



Relational Practices and Families in Oncology and Palliative Care

COURSE SYLLABUS

2019

Course Facilitator: Deborah McLeod

Course Offering: de Souza Institute in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology

Course Format: Real-time online seminar & eLearning

Contact Information: Victoria.wolno@desouzainstitute.com

Registration: Required

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed primarily for health care professionals in 5 disciplines (medicine, nursing, psychology, social work and spiritual care) Practitioners from other disciplines may be interested and are welcome.

Emphasis will be on exploring the interprofessional care of families experiencing cancer along the illness trajectory from diagnosis through to bereavement or long term survivorship. Using case based learning in small interprofessional groups; participants will explore a variety of key learning themes relevant to the interprofessional care of families. Themes that will be addressed include: family theory, models of family & couple counseling/ therapy, family assessment, therapeutic conversations and interventions. Case examples will be drawn from the experience of families across the cancer illness trajectory, from diagnosis through to death and dying, bereavement and long term survivorship. Small group work will allow participants to develop a rich understanding of the cancer experience from the perspective of families and to build competency in family assessment, intervention, interprofessional collaboration, and cultural safety. Attention to diversity will be integrated throughout the course.

Pre-requisite: While the course “Interprofessional Psychosocial Oncology: Introduction to Theory and Practice” is not a required pre-requisite, it is recommended; particularly for participants who have limited background in cancer care.

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial Oncology Objectives

This course is designed to offer participants the opportunity to:

1. Explore the illness experience of cancer as both a chronic and life-threatening illness from the perspective of family*.
2. Analyze theoretical and empirical issues in the care of families in psychosocial oncology and palliative care.
3. Explore personal thoughts and feelings in the area of living with and dying from cancer, and the ways in which these can become avenues of personal and professional growth.
4. Develop knowledge and skills to assess families from a psychosocial and spiritual perspective and to develop a collaborative family plan of care that is responsive to family needs, beliefs and priorities.
5. Develop knowledge and skill in evidenced-based family interventions that foster healing, that facilitate coping and are respectful of socio-cultural context of families experiencing psychosocial and spiritual distress.
6. Acknowledge and attend to aspects of diversity and understand how these might influence the family experience of cancer and the health care system.

** The definition of family that informs the course is not limited to traditional understandings. Rather the family is defined by the person experiencing cancer.*

Interprofessional and Transprofessional Collaboration Objectives

1. Analyze interprofessional functions within health care teams when caring for families. Understand the theoretical and philosophical differences as well as areas of commonality across disciplines.
2. Develop theoretical understandings of collaboration and both inter – and transprofessional team work in caring for families, including forming and maintaining interprofessional relationships and teams and conflict management strategies.
3. Understand the roles, responsibilities and professional capabilities of members of other professions.
4. Develop self-awareness, cultural competency and relational practices for effective interprofessional team work, as well as awareness of personal strengths and areas of growth.
5. Analyze practice environments and their influence on team collaboration and provision of family care. “Practice environment” is understood to include community.

C. MODE OF LEARNING

The main mechanisms to facilitate learning in this course will entail eLearning and twelve 1.0 hour weekly real time online conference sessions.

eLearning

The course homepage will be located at the de Souza eLearning center. The eLearning will cover the following activities:

- Baseline and post course evaluation.
- Self-directed learning: There are 6 units in the course, with each unit being completed over a 2 week period. Please follow the content sequence outlined by the course table on page 5. Online resources include background information, content modules, interviews, narratives, plays, and case studies with questions for reflections.
- Discussion boards via the eLearning platform are intended to engage all participants enrolled in the course. This is a form of learning that really depends on the active participation of the group. Online discussions regarding module content, readings or activities will enhance knowledge acquisition. It is encouraged that you share experiences, ideas or resources from clinical practice with others in the course
- Technical support will be provided throughout the course.

Seminar – real time online conferencing

Every week, participants will meet with a faculty facilitator online for 1 1/2 hours. The format is seminar style in real time, with all members of the group contributing to the discussion of assigned readings or other resources. Seminars will provide opportunities to develop and practice interprofessional collaboration skills and to learn from, with, and about other disciplines and roles in psychosocial oncology. Links to the online conference will be provided in the course homepage on eLearning centre.

D. MODES OF EVALUATION

The following are required in order to receive a course completion certificate. Feedback will be provided by the faculty facilitators.

1. Brief reflection papers

Write 3 reflection papers, no more than 500 words (2 pages) in response to suggested topics. Papers are due one week after assignment. Specific guidelines for the reflection papers are provided on the course home page. Individual feedback will be provided by the course faculty.

2. Participation in online conference and discussion boards

Course participants are expected to contribute regularly and meaningfully to online discussions, posted reflection questions and in their small groups. Participation on the discussion board is expected to take between 1-2 hours per week. Effective use of the discussion boards includes thoughtful replies to postings and building on the reflections shared by others through referring to readings or experiences. Participants are also expected to contribute to creating a safe learning environment for themselves and their colleagues.

E. TIME REQUIREMENT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

To be successful in completing this course, you are encouraged to set aside approximately 2 to 4 hours each week to complete each section as learning is primarily self-directed. The total learning hours for this course are **48 hours**. It is strongly recommended for participants not to plan a vacation during the course offering period. If you plan to go on vacation you must notify the course facilitator at least two weeks in advance. It is expected that you post your discussion posting/ submit your assignment before you go on vacation.

F. FACILITATOR AVAILABILITY

Facilitator for this course will be responsible to guide the eLearning component including online discussion, to lead online conference session, to be available to you for questions throughout the course and to provide final grade. The response time from a participant enquiry to a facilitator response ranges from 24 hour to 48 hours. Technical support is available by contacting support@desouzainstitute.com

G. COURSE TIMELINE

Course Units (Each unit is to be completed over a 2 week period and will include a focus on psychosocial oncology objectives as well as interprofessional collaboration objectives)

Unit 1: Overview of Family Theory	
Week 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to the Course and course site • Creating an interprofessional community of learning in cyberspace. • Theoretical understandings of family • Interprofessional Collaboration: Working as a team
Unit 2: Family Assessment & Intervention from an Interprofessional Perspective	
Week 3 & 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family assessment and intervention • Developing therapeutic conversations with families/couples
Unit 3: Couple Interventions	
Week 5 & 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strengths based approach to working with couples/families • The impact of cancer on couples • Therapeutic work with couples
Unit 4: Working with Families in Transition	
Week 7 & 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families in transition • Family/Team Collaboration
Unit 5: Working With Families Experiencing Loss	
Week 9 & 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families at End of Life • Grief Loss and Bereavement
Unit 6: Working With Families & Survivorship	
Week 11 & 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and long term survivorship • Families Living with Genetic Concerns

Statutory Holidays

When your scheduled seminar falls on a statutory holiday, groups will need to negotiate with their group facilitator about how to make up the seminar time in order that all the topics are covered, i.e., to have a longer seminar the week following or preceding the holiday.

H. HISTORY OF THIS COURSE

This course was developed through a grant from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The IPODE project has brought together 14 universities in 9 provinces to collaborate in developing the course. National leaders in psychosocial oncology (faculty and clinicians), interprofessional education and distance education contribute through the regional expert panels.

I. FACILITATOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Deborah McLeod, is a clinician scientist in Nursing with the QEII Cancer Care Program in Halifax Nova Scotia. She holds adjunct appointments with Dalhousie University and University of Calgary. Her clinical work in psychosocial oncology (PSO) focuses on individual, couple and family therapy. Although she works with a variety of populations, she is particularly interested in prostate cancer populations and is currently involved in several national initiatives that address the sexual and other survivorship needs of men and partners dealing with prostate cancer.

J. GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE DISCUSSION

Discussion related to course content will take place in the collaboration discussion forums. The collaboration discussion forums provide you with the opportunity to share ideas and clarify your understanding of course content and readings.

K. SOCIAL FORUM

The social forum is provided for you, the participants, to post news, items of general interest, share information about yourselves and to raise topics of interest beyond the specific questions being discussed in the module-specific forums. All messages of a social nature can be posted in the social forum. This forum is open to all participants, including the facilitator.

L. VIRTUAL LIBRARY

The de Souza Institute has a virtual library <http://library.desouzainstitute.com/> that can be accessed by those registered in this course or any other de Souza Institute continuing education program. This invaluable resource enables you to access over 1500 e-Journals, 200 e-books and 8 on-line databases such as CINHALL or Ovid-Medline. You can use the virtual library to access the required reading materials for your course. The virtual library can be accessed 24 hours a day using your de Souza Institute login and password.

M. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

eLearning Centre Orientation

If this is the first time you are taking a course offered by the de Souza Institute, please complete the eLearning Centre Orientation. This is designed to introduce you to online learning and help you understand how to navigate through the de Souza Institute eLearning center and courses. The goal of eLearning orientation is to answer all of your questions in order to facilitate a dynamic and meaningful learning experience.

de Souza Support

If you have questions about the content of a course please email your course facilitator.

If you need assistance accessing or navigating the eLearning Center, please refer to the eLearning Orientation course. If you have questions or have any general technical difficulties please contact support@desouzainstitute.com

N. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

[Academic Honesty and Copyright Policy](#)

[Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#)

Course content and resources provided in this course are based on best practice guidelines from provincial and national bodies. Please consult your educator if you have specific questions related to local protocols and policies as they vary among healthcare organizations.