

Guidance for Medical Students on the Palliative Care Programme

The St Luke's Integrated Palliative Care Service

- Derriford Hospital Palliative Care Team
- Hospice In-patient unit
- Hospital Outpatients (Derriford)
- Pain Clinic (Hospice)
- Community Specialist Palliative Care Team (Brooklands)
- St Luke's crisis team.
- Bereavement Service
- Education and Research
- Volunteers
- Fund Raising

We operate out of three sites: -

1. Level 8, (just outside Brent ward), Derriford Hospital, Plymouth PL6 8DH
Telephone No. 01752 436744 (admin team)
 - St Luke's at Derriford
2. Units 3-5 Brooklands, Budshead Road, Crownhill, Plymouth PL6 5XR
Telephone No. 01752 964250 (Education) 01752 964200 (community team)
 - St Luke's at home
3. St Luke's Hospice, Stamford Road, Turnchapel, Plymouth PL9 9XA
Telephone No. 01752 401172 (Reception)
 - St Luke's at Turnchapel

If you require directions, please contact the medical secretaries at any of the three sites. (Contact information for the medical secretaries is given on the attached sheet.)

Palliative Care Programme

The Palliative Care Pathway consists of 2 weeks, which can occur in either order:

- **Hospice week**
- **Hospital/community week**

1st Monday Morning of the pathway

The first Monday of the 2 pathways will entail an introduction to St Luke's Hospice Plymouth and to palliative care in general.

We are aware that this field can be difficult for some people who have their own personal experience of palliative care, we would not necessarily know individual circumstances but would encourage you to inform us if you feel that this is the case so that we can support you as needed.

Last Thursday of the pathway

The aim is to meet with you pathway provider after the feedback, this may be at the hospice or hospital. The aim is to provide some reflection and learning for the fortnight. This is where the professional judgement forms are completed.

Seeing Patients at Derriford and St Luke's Hospice

Palliative Care patients are often very frail and it can sometimes be difficult for us to find patients at the hospice who are well enough for you to see on your own for long assessments. However, we will try to arrange a patient to whom you can return to for a longer discussion of their problems. We would encourage you to prepare 2 patients per week for feedback if the number of patients allow. In the hospital/community week I would encourage one of these possibly to be from the community session.

NB It is advised that you should check with the ward staff (at Derriford and St Luke's) before going to see a patient.

There are sessions allocated for ward work on the timetable in both weeks. **We would like to encourage you to:**

- See patients for your feedback sessions
- Join ward rounds
- Observe doctors clerking in and assessing patients.
- Attend any suitable educational events, which occur here during your time with us.
- In addition, at St Luke's Hospice you can observe a drug round, observe the setting up of a syringe driver, and follow the process of death certification.

Please return patient's notes to the appropriate place (e.g. notes trolley) after use so other members of staff can easily access them.

Seeing Patients in the community

You will have the opportunity to see patients and carers in their own homes. This should be in the company of a member of the St Luke's multidisciplinary team (nurse, doctor, social worker, allied health professional etc.). Any information you collect and record must be treated with strict confidentiality and kept in a secure place. If you wish to visit a patient or carer again, this must be discussed with a member of the medical or nursing team in advance of the repeat visit.

Dress Code

We expect medical students to wear clothing that will ensure that patients feel comfortable and respected. Clothing should be smart but casual, clean and tidy. White coats are not worn at St. Luke's or in the community.

Feedback sessions (see guide to clerking palliative care patients)

NB The time of Thursday Feedback Session must be confirmed on the preceding Wednesday, with each site (St Luke's Hospice and Derriford)

We understand that you will not always be able to take a full standard history or clinical examination from the patient, especially if the patient is at home or in clinic. It is always possible to make a general "end of the bed" assessment of the patients' physical conditions (for example any jaundice, anaemia, and visible shortness of breath) and acknowledgement of this in your presentation will be sought. We expect you to read the patient's notes carefully if able to before you see the patient so you are fully aware of any areas of sensitivity.

In the feedback session we are interested in your holistic assessment of the patient starting with the physical symptoms, but you should also try to look at psychological, social and spiritual issues.

Writing a patient problem list is a very helpful way of assessing our patients. Please feel free to talk through a patient's problems with the nurse or doctor after seeing the patient. Gathering basic information about the results of recent investigations, the extent of disease and the sequence of events prior to admission or referral to the Community team is recommended. We are aware that it is not always possible to get detailed information from the patients themselves so if the opportunity arises, talk to the relatives.

Patients to clerk for feedback sessions may be obtained by: -

- Consulting the nurses on the inpatient unit at St Luke's Hospice.
- Consulting the Specialist Palliative Care team at Derriford Hospital
- Consulting the Specialist Palliative Care Community Team member

When giving your case presentation in the Feedback Session please note:-

1. The summarising statement needs to state the reason for referral to palliative care.
2. The differential diagnosis should address the causes of the presenting symptoms on this admission or on referral to the Palliative Care Service.
3. Patient centred issues are very important in Palliative Care. Try to understand social issues, future care, and discharge issues if appropriate.
4. You should be aware of the medication being taken by the patient and why they are on the medication.
5. Observation of the patient's general condition and functional status are expected. Physical examination is appropriate but may need adapting to minimise patient discomfort.
6. A problem list is helpful in developing a treatment plan.
7. There is often uncertainty when discussing prognosis, patient management and patient understanding. In Palliative Care the situation can change rapidly- these patients are often unstable. Revisit and reassess patient if time allows.

Self directed learning opportunities

Library facilities

- **Derriford Hospital**

The main library is on the 5th floor of the South West Cardiothoracic Centre.

- **St Luke's Hospice**

The volunteer Librarian, Pat Irving is available on Mondays 10.00 – 15.00.

Paula Hine is in charge of educational resources and would be happy to help you access any information you need about palliative care – now based at Brooklands – telephone 01752 964250.

Other opportunities

- Students may be invited to attend other activities in any relevant discipline as opportunities arise.
- Your time at the Hospice may provide you with a unique opportunity to experience the practicalities surrounding a patient's death e.g. certifying a patient's death, filling in a Death Certificate or cremation form. If you would like to take advantage of these opportunities, please let the doctor in charge of the unit know.

Self directed learning opportunities

There are plenty of SDL learning opportunities provided .

- **St Luke's Hospice resource page**

This is a good resource for medical students providing e-learning opportunities and information for the pathways

- **pallied.com**

www.pallied.com is a website that was designed specifically for medical undergraduate students in the UK. It has clinical cases that you can work through as well as links to other useful reference websites.

- **e-LFH**

'E-learning for health' is a resource from NHS England . access is via the information sheet provided.