

Supplementary File 1: Email templates

Email template to medical schools

Dear XX

I am a researcher in the Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Department at University College London (UCL). I am undertaking research into prognostication in palliative care, specifically the recognition of the dying phase.

In 2013 an independent review into the Liverpool Care Pathway (More Care, Less Pathway) made a number of recommendations about **teaching and training** in the recognition of the dying phase and how this should be communicated to patients and relatives. Two of the recommendations made by the review panel were that;

NHS England and Health Education England should collaborate to promote: the use of evidence-based prognostic tools, including awareness of their limitations; and Evidence-based education and competency based training, with regular refresher modules, for all professionals working with people approaching the end of their lives, both in the use of prognostic tools and in explanation to patients and relatives or carers of how they are used and the unavoidable uncertainties that accompany an individual's dying.

The General Medical Council should review whether adequate education and training is currently provided at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to ensure competence [in the diagnosis of dying and the communication of uncertainty].

We are currently trying to collate information about whether medical students in the UK currently receive any **specific training** in the skill of **recognising when** terminally ill patients are dying and **how to communicate this** information to patients and relatives. Please note that this is distinct from any other more general training that may be offered in the recognition of potentially reversible deterioration in acutely ill patients (such as in the use of the National Early Warning Score [NEWS]) or more general communication skills (such as “Breaking Bad News” training).

The information that we obtain about curricula from each of the medical schools in the UK will be used as part of our research, which will focus on how to develop and implement specialist training resources in this area. We also plan to publish a short report on the findings of the survey.

[Prior to writing to you we have checked the Association of Palliative Medicine website, where the course content of each medical school is described. From this we saw that [university name] provides [detail on training].

Would it be possible for you to expand upon this slightly so that we can understand what (if anything) is specifically taught about the recognition of dying in the terminally ill and how this should be communicated to patients and their families.]

Or (if not identified on APM)

[Would it be possible for you to complete the questions below, so that we can understand what (if anything) is specifically taught about the recognition of dying in the terminally ill and how this should be communicated to patients and their families]

Question	Place your response here		
1. Do you provide any specific training on the recognition of dying in patients who are terminally ill?	YES	NO	(delete as appropriate)
If you responded YES above please complete the following:			
a. If so, would you be willing to share more details about the content and nature of this training?			
b. At what stage in the curriculum is this covered?			
c. How much time is dedicated to this topic?			
d. Is this mandatory training?			
2. Do you provide any specific training on how to talk about prognoses with patients who are dying and/or their relatives?	YES	NO	(delete as appropriate)
If you responded YES above please complete the following:			
a. If so, would you be willing to share more details about the content and nature of this training?			
b. At what stage in the curriculum is this covered?			
c. How much time is dedicated to this topic?			
d. Is this mandatory training?			

If you would rather discuss this over the phone, then please do not hesitate to call me on the number below. I am typically in the office Monday, Wednesday-Friday.

Many thanks in advance for your help

[signature]

Email template to courses listed on UCAS as either “Adult Nursing” “Social Work” “Physiotherapy” “occupational therapy”

Dear XX

I am a researcher in the Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Department at University College London (UCL). I am undertaking research into prognostication in palliative care, specifically the recognition of the dying phase. I would like to get in touch with the course leader or a lecturer on the [course name] which is offered at [institution name].

We are currently trying to collate information on if there are any specific skills or training undergraduate students in the UK receive in regards to **working with a dying patient**. Specifically, what (if any) training is given on **recognising when a patient is dying** and **how to communicate this** to phase.

The information that we obtain about curricula from each of the undergraduate courses in the UK will be used as part of our research, which will focus on how to develop and implement specialist training resources in this area. We also plan to publish a short report on the findings of the survey.

The table below contains 3 questions that we are looking for responses to:

Question	Place your response here
1. Do you do any teaching about working with terminally ill people in the last days of life?	YES NO (delete as appropriate)
2. Do you provide any specific training on the recognition of dying in patients who are terminally ill?	YES NO (delete as appropriate)
If you responded YES above please complete the following:	
e. If so, could you share more details about the content and nature of this training? (e.g. is it a lecture? Part of coursework? Placement?)	
f. At what stage in the curriculum is this covered?	
g. How much time is dedicated to this topic?	
h. Is this mandatory?	
3. Do you provide any specific training on how to talk about prognoses with patients who are dying and/or their relatives?	YES NO (delete as appropriate)
If you responded YES above please complete the following:	
i. If so, could you share more details about the content and nature of this training? (e.g. is it a lecture? Part of coursework? Placement?)	
j. At what stage in the curriculum is this covered?	
k. How much time is dedicated to this topic?	

I. Is this mandatory training?	
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If you are able to identify an appropriate person for me to talk to, I would greatly appreciate it. If you would rather discuss this over the phone, then please do not hesitate to call me on the number below.

Many thanks in advance for your help

[signature]