

Who's the expert?

Creating public education about death that recognises, mobilises and develops the knowledge that exists within communities.



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End of Life Aid Skills for Everyone (EASE) is new public education course developed by the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care (SPPC). It aims to enable people to be more comfortable and confident supporting family and community members with issues they face relating to caring, dying and grieving. Online and face-to-face versions of the course have been developed. The course and delivery model aim to recognise, mobilise and develop the knowledge that already exists within Scottish communities.



Related publications:

Patterson *et al*, *End of Life Aid Skills for Everyone*, SPPC Conference (2019)

Patterson & Hazelwood, *Developing end of life literacy through public education*. The Oxford Textbook of Public Health Palliative Care (to be published in 2021)

This poster is part of
the SPPC Poster
Parade 2021



Can public education about death have unintended effects?

“because death education programmes are typically not designed to mobilize networks or create social action they may actually promote compliance with the dominant medical approach by reinforcing the primacy of professional knowledge.

As such these traditional models of education rarely recognize, mobilize or develop the existing knowledge within communities.”

Noonan, K., Horsfall, D., Leonard, R., Rosenberg, J.P., (2016). Developing Death Literacy. *Progress in Palliative Care* 24(1):160108221646007

SPPC set out to design a public education course that imparts knowledge and skills while supporting development of social networks and sharing of experiences and avoids presenting professionals as the sole repository of expertise in the area of caring, dying and grieving.

We also wanted to establish a sustainable delivery model that doesn't rely too heavily on busy palliative care specialists, and which brings the course to a diversity of communities.

What did we do?

Specialist input

Course materials were developed, piloted and revised based on feedback. This included handouts, quizzes, interactive exercises, and films to provide specialist professional input. (Film examples below.)



Participant input

The course was structured to encourage discussion and provide opportunities for participants to share experiences and learn from each other.

Facilitator input

Volunteers were recruited to participate in EASE online Course Facilitator sessions run by SPPC in February 2021, and become accredited EASE online Facilitators. Volunteers are not required to have particular clinical or practical experience relating to caring, dying or grieving, but do need facilitation skills.

A detailed course facilitator manual was produced for Volunteer Facilitators to follow. Facilitators deliver courses in pairs and are encouraged not to set themselves up as 'experts', but instead to lead and take part in the group journey.

Is the EASE delivery model working?



The Prince & Princess
of Wales Hospice

“...the combination of film clips, written information, discussion board questions, and live facilitated conversations helped all 11 participants become more confident and comfortable in thinking and talking about dying, death and bereavement, which then helped them feel more confident and comfortable about the prospect of supporting themselves and others in their personal network with issues they may face at the end-of-life.”

Two pairs of newly accredited facilitators from the February cohort went on to deliver local EASE courses in June 2021 (Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice) and August 2021 (North Berwick Compassionate Community).

Initial indications are that the delivery model has the potential to work well. Feedback is being sought from NBCC and PPW to refine and improve the model. Plans are underway to run further EASE facilitator sessions, and in time we hope to recruit a diversity of facilitators from a wide variety of communities.

North Berwick
Compassionate
Community



“The EASE course has provided a unique opportunity for North Berwick Compassionate community volunteers to explore issues around death, dying and grief together as a group. It has helped to ensure that our compassionate neighbour volunteers are prepared and confident to engage in community conversations and offer support.”