



# Association for Palliative Medicine

Of Great Britain and Ireland

## What is Palliative Medicine?

Palliative medicine provides clinical leadership, care and support to prevent and relieve suffering for people with life-limiting and life-threatening illness.

- Its diagnostic and therapeutic priorities focus on meeting every individual patient's goals through shared decision-making with them and those important to them
- It is practiced both as part of multidisciplinary palliative care teams and in partnership with other relevant specialties to deliver individualised, holistic care
- It is a medical specialty recognised by the respective nations' Royal Colleges of Physicians

Palliative Medicine's specific expertise is in:

- Assessing and managing physical, psychological and spiritual symptoms and in mitigating distress
- Clinical analysis of and decision-making in complex scenarios, such as when a patient's clinical needs, preferences and interests are finely balanced and may require skilled application of relevant ethical and legal guidance
- Skilled communication about and co-ordination of care, especially at disease transitions and boundaries between care settings
- Working with partners, colleagues and organisations across multiple sectors to provide excellent multidisciplinary care for patients and those important to them
- Care and support to those important to the patient, including facilitating their bereavement care

## The Association

The Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland (APM) is the world's largest representative body for doctors practicing or interested in Palliative Medicine, with a growing membership of over 1,000. We welcome international members.

- **Full and Associate membership** is open to doctors practicing or interested in palliative medicine
- **Student membership** is open to undergraduate medical students
- **Affiliate membership** is being developed for other clinicians with an interest in palliative medicine

We work in strategic alliance with those who can contribute to achieving our vision, supporting our values and delivering our aims.

## Our Vision

We seek to create a future where all people with life-limiting and life-threatening illnesses live as well as possible for the duration of their natural lives and in which no one need die in distress or discomfort for lack of access to the best palliative care.

## Our Mission

We will promote professional development, societal debate and advocate with and on behalf of all those who are involved in palliative medicine in order to promote, facilitate, advance and develop excellence for the benefit of every individual patient and those important to them.

## Our Values

Our membership and all our work is driven and bound by a contract of shared values through our **Leadership PACTE**. We strive to be:

### *Leaders:*

- Bold, innovative and boundary-breaking, while accepting the complexity of the area in which we serve
- Active participators in professional and societal debate surrounding health, care, wellbeing, illness, death and dying

### *Person-centred:*

- Focused on patients' goals and concerns above and beyond their disease(s) alone, including the related needs of those important to them

### *Academically excellent:*

- Inquisitive, evidence-led and willing to challenge and advocate where fresh evidence and experience are counter to or challenge established opinion or the *status quo*
- Advocates for and, where feasible, participators in relevant research into contentious and neglected areas of palliative care
- Skilled in ethical analysis, complex problem solving and shared decision-making

### *Clinically excellent:*

- Expert in assessing and managing the clinical aspects of patients' suffering
- Skilled in helping individual patients and those important to them to engage with their unique circumstances and the uncertainty, complexity and finely balanced interests and decisions that are part of their life's conclusion
- Professionally objective and tempered with compassion that supports and empowers those in receipt of our care

### *Transparent and collaborative:*

- Able to embrace multi-professional practice

- Collegiate and accountable within multidisciplinary teams
- Willing to assist colleagues with their professional challenges around death and dying and its personal impact
- Collaborative with other specialist organisations and disciplines
- Open to change and scrutiny
- Progressive and willing to engage with the opinions and perspectives of others

### *Educators and trainers:*

- Advocates for all professional communities across health and social care to be confident and competent in understanding and meeting palliative care needs where they find them that includes the relevant mandatory education and training to achieve this
- Committed to our own learning and development and working with the Royal Colleges of Physicians

## Our Aims

Through the expertise of our members and our partners, the APM:

- Drives excellent, person-centred palliative care services
- Sets professional standards
- Promotes education and training
- Promotes research and development
- Influences policy development, commissioning and its implementation
- Influences planning of the palliative medicine workforce strategically, subject to our national approaches
- Develops and works in strategic partnerships and
- Ensures its own effective governance

The APM's Leadership PACTE and our aims inform the structure of our organisation, our strategic priorities and specific position statements in all relevant areas of health and social care in order to promote the interests of our patients and those important to them.

For further information, visit our website:

[www.apmonline.org](http://www.apmonline.org)