

## ASSESSING AND ADDRESSING END-OF-LIFE NEEDS OF VETERANS

### DESCRIPTION:

The varied experiences of our country's veterans call for different approaches to end-of-life care. As younger generations of veterans enter hospice and rules around care change, hospices and their staffs face new face challenges. This webinar addresses the needs of veterans and their families at life's end; recent developments in concurrent palliative and hospice care; and how hospices work with veterans in their communities to provide quality care that honors their service.

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### PROGRAM DETAILS:

This presentation features experienced professionals offering their own expertise on the topic. On the screen, you will see the slide presentation and will be able to hear the experts talking and presenting. If you login for the live version of the program, you'll also have the opportunity to email or text the experts' questions that they will discuss and answer during the program's Q & A session.

<b>LIVE DATE:</b>	October 8, 2024
<b>TIME:</b>	Noon to 1:30pm ET
<b>ON DEMAND:</b>	Available for 6 months; until April 8, 2025
<b>LENGTH:</b>	90 minutes
<b>CEs:</b>	1.5 hours
<b>CONTENT LEVEL:</b>	The program is mainly for professionals already working in the field but is practical for all levels of education – entry level, intermediate or advanced.
<b>TARGET AUDIENCE:</b>	Health care clinicians, social service clinicians and others working in the hospice, palliative care, counseling, hospital, nursing home, funeral home, or faith community environments

**This program will be live on the air date, recorded and made available for on demand viewing. The recorded program will be available approximately a day after the live event.**

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### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

To view the program, you will need a computer and screen, reliable internet access, and speakers.

TEST LINK for live program Audio and Video: <https://zoom.us/test>

**Technical Questions?** Please go to <https://zoom.us/> and click “support”

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### PROGRAM FEES/MATERIALS:

**Registration includes continuing education and on-demand viewing for 6 months from live date.**

#### Single Webinar Registration

Individual Viewer: Member: FREE | Non-member: \$35.00  
Organizational Viewing: Member: FREE | Non-member: \$135.00

## HOW TO REGISTER:

Register directly online, on HFA's website: <https://www.hospicefoundation.org>

## MATERIALS AREA:

Materials are available on HFA's website at <https://hospicefoundation.org/Shop-HFA/My-Account>. From here, click on "Orders/Courses." *Information will be posted to your account as they become available.*

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the PACT Act and how hospice staff can support Veterans' Toxic Exposure Screening (TES).
  2. Explain "Palliative Concurrent Care" and what this means for Veterans receiving hospice care.
  3. Identify at least two unique issues faced by veterans at end-of-life.
  4. Identify the benefits of the We Honor Veterans program.
  5. Describe health risks related to specific conflicts.
  6. Describe strategies and resources for the assessment and management of end-of-life issues for veterans.
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## PROGRAM OUTLINE:

### Part I: Presented by Ryan Weller, LCSW, APHSW-C (15 min)

- I. Give an overview of the large scale of Veterans who are receiving hospice (e.g., the number using the Medicare Benefit, the number using VA pay). (3 min)
- II. Define the PACT Act; give data regarding the number of Veterans screened for Toxic Exposure; describe scenario(s) where hospice staff can support Toxic Exposure Screening and perhaps lead to an increase in VA Benefits for Veterans and families. (3 min)
- III. Describe the VA Whole Health initiative, list several resources available to Veterans and family members, describe where hospice staff can access more information and access to these resources. (3 min)
- IV. Share the VA Survivors & Burial Kit resource; give examples of the type of information available in the kit regarding VA Benefits for burial and survivors. (3 min)
- V. Describe the update in CMS' policy about Concurrent Palliative Care for Veterans who are dually-enrolled in VA and Medicare, and give examples of what this means for Veterans wanting to receive services from VA while receiving hospice care. (3 min)

### Part 2: Presented by Dorothy Wholihan, DNP, AGPCNP-BC, ACHPN, FPCN, FAAN (23min)

- VI. Identify unique issues faced by veterans at end-of-life (5 min)
  - a. Demographics of veterans
    - i. Numbers
    - ii. Veteran characteristics (culture)
    - iii. Potential diagnoses
  - b. End-of-Life issues for veterans (8 min)
    - i. Pain and symptoms
    - ii. Mental health issues
      1. Depression-anxiety
      2. SUD

- 3. PTSD
      - iii. Vulnerable groups
        - 1. Women vets
        - 2. LGBTQ vets
        - 3. Rural vets
- VII. Describe strategies and resources for the assessment and management of end-of-life issues for veterans. (10 min)
  - a. Assessment
    - i. Symptom Assessment
    - ii. PACT screening
    - iii. Military history checklist
  - b. Mental health treatment
  - c. Earlier hospice referral
  - d. Prognostication challenges
  - e. Resources
    - i. We Honor Vets
    - ii. ELNEC
- VIII. Entitlements

**Part 3: Presented by Angie Meyer, MSN, RN, CHPN, COS-C (22min)**

- IX. Discuss 15 Things Veterans Want You to Know by PsychArmour (8 min)
- X. Explain the We Honor Veterans program. (5 min)
- XI. Educate health risks that are related to conflicts through the different eras. (4 min)
- XII. Educate how to help Veterans receive benefits. (2 min)
- XIII. Educate how to advocate for Veterans. (3 min)

**Part 4: Question and Answer session (30 min)**

**CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) CREDITS:**

This program is valid for 1.5 continuing education contact hours. CE certificates are available for 6 months, until April 8, 2025.

A complete list of board approvals for this webinar program is posted to HFA's website at [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org).

**COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS:**

Participants must attend the entire 1.5 hour program. Partial credit is not awarded. Participants must also complete the entire CE process online which includes a required evaluation form and exam. The exam must be completed at 80% or above (the exam may be re-taken, if necessary).

**EXPERT PANELISTS:**

**Angie Meyer, MSN, RN, CHPN, COS-C**, Clinical Manager of Home Health and Hospice at Gundersen Palmer Lutheran Hospitals and Clinics, has been working in hospice for over ten years. As a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse, Angie is dedicated to serving her community in rural Northeast Iowa. Angie is the leader of the Gundersen Palmer Hospice We Honor Veterans Program, board member of the Iowa Hospice Veteran Partnership, and president-elect for Hospice and Palliative Care Association of Iowa. Angie has experience with advocacy at the state and federal levels. Angie was a We Advocate for Veterans representative

in 2024 for Hospice Action Week on behalf of the We Honor Veterans Partnership. She also wrote an article for the American Nurses Journal on Honoring Our Veterans.

**Ryan Weller, LCSW, APHSW-C**, is the National Program Manager for Palliative and Hospice Care for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Prior to this role, he was the team leader and clinical social worker for the Portland (Oregon) VA Medical Center's Palliative Care Consult Team for 20 years. During 10 of those years, he was also the VA's Northwest regional program manager for palliative and hospice care. He has a Certificate in Care of the Dying from Wellspring Hospice-At-Home, a hospice based in London, England, where Ryan trained for a year in end-of-life care.

**Dorothy Wholihan, DNP, AGPCNP-BC, ACHPN, FPCN, FAAN**, is director of the Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner Program and a clinical professor of nursing at the NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing. She is a palliative care nurse practitioner with over 40 years of nursing experience and maintains a current practice as a palliative care nurse practitioner at the JJ Peters VA Medical Center in Bronx, NY. Dr. Wholihan is a national and international faculty trainer for the End of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC). This work included curricular development and direct teaching in a special course entitled, ELNEC for Veterans. Her practice and research interests include spiritual aspects of care, communication skills training, and the care of veterans at end of life.

#### **REVIEWER:**

**Angela Novas, MSN, RN, CRNP, ACHPN**, *Senior Medical Officer*, Hospice Foundation of America

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#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES:**

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Varilek, B.M. and Isaacson, M. J. (2021). Female veteran use of palliative and hospice care: A Scoping Review. In *Military Medicine*, Vol. 186, Issue 11-12, pp. 1100-1105.

[Wachterman, M. W.](#), Smith, D., [Carpenter, J.](#), [Griffin, H. L.](#), [Thorpe, J.](#) [Feder, S. L.](#) [Hoelter, J.](#) [Ersek, M.](#), [Shreve, S.](#), & [Kutney-Lee, A.](#) (2024). A comparison of end-of-life care quality for Veterans receiving hospice in VA nursing homes and community nursing homes. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, Vol. 72, Issue 1, pp. 59-68.

Way, D., et al. (2019). Top ten tips palliative care providers should know about caring for veteran. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 22(6), 708-713.

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Reasonable accommodation may be made available, on an individual basis. To request accommodation, please contact HFA via email at [educate@hospicefoundation.org](mailto:educate@hospicefoundation.org) or call 800-854-3402, or write to HFA, 1707 L Street NW, Suite 220, Washington, DC 20036.

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### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Planners (Panelists and Review Committee Members) disclose no conflict of interest relative to this educational activity. None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationships to disclose with ineligible companies.

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### **FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR ADDRESSING GRIEVANCES**

**Please contact Hospice Foundation of America (HFA)**

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