Background

We all want to ensure that people with life-limiting conditions experience the best possible quality of life. The Palliative Care Needs Assessment Guidance is one way to help health and social care professionals achieve this goal. Accredited by both NMBI and the RCPI, this module serves as a framework that enables staff to build up a holistic picture of individual and his/her family needs and strengths using a palliative care approach.

It is recognised that all health and social care providers who work with individuals who have a life limiting diagnosis provide palliative care throughout the person’s journey from diagnosis to death, including care of the deceased and bereavement support. The guidance document, developed by the National Clinical Programme for Palliative Care, will assist health and social care professionals when providing or co-ordinating current and future care for individuals and their families. By helping individuals and families identify their concerns, care plans can be developed that are tailored to the specific palliative care needs of each individual, with the overall aim of identifying and managing issues quickly to improve outcomes. The palliative care approach outlined in the guidance document aims to promote physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being; all identified as essential elements of a palliative care assessment.

The Palliative Care Needs Assessment Guidance was developed as part of a larger work stream to support palliative care service delivery and will in part meet the requirements of the Palliative Care Competence Framework (available on the programme website, details below).

Practice Development and Workplace Culture Change

Developing or changing practice can be a complex process that sometimes challenges traditionally held values and beliefs about how care should be planned and provided. It requires an approach that involves teams and individuals working together to identify and build on existing knowledge, as well as introducing new knowledge and skills when required in order to embed change within an overall person-centred workplace culture. Due to the influence of workplace culture on practice development and the immediately impact it has on the experience of care by service users the interface between staff and service users, a focus on developing supporting cultures that relate to levels of competence in person-centred care, quality of leadership, care processes, environments and evaluation is vital.
Figure 1 below by Garbett and McCormack (2002) outlines the practice development process used in the approach in order to develop person-centred cultures.

![Figure 1](image_url)

**Palliative Needs Assessment Module**

The Palliative Needs Assessment Module is available to all health and social care professionals providing levels 1 and/or 2 palliative care. The module features a two-day face-to-face workshop with skilled facilitators who offer learners the opportunity to experience a work-based learning approach that they can bring back to their organisation. The facilitation skills and approach used on the workshops builds on a philosophy of person-centredness both in practice and in how staff communicate and work together. This approach supports the development of person-centred cultures that in turn supports human flourishing for both staff and service users.

Participants who undertake the workshops have full access to all documentation developed by the Programme to enable them to plan and facilitate this module in their own organisations with the support of their senior management. The supporting documents include workshop plans for facilitators and participants, action plan templates, evaluation templates, a selection of scenarios, practice development processes, a PowerPoint presentation, poster of domains, and reflective summary templates.

**E-Learning**

The e-learning component of the module is divided into two parts: Lesson 1 and Lesson 2, which provide learners with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the principles.
and levels of palliative care, how to use a palliative care approach and how to facilitate person-centred practice development. Learners will build competence in using open sensitive communication when undertaking an assessment or breaking bad news. They will explore the full meaning of person-centredness and how this can be used to provide care to individuals and their families and within a workplace culture that supports person-centredness. The lessons will also cover how to facilitate workplace learning using practice development principles so that sustainable change and development can take place that involves the whole team. The e-learning lessons can be completed either as part of the overall module or on their own. They will take approximately 1 ½ hours to complete.

The e-learning lessons can be accessed by all who register with HSElAnd whether working in the HSE or not, using the following links: www.hseland.ie and after sign-in or registration click ‘Learning Resources > Learning Programmes> Click ‘Find a Programme ‘Allied Health & Social Care Professionals > Go

PowerPoint Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation is available on the Programme website to enable staff to share information in their organisations on the palliative care needs assessment process either during workshop days or on its own as an education resource.

CPD credits

The programme is accredited by the RCPI and the NMBI and in order to qualify for accreditation participants must attend both workshop days in full and undertake both e-learning lessons and provide a written summary of learning from both lessons.

Poster of Domains

A poster is available for downloading from the Programme website with the four domains outlined as a quick reference for staff in the workplace.

The Programme Website

The Palliative Care Needs Assessment Guidance document along with other information and resources on the work of the National Clinical Programme for Palliative Care (NCPPC) is available on the Programme website: www.hse.ie/palliativecareprogramme or through the Programme office on Clinicalprogrammeadmin@rcpi.ie

For further information on any aspect of this module please contact Lorna Peelo-Kilroe, ONMSD Nursing Lead for the NCPPC on lorna.peelo@hse.ie