
AQUIFER EDUCATOR CONNECTION PODCAST

Episode 15: Addressing a Critical Gap: Standardizing Primary Palliative Care Education with New Cases

Guest: April Zehm, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Hematology and Oncology) at the Medical College of Wisconsin specializing in hospice and palliative medicine and Aquifer Palliative Care Leadership Team Co-Academic Lead.

Host: Lynne Robins, PhD, Professor Emerita, Department of Biomedical Informatics and Medical Education, University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, WA.

Description: Foundational skills in communication, symptom management, transitions of care, and interprofessional collaborations are critical in improving the quality of life of patients with serious illnesses—but most health professions students don't receive standardized education in these key principles of primary palliative care. In this episode, Dr. April Zehm describes the Aquifer Palliative Care Leadership team's creation of a national standardized curriculum and soon-to-be available online palliative care course focused on preparing students to provide high quality patient-centered care. She will also discuss how faculty can integrate course resources into their pre-clinical and clinical teaching.

April's Perspectives on Integrating Palliative Care into Early Health Professions Education:

- To address identified gaps in palliative care education, Aquifer's Palliative Care Leadership team is creating a national standardized curriculum for all health professions students with the goal of providing a generalist level palliative care skillset.
 - The course is intended to educate students who can become palliative care ambassadors - able to explain why palliative care matters and know when to refer patients for palliative care.
 - Stakeholder focus groups and expert input were used to build the curriculum, which will include material that defines palliative care, and instructional resources addressing communication, symptom management, safe opioid use, and the ethics of challenging clinical situations.
 - The learning objectives cover foundational skills in symptom management, serious illness communication, interprofessional work, end-of-life care, health disparities and cultural sensitivity, and psychosocial and spiritual assessment and care.
- The goal of the project is to equip and empower faculty with tools to be able to teach learners about palliative care using a case-based format and developmentally appropriate material. These high-quality materials can be integrated into existing courses and curricula.

- Cases and videos can facilitate discussion, practice, and debriefing.
- Frameworks, tools, and roadmaps for discussion can be used to prompt reflection and discussion about how to approach clinical content with a palliative lens.

An Initial set of cases covering a wide range of serious illness, ages, and stages of disease will be available to Aquifer Curricular Partners July 1, 2022. Aquifer will also be looking for schools to participate in a formal pilot program.

Additional Resources:

- [Aquifer Palliative Care Announcement](#)
- [Aquifer Palliative Care Update](#)

Theme Music: “Little Idea” by scottholmesmusic.com