

A word from Dr Ellen Bodger

Careers and Mentorship Coordinator

Hello and welcome to January's newsletter,

Happy New Year! I'm Ellen, the new Careers and Mentorship Coordinator. I'm currently working as an IMT2 in the East of England. I'm excited to start in the role, supporting others hoping to pursue a career in Palliative Medicine, particularly to find opportunities to explore the specialty. Outside of medicine I'm normally baking, hiking or crafting.

To start off the year we have given the newsletter a fresh look and have started to introduce some new features. If you have any interest in writing a piece to be included in a future edition of the newsletter then please get in touch with me via submissions.apmj@gmail.com. We would love to hear more about your experiences, reflections or projects.

Take care, Ellen



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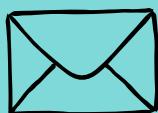
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Research Round-Up

This month's research round-up spotlights some new and emerging ideas in the palliative care research space, and summarises some useful resources for members with an interest in research and methodology.

Psychedelic drugs in palliative care

Stokes C, Khagram A, Metselaar B, et al Psychedelic drugs in palliative care: research agenda. BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care 2026;16:79-81. <https://doi.org/10.1136/spcare-2025-005661>

Sanders JJ, Beaussant Y. Feeling groovy? The present and future of psychedelic research in palliative care. Palliative Medicine. 2025;39(10):1034-1036. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02692163251393561>

These two articles highlight the emerging research agenda of psychedelic drugs in palliative care. Stokes et al. consider the potential of psychedelic drugs as alternative therapies for psychological and existential distress, depression, anxiety and chronic pain where other treatments fail. This agenda is entering the research space following a small number of recent systematic reviews demonstrating effectiveness of psychedelic-assisted therapies in symptom control for patients with life-limiting illnesses, largely for patients with cancer. Sanders and Beussant go a step further, considering the potential complementarity of psychedelic-assisted therapies with the psychosocial and spiritual aspects of palliative medicine - including total pain – as well as in the shifting landscape of assisted dying. Both papers highlight the need for adequately powered randomised controlled trials and qualitative resource to understand the safety and scope of use in clinical practice.

Research Round-Up

Unpaid and informal carers

Lamfre L, Collier M, Meier C, et al. Informal end-of-life care—hidden costs: multi-method analysis. BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care. 2026;16:122-129. <https://doi.org/10.1136/spcare-2025-005779>

Gardiner C, Juet A, Webb EJ, Stone J. Characteristics and population estimates of unpaid end of life carers: An observational study. Palliative Medicine. 2025;39(10):1091-1098. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02692163251366090>

The economic costs of caregiving at the end of life is a hugely important policy priority. Lamfre et al. put forward an analyse of the costs for unpaid (informal) carers in the context of the Argentinian healthcare system through the lens of gender equity. Using a mixed methods analysis, they found caregivers provided an average of 57 hours of informal care per week and lost 25 hours of paid work – with women consistently delivering more hours of unpaid work to men (cost ratio 2.0). Gardiner et al. explore the demographic characteristics of unpaid carers in the UK. Their results provide the first estimate of the number of unpaid end of life carers in the UK (which could be as high as 775,000), finding that they are more likely to be older and female. They also highlight the economic impact, finding an increased percentage of carers falling into poverty in the year after providing care. As more data is published, the global picture is being built of the true cost that unpaid caregivers face, both in lower and higher income.

Research Round-Up

Research Resources

Palliative Research Incubator: Useful for anyone involved in palliative care research, the recently established Palliative Research Incubator holds workshops both online and in-person. They also post recordings and slides from previous events, including their recent workshop on writing a successful NIHR fellowship application – watch this space!

NIHR Research Support Service Methods Academy: Interested in palliative care research and wanting to know more about different methodologies? The NIHR RSS has posted the recording of their recent Research Methods Academy here.

Clinical Academic Trainee Special Interest Forum: Are you a clinical academic trainee in palliative medicine? We have an APM Special Interest Forum that you can join to network, share insights, and learn from peers – contact elisha.de-alker3@nhs.net for more details.



Film and book recommendations



With so many books, films and shows available that explore palliative care themes, we thought it would be a good opportunity to showcase some of our favourites. Each month our committee members will be sharing their recommendations with our readers.

Book recommendation of the month

We all want impossible things by Catherine Newman

Goodreads rating 3.96/5



A fiction book based around two lifelong friends, Edi and Ash, focusing on their journey after Edi is diagnosed with terminal cancer. It explores the care they receive, friendship, grief and celebrating love and life. Dr Katherine Geoghegan, our Conference Coordinator recommended the book because of its take on the anticipatory grieving experience of someone whose best friend goes through hospice care.

Film recommendation of the month

The Farewell

IMDb rating 7.5/10



A 2019 film, where a Chinese family discovers their grandmother has only a short time left to live and decide to keep her in the dark, scheduling a wedding to gather before she dies. Our committee chair, Dr Angus Grant, recommended the film due to its focus around the differences in societal approaches to health and illness across culture, focusing on themes of collusion and information sharing.

Opportunities to gain experience in Palliative Medicine

Are you a palliative care trainee interested in older people?

From Dr Alexandra Lindsay-Perez,

I'm an IMT3 with an interest in geriatrics, and am hoping to write some patient-facing blog posts about the results of the NACEL audit (national audit for care at the end of life). The project is in the early stages, and we're keen to get more people on board. If you'd be interested in finding out more, drop me (Alex) an email on alexandra.lindsay-perez@nhs.net

In coming months we will be recruiting the APMJ conference sub committee for 2026. Keep a look out in our future newsletters and social media for updates!

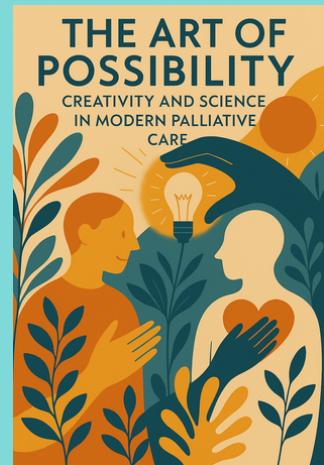
If you would like to highlight any opportunities related to palliative care, then please feel free to email us

Upcoming events

Palliative Care Congress

26-27th March 2026

Brighton Dome



Tickets available via: <https://pccongress.org.uk/registration/>

Useful resources

APM/PCRS Research directory

<https://apmeducationhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Palliative-Care-Network-April-2023.pdf>

Palliative Medicine Curriculum

<https://www.jrcptb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Palliative%20Medicine%202022%20curriculum%20FINAL.pdf>

e-ELCA

https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/myElearning/Index?HierachyId=0_29&programmId=29

APM Junior Doctor Resources

<https://apmonline.org/junior-doctor-resources/>