

Interprofessional Education in Serious Illness Care Enhancing Collaboration and Patient Outcomes

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WHY THIS MATTERS

Serious illness care requires coordinated, goal-concordant decision-making across disciplines. Yet fragmented communication and unclear team roles can lead to avoidable interventions and poor patient/family experience. Interprofessional Education (IPE) is a scalable strategy to strengthen collaboration, improve care delivery, and support workforce confidence in hospice and palliative settings.

KEY OUTCOMES

- 1. Increased Clinical Confidence**
 - Greater ability to assess hospice eligibility and illness trajectories
 - Improved comfort managing end-of-life symptoms
 - Enhanced preparedness for advance care planning discussions
- 2. Strengthened Serious Illness Communication**
 - Increased use of structured conversation guides
 - Improved active listening and psychological language
 - Greater confidence navigating emotionally complex discussions
- 3. Enhanced Interdisciplinary Team Function**
 - Increased role clarity across disciplines
 - Integration of tools into IDT meetings and onboarding
 - Improved shared decision-making and collaborative care planning
- 4. Expanded Psychosocial, Spiritual & Ethical Competency**
 - Greater recognition of grief stages and existential distress
 - Increased use of spiritual assessment frameworks
 - Application of structured ethical decision-making models
- 5. Heightened Attention to Social Determinants of Health**
 - Improved identification of socioeconomic barriers
 - Increased resource navigation in home-based settings

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

A structured, NCP-aligned interprofessional curriculum can strengthen team communication and clinical confidence supporting more coordinated, goal-concordant serious illness care.

PROGRAM AIMS

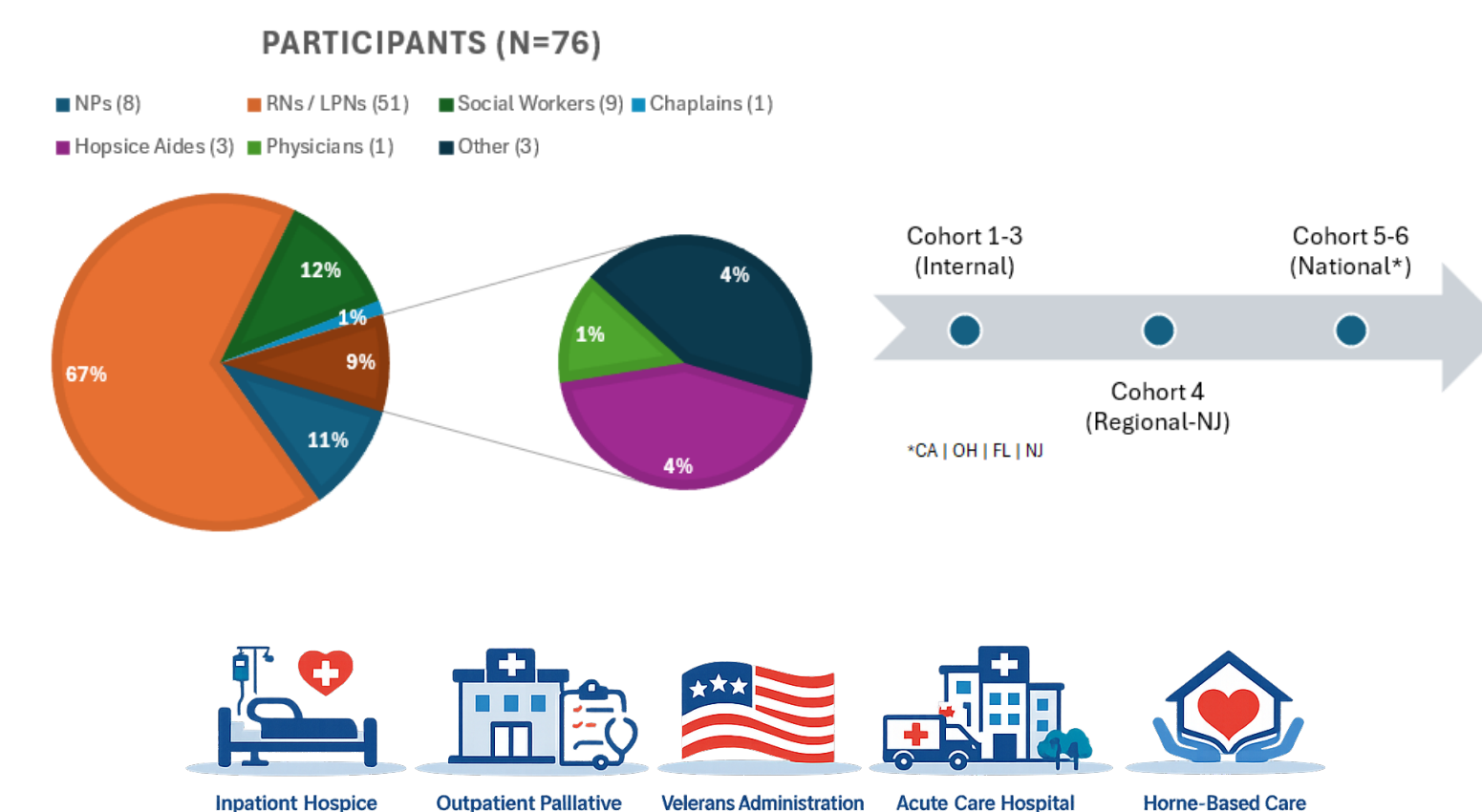
To build interprofessional workforce capacity in serious illness care by delivering a structured curriculum and evaluating its impact on clinician confidence, communication, and team collaboration.

Sub-Aims

- Strengthen role clarity and interdisciplinary teamwork
- Support psychosocial, spiritual, and ethical competency development
- Enhance application of serious illness communication tools in clinical practice

COMPETENCY ACROSS DOMAINS

Qualitative expansion across six cohorts demonstrates interdisciplinary participation and increasing geographic reach, supporting scalability of the IPE model across diverse hospice and palliative care environments.



INTERVENTION DESIGN

A structured Interprofessional Education (IPE) curriculum combining asynchronous learning with live collaborative application.

Curriculum Framework

- Grounded in the 8 domains of the National Consensus Project (NCP) Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care

Content Delivery

- Ten (10) on-demand modules addressing key domains of hospice and palliative care, including: prognostication and illness trajectories, advance care planning, care near end-of-life, grief and bereavement, social determinants of health, and ethical frameworks
- Two (2) live interprofessional sessions, each integrating and reinforcing content from five modules through guided discussion, case-based learning, and team reflection

Instructional Approach

- Didactic content paired with applied learning to promote role clarity, shared decision-making, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

FIGURE – Competency Across Domains

Module	Communication	Emotional Support	Education / Knowledge	Barriers Identified
1. Hospice & Palliative Care	Clarifying hospice vs PC	Spiritual awareness	Levels of care	Public misconceptions
2. Prognostication	Prognosis discussions	Anticipatory grief	PPS / PPI tools	Denial, uncertainty
3. Advanced Illness Patterns	Palliative triggers	Family support	Decline trajectories	Resistance to decline
4. Psychosocial Support	Active listening	Anxiety support	Symptom differentiation	Emotional stigma
5. Grief & Bereavement	Open-ended dialogue	Grief validation	Bereavement risk	Resource limitations
6. SDOH	Social needs inquiry	Socioeconomic empathy	Screening tools	Infrastructure gaps
7. Spiritual Care	Spiritual conversations	Existential distress	Assessment tools	Discomfort / access limits
8. Care Near End of Life	Symptom explanation	Transitional support	Signs of dying	Fear of comfort meds
9. Advance Care Planning	ACP clarification	Rapport building	Capacity vs competency	Cultural resistance
10. Ethics	Ethical frameworks	Managing moral distress	Ethics vs morality	Family conflict / bias

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

A structured, NCP-aligned IPE curriculum strengthened interdisciplinary communication, role-clarity, and clinician-confidence in serious illness care. The modular format supports scalability across settings and can be integrated into onboarding and ongoing team development. Future work will evaluate sustained impact on patient outcomes and workforce retention.



Scan the QR code to learn more or connect with the author.

Want to take part?
Cohort 7 Enrolling
Fall 2026