES | SEPT 2025

September 2025



Big Brothers Big Sisters Month ♥ Blood Cancer Awareness Month ♥ Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month ♥ Prostate Cancer Awareness Month ♥ World Alzheimer's Month






Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 Canadian Compassionate Companies	1 Labour Day  	2 CAPCE Fall 2025 Begins	3	4	5 International Day of Charity	6
7 National Grandparents' Day	8 EPM Fall 2025 #1 Begins	9 International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day	10 APPS Fall 2025 Begins	11 FHPC Fall 2025 #1 Begins	12	13
14	15	16 CAPCE Fall 2025 Session	17 World Patient Safety Day	18 CSIC Registration Opens Fall 2025	19	20 World Cleanup Day
21 International Day of Peace	22	23	24 ECHO No Right Place to Die	25 APPS Fall 2025 CBL #1	26	27
<div style="text-align: center;">  National Truth and Reconciliation Week </div>						
28 International Day for Universal Access to Information	29 CAPCE Fall 2025 Session	30  National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	<i>"September days have the warmth of summer in their briefer hours, but in their lengthening evenings a prophetic breath of autumn."</i> — Rowland E. Robinson			

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Share the Knowledge

Truth & Reconciliation
Week 2025

September 22-26

Register at
trw-svr.nctr.ca

#TruthandReconciliationWeek



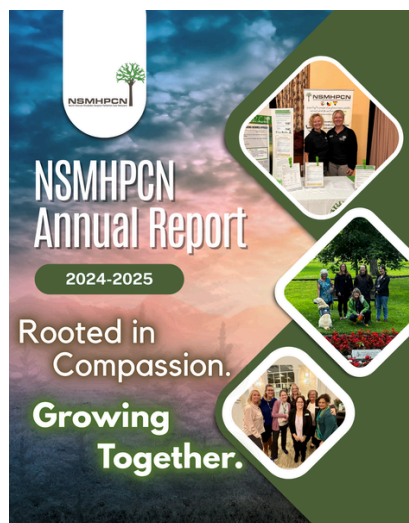
National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA



North Simcoe Muskoka Hospice Palliative Care Network
169 Front St. S., Orillia, ON L3V4S8
nsmhpcn.ca/education | Ph: (705) 325-0505

2024-2025 Annual Report

Explore the 2024–2025 NSMHPCN Annual Report to learn how, together with our dedicated staff, volunteers, and community partners, we've strengthened palliative care across North Simcoe Muskoka.



This year's report highlights our expanded programs, deepened partnerships, and continued commitment to ensuring quality end-of-life care for all. To request a printed copy, please reach out to Amanda at amanda@nsmhpcn.ca

<https://bit.ly/2425REPORT>



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PPSMC = Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultants

*= Hospice Orillia

Updated June 1, 2025



Request a Speaker

If you are seeking education on a specific topic or would like to request a speaker for an upcoming presentation at your organization or service group, we would be happy to assist! Please complete the online request form to provide us with the details. You can easily access the form by scanning the QR Code to the left, or by visiting: bit.ly/Req25

Alternatively, you may contact Lori Gill, Education Specialist, directly via email at lori@nsmhpcn.ca.



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BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

A PODCAST FOCUSED ON HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE



NSMHPCN.CA/BEYOND-THE-STETHOSCOPE/

Air Date: 01-SEPT-25

Being an Ally in Grief

In this episode, host Lori Gill is joined by Louise Brazier, Bereavement Services Coordinator with NSMHPCN, along with Stefanie Collins, Social Worker, and Sidney Grocott, Community Social Worker, both from Hospice Orillia, to discuss how to be an ally in grief and bereavement.



Food and Fluid at End-of-Life

As the body prepares for the end of life, it's natural for appetite and thirst to decrease. Most people stop eating and drinking as their body no longer needs or can process food and fluids. While this can be difficult for families to witness, it's not usually painful or distressing for the person.

Normal Changes

- Less Hunger and Thirst: The body needs less energy.
- Swallowing Becomes Difficult: Muscles weaken.
- Slowed Digestion: Eating may cause discomfort.
- No Suffering: Lack of food or fluid doesn't usually cause pain.

How Families Can Help

- Keep the Mouth Comfortable: Use water-based gels, swabs, or damp cloths.
- Offer Small Sips or Favorite Foods: Only if the person can swallow and wants them.
- Don't Force Food or Fluids: Respect their wishes.
- Talk to the Care Team: Ask about what's best in your loved one's situation.

Things to Know

- Artificial hydration rarely improves comfort or extends life.
- It doesn't relieve dry mouth—mouth care is better.
- In some cases, fluids can worsen symptoms like swelling or nausea.

The focus at this stage should be comfort, dignity, and honouring the person's choices.

read

Food and Fluids when Nearing the End-of-Life



<https://bit.ly/SEPT25R>

watch

Supporting Nutrition and GI Symptoms at End-of-Life



<https://bit.ly/SEPT25W>

listen

End-of-Life Nutrition & Hydration



<https://apple.co/3JljgYc>



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Palliative Care ECHO Project

“No Right Place to Die” A Palliative Approach to Serious Mental Illness

Wednesday, September 24th, 2025 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM | Zoom

Register online: <https://nsmhpcn.ca/echo> or scan the QR Code

Please join our hosts, Julie Leighton-Phelps, RN, BScN, CHPCN, Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultant, North Simcoe Muskoka Hospice Palliative Care Network, and Chantal Byrnes-Leadbetter, RN BScN AWCCP Clinical Educator, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health, as they discuss the importance of applying a Palliative Approach to Serious Mental Illness.



Register online:
[HTTPS://NSMHPCN.CA/ECHO](https://nsmhpcn.ca/echo)

SCAN
ME



Catch up on YouTube

You can now catch up on our past ECHO series through the playlists listed below. Each series can be viewed in its entirety by visiting <https://bit.ly/ECHOreplay> or by scanning the QR Code.



Palliative Care ECHO Project

Georgian Bay Clinical Coach and E3: A Palliative Approach to Care and Those with Intellectual Disabilities

Thursday, January 29th, 2026 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM | Zoom

Register online: <https://nsmhpcn.ca/echo> or scan the QR Code

Join Christine Vallis-Page, MHA, CHE, BCom, RN, CEO, Chef de la Direction, E3 Community Services Inc., and Lisa Wright, RN, BScN, CHPCN(c), SGB OHT Palliative Care Clinical Coach, Hospice Georgian Triangle, for a presentation on their joint program supporting aging individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With a focus on helping people remain in their homes, the project equips staff with tools to provide compassionate, person-centred care. It also addresses the healthcare gaps this population often faces due to complex behavioural and communication needs.



Register online:
[HTTPS://NSMHPCN.CA/ECHO](https://nsmhpcn.ca/echo)

SCAN
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Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care (FHPC)

nsmhpcn.ca/fundamentals-of-hpc/



The Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care program is a highly interactive, introductory course for all healthcare providers, support workers, and volunteers interested in enhancing their knowledge of Hospice Palliative Care.

Course Components:

- Three, 3-hour virtual in-class Case Based Learning sessions
- Self-directed online learning modules x 11
- Two Peer-to-peer exchanges
- One reflective Activity
- All course components are mandatory, including attendance at all virtual in-class learning sessions.

Duration: Approximately 9 weeks

Fee: \$40

Pre-requisites: None

UPCOMING SESSIONS:	Fall 2025 #2	Winter 2026
Start Date:	Oct. 30th, 2025	Jan. 15th, 2026
Registration Deadline:	Oct. 16th, 2025	Jan. 1st, 2026
Time:	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Required Sessions:	Oct. 30th, 2025 Nov. 20th, 2025 Dec. 4th, 2025	Jan. 15th, 2026 Feb. 5th, 2026 Feb. 19th, 2026

Advance Palliative Practice Skills (APPS)

nsmhpcn.ca/apps/



Building on the Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care Program, The Advanced Palliative Practice Skills (APPS) program is an interactive, educational opportunity for Personal Support Workers (PSWs), Health Care Aides and Hospice Volunteers who are graduates of the Core Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care Program.

Course Components (all course components are mandatory, including attendance at all virtual in-class learning sessions):

- Three, 2-hour virtual in-class Case Based Learning sessions
- Self-directed online learning modules x 4
- Two peer-to-peer exchanges
- Ongoing self-reflection with practical application activities

Duration: Approximately 9 weeks

Fee: \$40.00

Pre-requisite: Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care



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Comprehensive Advanced Palliative Care Education (CAPCE)**nsmhpcn.ca/education/capce**

The CAPCE program is uniquely designed for nurses (RPN, RN, NP) to develop their leadership and expertise skills in hospice palliative care across all healthcare sectors.

All course components are mandatory, including attendance at all virtual in-class learning sessions.

Duration: Approximately 5 months
Fee: \$200

Course Components:

- Nine two-hour virtual in-class coaching sessions over 18 weeks
- Self-directed reading and tasks
- Complete and submit three learning goals and attend a 1:1 review of goals with facilitator
- Three Peer-to-Peer exchanges
- Four discussion board postings
- End of module quizzes
- Complete a final assignment and application of knowledge in the final coaching session
- All course components are mandatory, including attendance at all virtual in class learning sessions.

Course Pre-requisites:

- Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care Program
- A minimum of 1-year experience caring for people with a progressive, life-limiting illness
- Ability and interest to function as a Resource Nurse, providing primary level support and advanced level knowledge and skills for care team members in his or her organization
- Ability and interest to coach others, facilitate change and be a role model
- Sensitivity to the impact of attitudes, behaviours, life experiences, values, thoughts and feelings on the well-being and quality of life from the perspective of all partners in care



UPCOMING SESSIONS:	Winter 2026
Start Date:	Jan. 20th, 2026
Registration Deadline:	Jan. 16th, 2026
Time:	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Required Sessions:	
Intro to CAPCE	Jan. 20th, 2026
Module #1	Feb. 3rd, 2026
Module #2	Feb. 17th, 2026
Module #3	Mar. 3rd, 2026
Module #4	Mar. 24th, 2026
Module #5	Apr. 7th, 2026
Module #6	Apr. 21st, 2026
Module #7	May 5th, 2026
Module #8	May 19th, 2026

Death Cafe**nsmhpcn.ca/death-cafe/**

"Breaking bread together fosters connection and is a universal human tradition. Throughout history, important conversations over meals have sparked significant artistic and political movements. Death over Dinner, founded in 2013 as a nonprofit, began after discovering that most Americans want to die at home but many don't due to discomfort talking about death. This initiative offers a safe space to discuss death and end-of-life planning. Now a global movement with over 100,000 events, Death over Dinner invites you to join the conversation.

To book a Death Café session for your organization, visit nsmhpcn.ca/death-cafe



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Essential Pain Management (EPM)

nsmhpcn.ca/education/epm/



Over the course of eight weeks, NSMHPCN Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultants (PPSMCs) will work with EPM learners to provide foundational knowledge and skills in pain assessment, management, and evaluation from a palliative care approach. The focus of the course is on the pharmacological management of pain, which can then be applied to practice.

The focus of this course is on the pharmacological management of pain. Pain assessment, management, and evaluation are foundational skills for nurses working in any practice setting. EPM aims to equip nurses with a foundational knowledge base and skills around pain management, from a palliative care approach, that can be applied to your practice.

EPM

You will have eight weeks to complete the course. To receive an EPM certificate, you must:

- complete the all online modules for Part 1 (EPM) and Part 2 (AMP), and
- attend two 90-minute, mandatory online coaching session.

Part 1 – Essential Pain Management (EPM) Curriculum (Total Hours: 18)

- One Getting Started Module
- Four Foundational Learning Modules
- One EPM Coaching Session (90 minutes) to target learner-specific needs
- Multiple Case-based, Interactive Activities to practice tools and approaches
- Multiple Self-Checks to help test learner understanding

Part 2 – Advanced Approaches to Manage Pain (AMP) Curriculum (Total Hours: 5)

- One AMP Preparation Module
- One AMP Coaching Session (3 hours)

Duration: Approximately 8 weeks

Fee: \$40.00

UPCOMING SESSIONS:	Fall 2025 #2	Winter 2026
Start Date:	Oct. 20th, 2025	Feb. 2nd, 2026
Registration Deadline:	Oct. 6th, 2025	Jan. 19th, 2026
Independent Study:	Oct. 20th, 2025 - Dec. 15th, 2025	Feb. 2nd, 2026 - Mar. 30th, 2026
Coaching Session #1:	Dec. 8th, 2025 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Mar. 23rd, 2026 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
Coaching Session #2:	Dec. 15th, 2025 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Mar. 30th, 2026 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM



Canadian Serious Illness Conversation (CSIC)

nsmhpcn.ca/csic



This program equips health care professionals with the skills to have compassionate and effective conversations with patients, families, and caregivers facing serious illness. By focusing on person-centered values, goals, and wishes, these conversations help reduce confusion and ensure that care decisions align with what matters most to the individual. The training includes a self-learning module and a facilitated session, guiding professionals in the use of the Serious Illness Conversation Guide developed by Ariadne Labs and Pallium Canada.

Course Overview

- Designed to provide health care professionals with the tools and knowledge needed to have compassionate and effective conversations with patients, families, and caregivers who are dealing with a serious illness
- Effective conversations between clinicians and individuals about values, goals and wishes in regards to health care treatment ease confusion and fear while ensuring decisions reflect what is most important to the individual
- Research shows that timely, person-centered serious illness conversations and care planning improve the care experience for both the clinician and the individual and their family/caregivers
- Provides a comprehensive understanding for healthcare professionals of the use and application of the Serious Illness Conversation Guide, developed by Ariadne Labs of Harvard Medical School and hosted through Pallium Canada
- Contains 2 parts: an online self-learning module (approximately 1.5-2 hours) and a 2 hour facilitated session led by certified facilitators to practice and refine the use of the guide through role-playing exercises

Duration: 2-hours

Fee: FREE

UPCOMING SESSIONS:	Fall 2025	Winter 2026
Date:	Nov. 18th, 2025	Feb. 12th, 2026
Time:	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

A Palliative Approach to Care with Dementia

nsmhpcn.ca/apacd/



Taking a palliative approach to care improves the quality of care provided and enhances the overall well-being of the person with dementia and their family and caregivers. However assessing and managing symptoms and ensuring the plan of care for someone living with dementia maintains their dignity and follows their wishes, goals, and values can be difficult when the disease reaches the stage where the person is not able to speak for themselves.

This workshop's learning objectives:

- Describe the prevalence and pathophysiology of the various types of dementia
- Better support the person living with dementia and their family/caregivers through end of life
- Understand some of the commonly used medications in dementia
- Understand specialized tools available for symptom assessment and management in dementia

Education specific to dementia for health care professionals allows for:

- Better symptom management as symptom assessment and management is more complex in the context of cognitive impairment
- Improved communication between family/caregivers and health care professionals by giving health care professionals strategies for facilitating open and honest discussions about condition, prognosis, and end-of-life preferences
- Effective interdisciplinary collaboration to tailor the plan of care to the unique needs of each patient and their family/caregivers living with dementia
- Increased caregiver support by better recognizing their unique needs and providing resources, education, and support during an extended illness journey that can place a significant burden on family caregivers
- Improved coping skills for health care professionals to promote resiliency and minimize the risk of burnout

UPCOMING SESSION:	Winter 2026
Date:	Jan. 28th, 2026
Registration Deadline:	Jan. 14th, 2026
Time:	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM



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Supporting Your Team

through partnerships, innovative programs and knowledge exchange.

NSMHPCN provides compassionate, holistic care for those with life-limiting illness through collaboration, innovation, and education. NSMHPCN offers self-paced modules, live workshops, and specialized programs help professionals and caregivers build skills and knowledge in palliative care.



Specialized Course

Educational opportunities including specialized courses, workshops and conferences. Topics listed to the right.



In Service Education

In-service presentations on topics such as advanced care planning, symptom management and bereavement.



Joint Visit/Case Based Support

Advanced symptom assessment by a Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultant in complex palliative care cases.



FREE On Demand Education

Providing a wide variety of on-demand education opportunities for those who require the option to learn at their own pace. Topics include ACP, Challenging Chats, Congestive Heart Failure, Ethics, Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) plus many more.



Supporting Your Teams Continued Education

Call Education Specialist
Lori Gill, RPN

705-325-0505 ext 221
to find out how NSMHPCN can support you and your team!

Not sure where to begin your education journey?

Recommended Order

Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care (FHPC)

Advance Palliative Practice Skills (APPS)

Comprehensive Advanced Palliative Care Education (CAPCE) Program

In No Particular Order

Canadian Serious Illness Conversation (CSIC)

Death Cafe

Essential Pain Management

A Palliative Approach to Care with Dementia



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FNIMUI RESOURCE COLLECTION

NSMHPCN.CA/FNIMUI-RESOURCES/

Resources include:

- Community Resource Directory
- First Nations Communities Directory
- Illness Specific Resources



GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

NSMHPCN.CA/GRIEF-BEREAVEMENT/

Resources tailored to:

- Children's Grief
- Healthcare Workers
- Patients & Families
- Pregnancy and Infant Loss
- Educational Resources



Resource Library for Patients, Family Members and Caregivers

NSMHPCN.CA/PATIENT-FAMILY-CAREGIVERS/

- Advance Care Planning
- Hospice Directory
- Illness Specific Resources
- Palliative Care Myth Busting
- Supporting Children
- Resources for Following Death



NSMHPCN DIGITAL RESOURCE BINDER

Hospice Palliative Care resources at your finger tips!

NSMHPCN.CA/RESOURCES/VIRTUAL-RESOURCE-PACKAGE

The dedicated team of PPSMC's have carefully curated the NSMHPCN Virtual Resource Binder which includes a wealth of resources for all staff of any discipline providing palliative, or end-of-life care, to residents and families in NSM. This includes links to gold standard assessment tools and client/family handouts, regardless of where you work in NSM (Retirement and Long-Term Care Homes and acute care, and community) you have access to these resources and to the services of the Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultants (PPSMC's) with the NSMHPCN. Resources includes but not limited to:

- A Palliative Approach to Care for LTC
- Advance Care Planning
- Consent and Capacity
- Emergencies in the Home - Conversation Guides
- Food & Fluid at End of Life
- Norms of Practice
- Ontario Palliative Care Competency Framework
- Palliative Care Approach for Primary Care
- Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework
- Patient Dignity Inventory CancerCare
- Power of Attorney
- Preferred Earlier Identification Tools
- Recommended Tools for Assessment
- Service Provider Resources for IDD
- Symptom Assessment and Screening
- What to Expect When Someone Close to You is Dying



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Starts Online
October 8, 2025

Palliative Care eLearning Program

Improve your knowledge
and skills in palliative and
end-of-life care.

Register today at
cpd.utoronto.ca/pcel



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September Wellness Break: A Fresh Start for Fall

September often feels like a new beginning—a chance to reset after summer and settle into a steady rhythm. This month, try building in a short daily pause to breathe, stretch, or step outside for a few minutes. Even the smallest break can lower stress, boost focus, and help you feel more energized as the season changes. Try these mini wellness breaks:

- **Reset with Nature:** As schedules get busier, take 5–10 minutes each day to step outside and notice the shift in the season. A short walk in the cooler air can boost focus, reduce stress, and help you feel more grounded.
- **Back-to-Routine:** September feels like a fresh start. Use a wellness break to check in on your daily rhythm—are you giving yourself enough time to pause, breathe, and recharge between tasks? A mindful pause can make your day flow more smoothly.
- **Cozy Cup Meditation:** As mornings get crisper, turn your tea or coffee break into a wellness ritual. Hold your warm mug, breathe deeply, and focus on the aroma and taste. A mindful moment with your cup can lower stress and refresh your energy.
- **Stretch into Fall:** Cooler weather can make us feel stiff—especially if we’re sitting more. Take a quick wellness break to roll your shoulders, stretch your spine, and loosen your hips. Just a few minutes can improve circulation and mood.



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