

A LEARNING PATH FOR OUT OF HOURS URGENT CARE PRACTITIONERS

Introduction

In 2012/2013 teams of experienced palliative medicine and end of life care professionals came together to develop and pilot blended learning paths incorporating e-ELCA for staff and volunteers involved in providing end of life care to people across a range of settings in Oxfordshire. These became known as the Oxford Learning Paths (OLPs). The work has now been adapted to enable others to develop local training utilising the work of the Oxfordshire teams as a foundation.

Aims and purpose

The aim of the path is to provide emergency care nurses, emergency care practitioners, Hospital/Hospice at Home nurses and other out of hours urgent care staff with a greater understanding and confidence when caring for individuals during the last days of life. This is usually expressed as the last 48 hours of life but can obviously vary. Many such patients may wish to die at home and do not wish for admission to hospital or a hospice, others may be discharged via 'fast track' processes being able to return to their usual place of residence to die.

The purpose is to provide a resource to deliver the following outcomes to improve the care experience for individuals and their families and enable out of hours urgent care staff to:

- ❖ have the confidence to deal with the needs of the individual and their families during the last days of life and support a patient's preferences for care.
- ❖ understand and improve communication skills around end of life care

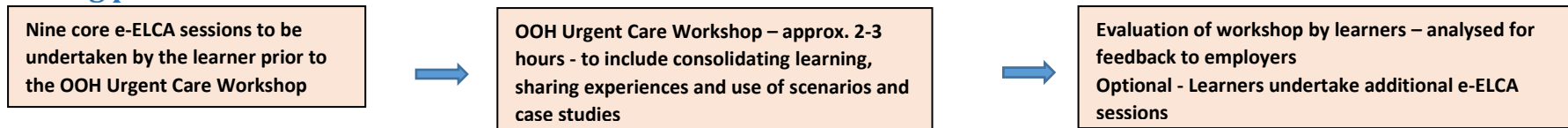
The learning path

This path has the flexibility to slot into a general education programme for urgent care staff and comprises of nine core e-ELCA sessions to be undertaken by the learner prior to attending a suggested workshop session that lasts around two to three hours. Further e-ELCA sessions are also suggested, but are options to undertake either before or after the workshop depending on the learner's interests and development needs.

Urgent care staff are not just dealing with individuals who are dying and much of the content for the end of life care sessions can be considered as part of a core skills set, even if they do have an end of life care slant. This can make it an attractive learning resource to many organisations as it can be included within other general education programmes. It does require input from end of life care services specialists to develop and deliver the workshop session due to the content and interpretation, and be available to answer questions and issues that arise.

Facilitators may find the leaflet 'Five Ways to Motivate and Engage Learners' useful: <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Five-ways-to-motivate.pdf>

Learning path flow



Recommended core and optional e-ELCA sessions and suggested workshop content

Click on the session title below to log in and access it on the e-LfH Hub.

The following table lists the recommended core e-ELCA sessions to be undertaken prior to attending the workshop:

Session
01_01 Introduction to principles of ACP
02_13 Assessing urgent situations with limited information
02_14 Assessment of dying phase and after death
02_15 First assessment: meeting the patient
03_22 'Am I dying?', 'How long have I got?' – handling challenging questions
03_27 'Why can't I stay here', 'I don't want to stay here' – when preferred place of care cannot be met
03_30 Discussing 'do not attempt CPR' decisions
04_23b Symptom management for the dying adult
05_13 When the dying process is protracted or unexpectedly fast

The following e-ELCA optional sessions could also be considered, but can be undertaken either before or after the workshop:

02_01 Introduction to principles of assessment in end of life care: part 1
02_02 Introduction to principles of assessment in end of life care: part 2
02_03 Assessment of physical symptoms
04_25 Managing agitation and restlessness in the dying phase
04_26 Managing distress in the dying phase

Suggested workshop content:

1. Introductory session – check what is required from the workshop and perhaps undertake a loss activity exercise – recognising loss in the palliative care journey and how a call out may be a 'final straw' in the individual's ability to cope	5. Principles of good communication – covering setting the scene, body language, touch, listening skills, questioning skills - perhaps introduce an exercise and/or draw on shared experiences with the group
2. Definitions of end of life care, palliative and terminal care	6. How to handle difficult conversations and questions in end of life care
3. Assessment - understanding emergencies and urgent care in end of life care and look at assessment models available e.g. an assessment ladder	7. What helps communication – roundup session
4. The importance of good communication in the assessment and care planning process with the individual, their family and other healthcare professionals involved in their care – use scenarios and case studies for discussion if possible	8. Evaluation, summary and close