

EDITORIAL: CHANGING THE CHANGE AGENTS THROUGH PALLIATIVE CARE EDUCATION FOR PSYCHO-ONCOLOGY PROFESSIONALS*

SHIRLEY OTIS-GREEN, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, OSW-C

City of Hope, Duarte, California

This special issue of *OMEGA* celebrates the institutional change efforts of 28 selected psychologists, social workers, and spiritual care professionals who participated in the *ACE Project*, a transdisciplinary palliative care education program funded through the National Cancer Institute (2006-2012). Participants reflect the three disciplines targeted by this educational grant and report on the institutional change efforts that emerged from their *ACE Project* activities. An article describing the *ACE Project* is followed by articles that address the participants' work to enhance collaborative palliative practice, address the concerns of diverse populations, integrate spiritual and existential care into palliative care, and their efforts to improve the delivery of end-of-life and bereavement support services within their institutions.

The articles that follow are authored by 28 *ACE Project* participants who responded to an invitation to share their work through this special issue. Many of these authors are being published for the first time and each reported that the experience of being a part of the *ACE Project* inspired them to more formally disseminate their work through additional venues.

*Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health under grant number R25CA110454. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE PALLIATIVE PRACTICE

ACE Project participants report on their diverse efforts to improve care through staff education and the development of new programs and services.

- Katherine P. Supiano—*Weaving Interdisciplinary and Discipline-Specific Content into Palliative Care Education: One Successful Model for Teaching End-of-Life Care*
- Donnelle Daly—*Building a Transdisciplinary Approach to Palliative Care in an Acute Care Setting*
- Pamela S. Gerber—*Last Watch: Developing an Inpatient Palliative Volunteer Program for U.S. Veterans in Hospice*
- Jennifer Hydeman—*Improving the Integration of Palliative Care in a Comprehensive Oncology Center: Increasing Primary Care Referrals to Palliative Care*
- Peg McGonigal—*Improving End-of-Life Care for Ventricular Assist Devices (VAD) Patients: Paradox or Protocol?*
- Stacy Terashita-Tan—*Striving for Wholeness and Transdisciplinary Teamwork at a Pacific Basin's Pain and Palliative Care Department*
- Susan Hedlund—*Northwest Cancer Specialists (NCS) CARES: Coordinated, Advocacy, Resources, Education, and Support: A Palliative Care Program in an Outpatient Oncology Practice*
- Suzanne R. Engelman—*Palliative Care and Use of Animal-Assisted Therapy*
- Cindy Tinker—*Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center's & Gilda's Club Nashville: Songs from the Heart*
- Hillel Bodek—*Facilitating the Provision of Quality Spiritual Care in Palliative Care*
- Alison Vandergrift—*Use of Complementary Therapies in Hospice and Palliative Care*
- Dayna Wood—*Home Hospice Care and the Arts: Arts @ the Bedside*
- Sara Moore Kerai—*The Forgotten Educational Needs of the House Staff: Training Internal Medicine Residents to Address End-of-Life Issues*

Spiritual and Existential Care

Participants recognize the importance of increasing attention to the integration of spirituality into palliative care and developed novel strategies to address this within their areas of influence.

- Linda F. Piotrowski—*Advocating and Educating for Spiritual Screening Assessment and Referrals to Chaplains*

- Kelly C. Markham—*Improving Incidence of Referrals for Psychosocial and Spiritual Transdisciplinary Care in a Palliative Care Service: Focus on Brain Death*
- Paul Galchutt—*A Palliative Care Specific Spiritual Assessment: How this Story Evolved*
- Daleasha Hall—*Improving Access and Satisfaction with Spiritual Care in the Hospice Setting*
- Shelley A. Johns—*Translating Dignity Therapy into Practice: Effects and Lessons Learned*
- Sarah W. Nichols—*Examining the Impact of Spiritual Care in Long-Term Care*

End-of-Life and Bereavement Support

Although palliative care is appropriate throughout the continuum of life, it is especially relevant for those facing end of life and bereavement. *ACE Project* participants developed numerous programs to attend to these vulnerable patients and family members.

- Betty Bachman—*The Development of a Sustainable, Community-Supported Children’s Bereavement Camp*
- Jessica Empeño—*The Impact of Additional Support Services on Caregivers of Hospice Patients and Hospice Social Workers*
- Tammi Vacha-Haase—*The “We Care” Program for Long-Term Care: Providing Family Members with Support Following the Death of a Loved One*
- Susan A. Wintermeyer-Pingel—*Improving a Grief and Loss Program: Caring for Patients, Families, and Staff*
- Donnamarie Flanagan-Kaminsky—*Intentional Anticipatory Mourning, Caregiver and Bereavement Support Program for Terminally Ill Veterans, Their Families, & Caregivers in the VA Contract Home Hospice Program*
- Dory Hottensen—*Bereavement: Caring for Families and Friends After a Patient Dies*

Addressing Disparities

An essential element of the *ACE Project* focused upon increasing services to those who are traditionally underserved. Participants report in this section on the unique needs of these vulnerable populations.

- Eric Holmstrom—*Strengthening End-of-Life Care for African-American Patients and Families through Education and Community Outreach*

- Sonia Quinones-Gonzalez—*Bridging the Communication Gap in Hospice and Palliative Care for Hispanics and Latinos*
- Frances R. Nedjat-Haiem—*Psychosocial Concerns among Latinas with Life-Limiting Advanced Cancers*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to Patricia Mullan, PhD, Eunice Yang, MPH, Kelly Greer, BS, and Ken Doka, PhD for their efforts to bring this issue to publication.

Direct reprint requests to:

Shirley Otis-Green, MSW, LCSW, ACSW, OSW-C
Senior Research Specialist
City of Hope
1500 East Duarte Road
Duarte, CA 91010-3000
e-mail: sotis-green@coh.org