

## NSN830 Palliation in Dementia Care

### Synopsis

#### What does this course cover?

This course has been designed to build the contemporary knowledge and skills of health professionals involved in the care of people with severe dementia and their families. In particular, the content of this course focuses on the highly specialised care needs of people with severe dementia and their families and uses innovative learning activities to enhance your evidence-based knowledge and clinical skills in this area.

The content and learning activities for this course have been divided into four modules:

**Module 1:** Contextualising dementia

**Module 2:** The trajectory of severe dementia

**Module 3:** Promoting the physical care and quality of life for the person with severe dementia

**Module 4:** Promoting a positive culture of care

Key topics addressed in each module are summarised below:

<p><b>Module 1: Contextualising dementia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of dementia and causative pathophysiology.</li> <li>• Differences between early and late onset dementia.</li> <li>• Complexity of trajectories towards death for different types of dementia.</li> <li>• Differences between a palliative approach and terminal care.</li> <li>• Signs and symptoms of severe dementia.</li> <li>• The practice and philosophy of palliative care in dementia.</li> <li>• Issues that may arise for the person with dementia, their family and staff, when the person with dementia dies because of other pathologies and/or in an acute care environment.</li> <li>• Barriers and driving forces for a palliative approach in severe dementia.</li> <li>• Use of standards for providing a palliative approach to people with “end stage” dementia.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Module 2: The trajectory of severe dementia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stages of the most common forms of dementia (from diagnosis to death).</li> <li>• Physical signals of impending death for the person with severe dementia.</li> <li>• Evidence supporting the relationship between the use of advance health directives and care planning during the terminal stages of the disease.</li> <li>• Provision of spiritual comfort to individuals with severe dementia and their family.</li> <li>• The importance of culture to those requiring a palliative approach for dementia (particularly Indigenous Australians).</li> <li>• Addressing the needs of a person with “end stage” dementia and their family when they identify with a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module 3: Promoting the physical care and quality of life of the person with severe dementia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence-based research in the management of physical conditions associated with severe dementia.</li> <li>• Use of artificial nutrition and hydration in severe dementia.</li> <li>• How to avoid the use of restraint (physical and pharmacological) for the person with severe dementia.</li> <li>• Strategies to reduce apprehension and fear for the person with severe dementia.</li> <li>• Strategies to promote the personhood and dignity of a person with severe dementia.</li> <li>• Relationship centred care within a palliative approach.</li> <li>• How the personhood of someone dying from severe dementia can be raised in the awareness of all members of the health care team.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Module 4: Promoting a positive culture of care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case conferencing associated with the care of a person with severe dementia and their family.</li> <li>• “Body shock” with reference to the care of the person dying from severe dementia.</li> <li>• The role of specialised health care practitioners in the provision of palliative care to the person with end stage dementia and their family.</li> </ul>

Successful completion of this course will enable the participant to:

- Differentiate between a palliative approach and terminal care for those with severe dementia.
- Describe the clinical features and common physical care problems associated with severe dementia.
- Describe the role of interdisciplinary team members in caring for individuals with severe dementia.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of strategies to facilitate communication with families about the trajectory of severe dementia.
- Integrate evidence-based practice and ethico-legal principles when conceptualising and analysing problems associated with the care of people with severe dementia.
- Reflect critically on learning with respect to individuals with severe dementia and their families.

### **Who should enrol?**

There are two levels of enrolment for this course:

1. Professional Development Level
2. Postgraduate Level

#### ***Professional Development Level:***

This level of enrolment is open to individuals wishing to undertake professional development in the area of dementia care. Enrolment at this level does not require the individual to be eligible for postgraduate study.

#### ***Postgraduate Level:***

This level of enrolment is open to individuals with a formally-recognised undergraduate qualification in a health-related discipline.

For any questions related to your eligibility to enrol in this course, please contact either:

Tracey Dutton (Course Tutor) on: +61 7 3138 5943, t.dutton@qut.edu.au

Professor Helen Edwards (Course Co-ordinator) on: + 61 7 3138 3844, h.edwards@qut.edu.au

### **What are the differences between the “Professional Development Level” and “Postgraduate Level” of enrolment for this course?**

The content of modules and related learning activities for the course are identical across the two levels of enrolment. However, there are different assessment items and associated marking criteria for the two levels of enrolment.

Please note that to be eligible for credit towards postgraduate units in the School of Nursing & Midwifery at QUT, Registered Nurses must enrol in the postgraduate level of the course. (Refer to "Recognition of this course" below).

### **How is the course delivered?**

This course is conducted in external mode. A course outline and study guide in CD-ROM format will be posted to participants. This CD-ROM will be linked to a QUT Blackboard site for “Palliation in Dementia Care”. Participants will be provided with detailed instructions on how to access this online site. Set readings for each module will be available from the Course Materials Database (CMD) within the Blackboard site. If required, assistance in learning how to access the Blackboard site and Course Materials Database will be provided to participants by the course tutor.

There is no requirement for participants to visit the University over the duration of the course.

### **How is the course assessed?**

There are three assignments to be completed and submitted as part of this course:

#### ***Professional Development Level of Enrolment:***

**Assignment 1:** Detailed summary of a research article based on a key theme within one of the modules (Word length = approx. 700 words, Weighting = 30%)

**Assignment 2:** Prepare a case study illustrating a palliative approach for a person with dementia (Word length = maximum 2,000 words, Weighting = 50%)

**Assignment 3:** Write four entries in a “reflective log” tracking your learning over the four modules (Word length = approx. 150 words per entry, Weighting = 20%)

#### ***Postgraduate Level of Enrolment:***

**Assignment 1:** Critical analysis of a research article based on a key theme within one of the modules (Word length = approx. 700 words, Weighting = 30%)

**Assignment 2:** Develop and prepare a workplace resource to support a palliative approach for people with dementia (Word length = maximum 2,000 words, Weighting = 50%)

**Assignment 3:** Write four entries in a “reflective log” tracking your learning over the four modules (Word length = approx. 150 words per entry, Weighting = 20%)

Participants must submit all assessment items to receive a grade for this course.

### **Recognition of this course**

Those who successfully complete the four modules and related assessment items will receive a QUT endorsed Certificate of Completion. For registered nurses only, this course will carry 10 credit points towards a postgraduate unit offered by the QUT School of Nursing & Midwifery.

### **What will the course cost?**

Course registration is \$1,020 (AUD including GST). The registration fee includes:

- CD-ROM (containing course outline and study guide)
- Access to the “Palliation in Dementia Care” Blackboard site and Course Materials Database
- Access to the course tutor: (a) via telephone, email, and/or face-to-face meetings by appointment; and (b) for individually-tailored learning support to assist participants in completing the course modules and assessment items.

To assist in understanding course content, participants are expected to access the following textbook: J. Hughes (Ed.) (2006). *Palliative Care in Severe Dementia*. London: Quay Books. This textbook is not included in the course registration fee and course materials provided to participants.

### **Who are the course co-ordinator and tutor?**

Course Co-ordinator: Professor Helen Edwards  
 Head of School—School of Nursing & Midwifery  
 Director (QLD Node)—Eastern Australia Dementia Training & Study Centre  
 Queensland University of Technology

Telephone: +61 7 3138 3844  
Email: h.edwards@qut.edu.au

Tutor: Tracey Dutton  
QLD Project Manager—Eastern Australia Dementia Training & Study Centre  
School of Nursing & Midwifery  
Queensland University of Technology  
Telephone: +61 7 3138 5943  
Email: t.dutton@qut.edu.au

Both the course co-ordinator and tutor strongly encourage participants to keep in contact with them over the duration of the course (via telephone, email, and/or face-to-face meeting by appointment). In particular, you are encouraged to contact the course co-ordinator and/or tutor to seek direction, clarification, and/or for any other matter related to completing the modules and assessment items.

**When is this course offered next?**

This is a 13 week course. It will commence next in the week beginning Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008. Please note that the course runs without a semester break. That is:

Week 1– first week of the course begins Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008

Week 13—final week of the course begins Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008

**What is the final date for enrolment?**

The final date for enrolment is: Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2008.