

The Education in Palliative Care (EPC) Course Series

# Symptom Assessment and Management in Palliative Care

COURSE SYLLABUS (EPCB00ODM24)

2024

**Course Authors:**

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**Course Format:** eLearning

**Contact Information:** [support@desouzainstitute.com](mailto:support@desouzainstitute.com)

**Registration:** Required

**Eligibility:** Open to all health care professionals

**Prerequisite:** *The Palliative Approach to Care (EPCA)*

**Exclusions:** *Interprofessional Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care - Oncology (iEPEC-O)*

## A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Symptom Assessment and Management in Palliative Care* is the second course in de Souza Institute's comprehensive *Education in Palliative Care* (EPC) course series. The course series is built on the 2017 de Souza online course, *interprofessional Education in Palliative and End of Life Care – Oncology (iEPEC-O<sup>1</sup>)*.

### Course 02 - *Symptom Assessment and Management in Palliative Care*

The *Symptom Assessment and Management in Palliative Care* course builds upon what you have learned in course 01 – the *Palliative Approach to Care*. This second course is divided into **four modules** and one **case-based practice activity** covering the focused assessment and management of four common symptoms experienced by patients in palliative care: pain, delirium, nausea and vomiting, and dyspnea.

Although you can complete the course modules at your own pace, you must complete all 4 modules and the final quiz within **five weeks** of the course start date (this date can be found on the course information page in *My Account*).

#### About the *EPC Course Series*

The EPC course series consists of **three courses** that teach a comprehensive curriculum in palliative and end-of-life care:

- **Course 01** - The Palliative Approach to Care
- **Course 02** - Symptom Assessment and Management in Palliative Care
- **Course 03** - End-of-Life Care, Grief, and Loss

These three courses cover a wide-range of competencies in providing person-centered care for patients living with serious illness such as cancer, end-stage renal disease (ESRD), congestive heart failure (CHF), or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Completing all three courses in the series will earn you the ***de Souza Certificate in Palliative and End-of-Life Care***.

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<sup>1</sup> This curriculum has been adapted and updated from the EPEC™–O Curriculum, which was developed by the U.S. National Cancer Institute in collaboration with the American Society for Clinical Oncology and the EPEC™ Project team and tailored to the Canadian context by EPEC-O Canada:

Emanuel, L.L., Ferris, F.D., von Gunten, C.F. and Von Roenn, J. (2005). *Education in Palliative and End of Life Care – Oncology*. The EPEC Project, Chicago. ISBN #0971418063.

Daeninck, P., Hanvey, L., Hauser, J., Librach, L., Preodor, M., Simpson, J. (2010). *Education in Palliative and End of Life Care - Oncology- Canada*. Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.

## B. de Souza DESIGNATION CREDITS

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**Domain of Practice** Therapeutic and Supportive Relationships

**Learning Hours** 9 hours

**de Souza Credit** 0.25 credit

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THE DE SOUZA

### Certificate in Palliative and End-of-life Care

After completing this course, you may choose to complete the remaining course in the EPC course series, ***End-of-Life Care, Loss, and Grief***, to earn the *de Souza Certificate in Palliative and End-of-Life Care*. For more information about the certificate visit:

<https://www.desouzainstitute.com/epc>

## C. COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe the principles of pain management using the WHO analgesic ladder.
- Perform dosing calculations for switching the route of opioid administration, rotating opioids, and breakthrough opioid doses.
- Identify the pathophysiological causes of pain, delirium, nausea and vomiting, and dyspnea in patients with serious illness.
- Select appropriate screening and assessment tools and strategies for assessing the cause and severity of pain, delirium, nausea and vomiting, and dyspnea.
- Identify appropriate pharmacological management strategies for the management of pain, delirium, nausea and vomiting, and dyspnea, and anticipate the adverse effects of these medications.
- Identify non-pharmacological strategies for the management of these symptoms.
- Explain the rationale use of antiemetics based on the symptom's underlying etiology and pathophysiology.
- Explain the complexities of managing pain and other symptoms in a patient with renal disease and identify opioids and other medications that should be avoided in this patient population.
- Teach family members how to care for a loved one experiencing these four symptoms.

## D. MODE OF LEARNING: eLearning

The eLearning environment fosters a self-directed approach. You can progress through the modules and exercises at a convenient time, at home or work. The course timetable, in **Section G** of the course syllabus, outlines our suggested weekly expectations for participants.

**eLearning Modules:** Modules were developed by the de Souza education team to reflect the latest knowledge in palliative care. The content is up-to-date and includes interactive application exercises and links to the latest clinical guidelines.

## E. MODES OF EVALUATION

As part of the evaluation process, you are required to complete the following:

- **A Baseline Participant Survey:** This survey assesses your knowledge, attitude, and confidence before you begin the eLearning modules for the course.
- **eLearning Modules:** You must complete all **4 modules** by the course end date.
- **Final Quiz:** The final quiz consists of 10 multiple choice questions. You must answer **8/11** questions correctly (**72%**) to pass. You have **two attempts** to achieve a passing grade.
- **Course Evaluations:** At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a “Course Evaluation” and provide your feedback on whether the content met your professional practice needs. These surveys are facilitated electronically through eLearning.

When you have met each of the above requirements, you will receive **9 learning hours and 0.25 de Souza credits** towards obtaining your de Souza designation. An email will be sent to you on how to download your **certificate of completion** via your “My Account”.

## F. EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

To be successful in completing this course, you are encouraged to set aside about 2-3 hours each week to complete each week’s activities. The total learning hours for this course is 9 hours. Your course activity completion will be reflected in your **grade book**. Below is a breakdown of the learning hours for each module:

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Module 01 - Pharmacological Management of Pain | 3 learning hours        |
| Module 02 - Delirium                           | 1.75 learning hours     |
| Module 03 - Nausea and Vomiting                | 1.75 learning hours     |
| Module 04 - Dyspnea                            | 1.75 learning hours     |
| Case-based Practice Activity                   | 0.75 learning hour      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                   | <b>9 learning hours</b> |

## G. SUGGESTED COURSE TIMELINE



### Suggested Weekly eLearning Activities

You do not have to complete the weekly course activities exactly as outlined below. However, you must complete all course requirements within **five weeks** of starting the course.

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Learner Agreement</li> <li>✓ Participant Baseline Survey</li> <li>✓ Page - Introduction to Pain &amp; Symptom Management</li> <li>✓ Module 01 - Pharmacological Management of Pain (3 hours)</li> </ul> |
| Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Module 02 - Delirium (1.75 hours)</li> </ul>  |
| Week 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Module 03 – Nausea &amp; Vomiting (1.75 hours)</li> </ul>   |
| Week 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Module 04 – Dyspnea (1.75 hours)</li> <li>✓ Page - Pruritus in End-stage Renal Disease</li> </ul>   |
| Week 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Case-based Practice Activity (0.75 hours)</li> <li>✓ <b>Final Quiz</b></li> <li>✓ Course Evaluation</li> </ul>  |

## H. FACILITATOR AVAILABILITY

This course is **self-directed**. However, a course facilitator is available to:

- Answer your questions related to course content.
- Monitor the registration process.
- Be available to you for questions throughout the course.

You can expect the facilitator to respond to your questions within 48-hours during the week and within 72 hours on the weekend.

**Facilitator Contact:** [support@desouzainstitute.com](mailto:support@desouzainstitute.com)

## I. COURSE AUTHORS BIOGRAPHIES

The EPC course series was written and designed by an interprofessional team:

### **Cathy Kiteley, APN, RN, MScN, CON(C), CHPCN(C)**

Catherine Kiteley is a clinical nurse specialist in the area of oncology and palliative care. She has both her Oncology and Palliative certification from the Canadian Nurses Association and is a long-standing member of CANO.

Over her career, Cathy has engaged extensively in research, professional practice and education. She holds a master's degree in nursing from U of T and has been involved in teaching activities at de Souza Institute and LEAP. Prior to retiring from her full-time role at Trillium Health Partners, she was an active clinician and regularly mentored nursing, inter-professional and medical students in oncology and palliative care. She was part of the development team for several CCO symptom management guides. She taught and evaluated workshops in emotional care, led an innovation in triaging and navigating palliative care referrals at Trillium, and she also facilitates numerous programs at Wellspring cancer wellness centre. Cathy currently works at the Ian Anderson Hospice as the professional practice coordinator.

### **Judy Simpson, RN, BN, MEd, CHPCN(C)**

Judy Simpson's nursing career spans more than forty years and consists of diverse roles, including staff nurse, educator, administrator, mentor, consultant and volunteer — most of which were devoted to the advancement of palliative care nursing in Canada. Since retiring in 2009, she has taken on several key roles in the not-for-profit sector, such as consulting for the Palliative and End-of-life Care-Oncology Canada education program and serving as president for the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Nurses Group.

Judy sees nurses as key leaders who are critical to the development of quality health care for all Canadians, with the Canadian Network of Nursing Specialties playing an active role in shaping health care in the country. With her strong background in the advancement of nursing practice and interprofessional education, developing, leading and evaluating projects and co-authoring standards, competencies and practice guidelines, Judy fully understands the value of life-long learning and ongoing personal and professional development.

Judy's accomplishments include her formative work in establishing the CNA Certification Program's hospice palliative care nursing specialty designation: CHPCN(C).

### **Susan Blacker, MSW, RSW**

Susan Blacker is the Senior Director, Cancer and Palliative Program Planning and Performance at Sinai Health System in Toronto, Ontario. In April 2018, Susan was also appointed the Provincial Clinical Co-Lead position for the Ontario Palliative Care Network. She is also appointed as the Quality Co-Lead and status-only Lecturer, Division of Palliative Care,

Department of Family & Community Medicine, and is an Adjunct Professor at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto.

Susan has been a recognized leader within the field of social work in palliative care for more than 15 years. Her experience includes clinical care, teaching and program development. She has participated in a number of regional and national palliative care projects in both Canada and the United States over the past decade, including being a founding board member of the Social Work in Hospice and Palliative Care Network. Her interests include interprofessional education and development of palliative care programs in the acute care setting.

### **Paul Daeninck, MD, MSc, FRCPC**

Dr. Paul Daeninck is a medical oncologist and palliative medicine consultant with Cancer Care Manitoba and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) Palliative Care Program. He is the Site Coordinator at the St. Boniface Hospital, and Chair of the Symptom Management and Palliative Care Disease Site at Cancer Care Manitoba. He is an Assistant Professor and Leader for the Palliative Care Longitudinal Theme at the Medical School of the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Daeninck has served with several national organizations, including those of the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians and Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. He sits on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Consortium for the Investigation of Cannabinoids (CCIC), and is currently a co-chair of the Royal College Conjoint Advisory Committee on Palliative Medicine.

Dr. Daeninck is the author of several research papers as well as textbook chapters. He serves as a reviewer for palliative medicine journals. He has been active in medical student and resident education and has ongoing research interests in several aspects of palliative medicine, including that of cannabinoid use in patients with cancer.

## **J. VIRTUAL LIBRARY**

de Souza Institute has a virtual library that can be accessed to those registered in this course or any other de Souza Institute continuing education program. This resource enables you to access over 1500 e-Journals, 200 e-books and 8 on-line databases such as CINAHL or Ovid-Medline. You can use the virtual library to access the additional reading materials for your course. The virtual library can be accessed 24 hours a day using your login and password. The direct link is: <https://library.desouzainstitute.com/login>.

## **K. TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

### **eLearning Centre Orientation**

The eLearning Centre Orientation is designed to introduce you to online learning and to help you understand how to navigate through the de Souza Institute eLearning centre and courses. It is strongly recommended that you complete this orientation so that you will be able to successfully navigate de Souza's eLearning environment.

### **de Souza Institute Support**

If you have questions about the content of a course please email de Souza Support.

If you need assistance accessing or navigating the eLearning Centre, please refer to the eLearning Orientation course. If you have questions or have any technical difficulties, please contact [support@desouzainstitute.com](mailto:support@desouzainstitute.com).

## **L. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Click the links below to read de Souza Institute's Academic Honesty and Copyright; and cancellation, incomplete and no show policies.

[Academic Honesty and Copyright Policy](#)

[Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#)

[Request for Accommodation Policy](#)

Course content and resources provided in this course are based on best practice guidelines from provincial and national bodies. Local protocols and policies vary among healthcare organizations; please consult educators within your organization if you have specific questions related to local protocols and policies.