P-74 KNOWLEDGE IS POWER? WHY COMMUNITY-CENTRIC LEARNING AND EXPLORATION OF DEATH, DYING AND LOSS COULD HELP TACKLE INEQUALITIES IN DEATH SYSTEMS

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Background The public health call for public engagement around death, dying and loss has led to initiatives around community engagement to encourage greater community involvement in end of life. One part of this is public education and death literacy, the idea that we must generate knowledge, skills and confidence for people about the end of life. While there are many opportunities, this can also create a risk of only sharing knowledge that we know of as institutions, which may reproduce inequality or significant knowledge gaps.

Aims This presentation will outline how at St Christopher’s we are supporting a type of learning experience and opportunity for members of the public that focuses on people with lived experience generating and sharing knowledge, and community members deciding what knowledge and skills they’d like to share and acquire.

Methods We have focused on using Community Development methods and strengths-based approaches to death literacy, including reframing public education into community learning and development opportunities. Our methods focus on peer-peer learning and exchange, and the assumption people have knowledge to share, rather than possess a knowledge deficit. We work in community settings with people with lived experience who become peer learning facilitators and engage in equitable exchanges based on reciprocity rather than hierarchy, to attempt to redress the balance of knowledge about the end of life and inequities of knowledge that exist. This also benefits St Christopher’s as we reflect on greater change and challenge we must enact.

Results To date the learning courses, workshops and initiatives have created an opportunity for hundreds of people to explore death, dying and loss and to develop skills, confidence and capacity. This includes young people, people receiving support from local charity and voluntary sector, for example, people with learning disabilities, and different faith groups.

P-75 THE GRIEFCASE: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN COMMUNITIES TO TALK ABOUT DEATH AND DYING, USING TOOLS DESIGNED TO OPEN DISCUSSION

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Background Globally the phrase ‘death literacy’ is becoming increasingly recognised, defined as ‘knowledge about and understanding of the death system’ (Primary Health Tasmania. Learning about death literacy, with Dr Kerrie Noonan. [internet]). Greater awareness about death and dying has been shown to reduce anxieties and enable a better experience around death. However, we struggle to engage with communities in a meaningful way to be more death literate society (Salynn, Smith, Ahmedzai, et al. Lancet. 2022; 399(10327):837–844). The Griefcase is an initiative inspired by the ‘death-positive movement’ (Koksvik & Richards. Mortality. 2023; 28(3): 349–366). It aims to facilitate thought-provoking conversations about death and dying. This includes both practical and emotional aspects at end-of-life, encouraging decisions to be made sooner rather than later (Marie Curie et al. Creating a death literate society. 2022). We created a ‘toolkit’ which is contained within the ‘Griefcase’, a physical case. Bespoke Griefcases include kinesthetic activities and cue cards to help encourage conversations and learning about end-of-life matters. These sessions are held in physical spaces called ‘Departure Lounges’, using the analogy of travel, connection and change to initiate engagement.


Results 25 people attending. Mode of delivery – face-to-face at hospice. Patients = 3, family member = 2, staff = 10, volunteers = 10. Evaluation forms (12 completed) with initial findings of (i) Increased confidence in conversations around death and dying (ii) Increased confidence in discussing practical issues sooner, (iii) Awareness of choices.


P-76 THE MAKING MEMORIES AND LASTING LEGACIES (MMELL) PROGRAMME: A PERSONALISED AND ART-BASED APPROACH TO MORE MEANINGFUL ADVANCE CARE PLANNING DISCUSSIONS

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Background Knowledgeable and deeply engaging discussions about the end of life are increasingly being valued. The Making Memories and Lasting Legacies (MMELL) programme is a novel approach to enable meaningful and personal Advance Care Planning discussions. It is a bespoke programme, designed to support and facilitate more meaningful Advance Care Planning discussions, through the use of art-based approaches and personalisation.

Aims The MMELL programme aims to support more thoughtful Advance Care Planning conversations, through the use of art-based approaches and personalisation. The programme is designed to enable meaningful discussions that are tailored to the individual’s needs, preferences, and values.

Methods The MMELL programme is a multi-faceted approach. It involves the use of art-based approaches, such as painting, collage, and writing, to facilitate conversations about end of life. These activities encourage individuals to reflect on their personal preferences and values, which can then be used to inform Advance Care Planning decisions.

Results The MMELL programme has been successful in enabling meaningful and personal Advance Care Planning discussions. Participants have reported finding the programme to be useful and engaging, which has helped them to have more thoughtful conversations about their end of life wishes. For example, one participant said, “I was able to express my thoughts and feelings in a way that was both personal and meaningful.”

Conclusions The MMELL programme demonstrates the value of art-based approaches and personalisation in enabling more meaningful Advance Care Planning discussions. It provides a creative and engaging way to support individuals in reflecting on their end of life wishes, which can lead to more informed Advance Care Planning decisions.