



Palliative Care

A Training Program for Long-term Care



Palliative care seeks to provide relief from the five domains of pain that all persons experience when faced with a debilitating diagnosis. It is not reserved for those who are near death. Palliative care allows each resident to receive the appropriate treatment that brings him/her comfort and the best possible care. Palliative care can be combined with curative care or with less aggressive care. It is not the same as hospice care or end-of-life care which is reserved for those who are clearly dying.

Developed to help long-term care facilities provide excellent palliative care, this program includes the education, implementation and sustainability for a formal Palliative Care Program.

Beginning with the foundation of palliative care and the identification of the five domains of pain, this program emphasizes the importance of comprehensive pain assessment and relief. Guidance in communication, the grief process, and cultural considerations are given to caregivers as they are the critical agents of palliative care. The program also discusses ethics and end of life support for both the resident and family. Lastly, the program contains an outline to overcome barriers and create organizational plans for achieving excellence in palliative care. **See reverse for more information.**



PALLIATIVE CARE TOPICS

The AIG Palliative Care Education Program contains eight sessions that address the critical aspects of palliative care and the role of caregivers:

1. Principles of Palliative Care
2. Assessing and Managing Pain
3. Implementing and Sustaining a Palliative Care Program
4. Communication
5. Comforting the Dying: Faith Traditions and Spiritual Assessments
6. Care at the Time of Death: Ensuring Quality Care
7. Ethical Issues at the End of Life
8. Loss, Grief and Bereavement

COMMON FAITH CONCERNS

Scripture quotes are used throughout the program to help one reflect upon the privilege of being called to serve the aged and infirm as part of Jesus' healing mission. There are many common concerns that all faith traditions face when an elder enters a long-term care setting. These concerns include:

- The importance of healthcare professionals understanding different types of pain and how to manage each type.
- The important role of the healthcare professional as advocate for the resident.
- The importance of culture and faith traditions in palliative care and end-of-life care.
- An interdisciplinary approach to each resident's care and the importance of the team approach to enhance the quality of care each resident receives.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The AIG Palliative Care Education Program is based in part on the Geriatric Curriculum developed by the End of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC). It was modified to embody the mission and values of the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. Additional experts in the field of long-term care contributed to the material as well.

The first edition of the AIG Palliative Care Education Program was developed as the foundation of a pilot project conducted by the Carmelite System and AIG. The pilot program began in late 2012 and concluded in May 2015. Six nursing homes served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm participated in this program.

To begin the pilot, each of these homes surveyed families, staff and residents to determine their level of understanding and practice of palliative care. The homes conducted the training and implemented the assessment protocols over the ensuing months in one area of their homes. Follow-up surveys were conducted to assess the efficacy of the program.

The AIG Palliative Care Education Program will continue to be a work in progress—strengthened as it is disseminated widely and updated to reflect the latest research.

About the Avila Institute of Gerontology

We at the Avila Institute of Gerontology believe that people in all stages of life deserve to be cared for in their entirety— Spirit, Soul and Body. With this philosophy, our expert staff who bring years of academic expertise and compassionate hands-on care, look forward to teaching your staff. Invest in your employees and residents, and experience the difference that AIG will help you make in your facility.

The Avila Institute of Gerontology was incorporated in 1988 initiated by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm as a response to the growing complexity of geriatric health care. As the educational arm of the Congregation, the Institute creates a unique opportunity for individuals to share experiences and knowledge about the care of the aged.

Functioning in accord with the teaching authority of the Church, the educational services of Avila Institute thoroughly reflect the Congregation's commitment to quality and compassionate care in an atmosphere of respect for each human life. The Institute strives to present the most recent information to enhance the field of gerontology.

Learn more at www.avilainstitute.org

**For more information about this program please contact
Sr. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm. at (518) 537-5000.**