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Welcome to the November issue of our trainee newsletter.

Firstly, I want to say that Erin and I are excited to be your new co-chairs. As we settle into our role we'd really like to hear from you if there's something you'd like your trainees committee to be doing – please email me at: [sarah.foot1@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.foot1@nhs.net).

We currently have our old positions vacant on the committee. It's a great opportunity to get involved with the APM, meet other palliative doctors and without too much time commitment. Please consider applying! <https://apmonline.org/vacancies/>

As I write, 2023's recruitment round 2 has just been completed. It's a mixed picture with only 32% of the NTN's being filled around the country, although many regions successfully filled all their places and others filling none ([https://phstrecruitment.org.uk/file/image/media/64d230a5d0478 Palliative fill-rates 2013-23.pdf](https://phstrecruitment.org.uk/file/image/media/64d230a5d0478_Palliative_fill-rates_2013-23.pdf)). It's obviously worrying for those working in regions where the number of registrars is dropping. The number of applicants remains down, and particularly unique applicants. Those from people who only apply to palliative medicine is down at 55% compared to low 70s pre-2021.

This is combined with a mixed picture across the country with the implementation of the new curriculum. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, it's difficult to have a clear picture of what is going on around the country and your input is important. The survey revealed challenges and variation in how trainees are having their IM blocks, teaching and supervision. As someone on the new curriculum I can certainly empathise and echo concerns about how stressful juggling the dual curriculums, maintaining knowledge and skills and the unknown of what our future job plans will look like. I also love working in hospitals, the variety of working in acute medicine and being a palliative voice within general medical teams.

As we move forward, we want to share what is working, make sure that there is consistency for trainees around the country and that trainees can feel confident in their dual roles as Palliative and Internal medicine trainees, and eventually consultants. If dual training isn't working, we want to hear about it so we can be your voice.

# Trainees' Committee Update

## **APMT Facebook Group and Twitter**

If you are a new palliative medicine trainee or not yet in our Facebook group, please join to share educational events, discuss topics and for latest APMT news.

Follow us on Twitter **@APM\_trainees**

## **OOP Trainees Facebook Group**

The Facebook group that was formerly set up to help support APM shielding trainees has evolved into a support group for trainees going OOP (parental leave, OOPE/T, sick leave) – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/apmto>

If you would like to join, please request to join via Facebook and drop us a message with your name and region.

## **Website update – Wellbeing Resource List**

Our website has been updated throughout this year. You'll find links to the curriculum including the Covid-amended curriculum.

The most recent addition is our Wellbeing Resource List compiled by our SAC team. Find it here – <https://apmonline.org/trainees-committee/>

# Upcoming Events

## **Training Programme to meet the Medical Needs of Adults with a Learning Disability**

This PG Cert is aimed at healthcare professionals working at a senior level with people with a learning disability. The programme consists of two modules of 30 credits each and takes 15 months to complete. Applicants must identify a clinical tutor to support them. Successful completion will enable practitioners to work in a 'Learning Disability Physician/ Practitioner Role'.

Dates: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March, Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April, Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Venue: Tutorial 1 in person at the Spine, Tutorials 2-6 online

How to apply: via Edge Hill University

Deadline: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

<https://www.rcp.ac.uk/education-practice/courses/training-programme-meet-medical-needs-adults-learning-disability>

## **Palliative Care Congress**

World Wide Working

Your invitation to an innovative, international MDT

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

Venue: Virtual

<https://pccongress.org.uk>

## **European Association for Palliative Care World Research Congress**

The 13<sup>th</sup> World Research Congress of the EAPC, giving opportunities for in-depth discussions on innovations in palliative care and palliative care research.

Date: 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Venue: Barcelona, Spain

<https://eapccongress.eu/2024/>

# Post of the Month: Update on Assisted Dying

## *What is the latest from the Isle of Man?*

The Isle of Man's Parliament (House of Keys) voted by a 70% majority on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October to pass an Assisted Dying Bill "to enable certain adults who are terminally ill to be provided at their request with specified assistance to end their own life". The second reading of the bill was subsequently passed on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November with 17 out of 24 members backing its progress to the clauses stage.

A five-member committee will now be established to debate how the proposed laws would work in practice. If the legislative process continues as expected, the Isle of Man could become the first part of the UK to legalise assisted dying, with the possibility of it becoming available as early as 2025.

## *What do the proposed clauses cover?*

The clauses of the proposed bill include eligibility for assisted dying – which would be based on the person's age, capacity, illness, prognosis and length of residency (see below); what constitutes a terminal illness and how assistance in dying would be given in practice. They also cover death certification – including the potential implications for any existing insurance policies (for example, life and mortgage insurance).

The aforementioned eligibility criteria which are proposed and would need to be fulfilled are the following:

- Aged over 18
- Isle of Man residency for at least 12 months
- Terminally ill, with death "reasonably expected" within 6 months; and
- Having legal capacity to make the decision.

"Terminal illness" is defined in Clause 5 as "having an inevitably progressive condition which cannot be reversed by treatment", as diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner.

Assistance in dying is covered in Clause 7, which states that: "The attending doctor of a person who has made a valid declaration may prescribe medicine for that person to enable that person to end their own life". Such medicine can be either self-administered or administered to the person on their behalf – with the decision between the two to be made by the person for whom the medicine is prescribed. The medicine cannot be given until 14 days after the person's declaration comes into effect – unless the person is not expected to survive for more than a month, in which case it can be given after 7 days. The healthcare professional involved must then remain *with* (defined as "in close proximity to, but not necessarily in the same room as") the person until they have died.

## *How does this affect medical professionals working in the Isle of Man?*

Assisted dying remains an incredibly sensitive issue. 74% of doctors did not support a change in the law, according to an Isle of Man Medical Society poll. Under the

proposed draft laws, doctors would be able to conscientiously object to being involved in assisted dying – Clause 8 states that: “A person shall not be under any duty (whether by contract or arising from any statutory or other legal requirement) to participate in anything authorised by this Act to which that person has a conscientious objection”.

*What about the rest of the UK?*

Assisted dying is illegal in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; and carries a potential maximum prison sentence of 14 years. In Scotland, assisting the death of another person can open up potential charges, including murder charges; but it is not a specific criminal offence. An attempt to change the law in England and Wales was previously made by Baroness Meacher whose assisted dying bill proposed legalising it for adults who were terminally ill, mentally competent and in the last six months of life - but this failed in May 2022.

*What does this mean for Palliative Medicine trainees?*

Palliative Medicine trainees have an important role to play in informing the debate on assisted dying. As Professor Katherine Sleeman wrote in our June 2021 newsletter, we should, as future leaders in caring for people with life-limiting illness, value our “expertise and potential to contribute to this complex societal conversation”.

*Further reading:*

The proposed Assisted Dying Bill 2023 can be found here:

[Assisted Dying Bill 2023](#)

The Position Statement from the APM can be found here:

[Association for Palliative Medicine Position Statement](#)

The APM also has web materials on physician-assisted dying (including non-UK guidance) here:

[APM Physician Assisted Dying Web Materials](#)

Dr Emma McDonald  
ST4 in Palliative Medicine and GIM  
APM Trainees Committee Communications Representative

## Journal Articles: In Focus

The following recent publications might be interesting/ of relevance to trainees. See links and summaries below:

1. Green L, Capstick A, Oyebode J. **Iatrogenic suffering at the end of life: An ethnographic study**. Palliative Medicine. 2023 Apr 23:02692163231170656. Iatrogenic suffering at the end of life: An ethnographic study - Laura Green, Andrea Capstick, Jan Oyebode, 2023  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/02692163231170656>

Brief summary: This is an observational study in the UK looking at end of life care for older people in the acute hospital setting. They focus particularly on suffering and found that suffering was influenced by a range of factors including a delay in recognising dying, environmental factors e.g. noise and smell, paternalistic attitudes and poor communication. They conclude that working to minimise this iatrogenic suffering is vital to providing compassionate end of life care in hospitals.

2. Leniz J, Davies JM, Bone AE, Hocaoglu M, Verne J, Barclay S, Murtagh FE, Fraser LK, Higginson IJ, Sleeman KE. **Deaths at home, area-based deprivation and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic: An analysis of mortality data across four nations**. Palliative Medicine. 2023 Apr 23:02692163231167212. Deaths at home, area-based deprivation and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic: An analysis of mortality data across four nations <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37088955/>

Brief Summary: The number and proportion of people dying at home increased across all UK nations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study retrospectively analysed mortality data and relates it to area-based deprivation. They found that deaths at home increased less in more deprived areas, further exacerbating an existing socioeconomic inequality in place of death in the UK.

**As an APM member you have free access to the following journals:**

- Palliative Medicine Journal
- BMJ Journals including BMJ Palliative and Supportive Care

**Plus membership benefits of the European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC) if you register on their website as an Associate Member via the APM, including Journal access.**

## **BMA England Junior Doctors Strikes**

We wanted to remind trainees in hospices that they can strike if employed by an NHS trust on the day of the strike. The BMA has got really helpful guidance on their website, with a specific section for palliative trainees:

[www.bma.org.uk/our-campaigns/junior-doctor-campaigns](http://www.bma.org.uk/our-campaigns/junior-doctor-campaigns)

## **Pay Protection for trainees on 2002 contract**

Pay protection was due to come to an end in March 2023, however it has now been extended to

August 2025. It is expected this will make sure all trainees pay protection will then last until they CCT.

If you think you won't CCT by August 2025, and you are currently pay protected under the old contract, please get in touch with our BMA Rep, Dr Sarah Foot:

[foot.sarah@gmail.com](mailto:foot.sarah@gmail.com)

## **SCE Revision Flashcards** – <http://www.pallmedpro.co.uk/flashcards>

The APM offers a full discount on purchases of the Pallmedpro SCE revision flashcards. Full details including how to claim reimbursement can be found on the APM website. (<https://apmonline.org/trainees-committee/>).

## **Instructions for Accessing PCF CSCI Compatibility Database (via APM membership) as of February 2023**

Compatibility charts have now moved to the PCF subscription which is available via APM membership.

There are several options available for use:

- The **PCF** (both hard copy and online versions) contains some basic compatibility charts <https://www.medicinescomplete.com/>
- **Palliative Care Adult Network Guidelines Plus** is the suggested reference in the PCF – <http://book.pallcare.info/> This does not require a login or password.
- The **PallCare Matters mobile app** – which is available for use on a desktop or phone — does require registration but is free and easy to use. This interactive resource explains the CSCI compatibilities in more detail and allows for submission of reports – <http://m.pallcare.info>
- A **compatibility book** on the ward, if available. However, this is only as current as the day of publication.

Please see the attached document below for a step-by-step guide –

### **Journal Access**

The following journals can be accessed by members via the APM website:

- Palliative Medicine Journal
- BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care Journal
- EAPC Journal (at a reduced subscription rate)

Publications may also be available through the BMA website, for those with membership.

A list of these can be found at: <https://www.bma.org.uk/library/e-resources/e-journals>

**APM Study Days (follow @APM\_hub)** – <https://apmonline.org/apm-events-courses/>

The APM & PCRS Research Course –

<https://apmeducationhub.org/events/apmpcrs-2023/>

28th September and 12th October 2023

### **Palliative Care Formulary Online**

As of 2020, full APM members (including reduced subscription) have access to the PCF Online through MedicinesComplete.

Access is via the APM website – <https://apmonline.org/>

Log in and click PCF via the Learning and Information tab.

### **COVID-19 Guidance**

The APM has issued guidance regarding COVID-19 and Palliative, End of Life and Bereavement Care.

The latest guidance can be found on the website at the bottom of the homepage <https://apmonline.org/>



# Contact the Committee

We're here to support trainees and our development.

Contact us:

- Via your regional APM Trainees' Rep
- On Twitter @apm\_trainees
- On our Facebook page 'APM Trainees'
- Email us directly via [apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com](mailto:apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com)



The APM is the world's largest representative body for doctors practicing or interested in palliative medicine. If you are not already a member join today! <https://apmonline.org/join-pages/join/>

Please remember to upgrade your membership to 'full membership' on commencement of your first consultant post. This can be done by emailing the APM at [office@compleat-online.co.uk](mailto:office@compleat-online.co.uk)

This newsletter is for trainees by trainees. We want to hear from you, allow trainees to connect nationally and have a platform to feature your contributions in the upcoming newsletters.

Please contact us at [apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com](mailto:apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com) to contribute with a feature article, a journal summary or trainee reflection.