

Improve palliative care through better training

What is your role in the project?

We will transform the knowledge from patients and practitioners on palliative care to create a supportive environment for all, namely patients, caregivers and health professionals.

This will be possible thanks to a tailor-made training programme for all parties involved in palliative care. The training programme will educate and support patients, families, service managers and front-line staff involved in palliative care. Finally, it will also focus on empathy to promote the mental health, emotional and social support for the patients.

How do you plan to do that?

- By developing strategies and resources to enable patients in need of palliative care to manage and improve their symptoms in a more effective way.
- By raising awareness to care staff, patients and their families on the benefits of an early integration of palliative care.
- By providing personalised information recommendations in complex chronic patients, according for example to their social status, education, ethnicity etc., to maintain their autonomy and competence.
- By developing a variety of patient-centred tools for self-determination and better coping with symptoms (improved self-efficacy) in a “tips in your pocket” resource-full approach.
- Also, by developing an educational mobile platform with simple to use tools for e-coaching to support relatives coping with anxiety and increase their health education enabling them to provide effective support to patients; enhancing their empathy skills through active listening exercises, role plays, non-verbal communication games and case studies.
- Care professionals will develop evidence based Virtual Patients cases to train patients and their relatives on how to respond in specific cases, related to their needs. A Webinar/workshop will be organized to inform all stakeholders about the need and benefits of palliative care.
- All the above techniques and tools will be tested in clinical trials with volunteering patients, caregivers and health professionals.

What are the challenges you could be facing?

Palliative care services vary between partner countries from very developed in UK to hardly existing in Greece. The challenge is to take everyone one step ahead but in some cases we need to cover a long distance. Patients, their families and their caregivers often confuse palliative care with End of Life Care and have a negative attitude towards palliative care services. Older adults could sometimes be technologically illiterate in some geographical areas and this can impede the use of tools, although user-friendly. A short training might be organized to overcome this obstacle. Empathy training sessions might be perceived in a negative way by professionals who feel very confident about their communicative skills and/or don't see the need of empathy in the doctor-patient relationship.

How does your work contribute to the overall objectives of the project?

Our work is the cornerstone of the project's objectives. We will use the data gathered by other partners, evaluate the rising needs, propose and develop the tools to face these needs and promote a Patient centred-supportive palliative care ecosystem. We will deliver this ecosystem to the clinical trials partners and cooperate closely with them to further improve it and meet the needs of the users. We will prepare and organize empathy training sessions, then analyse and evaluate the adherence of the developed ecosystem. Finally, we will inform the stakeholders about the characteristics of this ecosystem and the targets of the project.

How do you think the project will improve the quality of life of older people with complex chronic conditions?

Older people (as well as people at all ages) need a holistic approach to their health status. Drugs heal the body symptoms but without a supportive system that treats their soul and spirit, without a social context that reinforces the patient's inclusion, therapy is not complete. INADVANCE is proposing a patient-centred palliative care ecosystem, derived from and addressing the needs of the patients, their families and caregivers. INADVANCE aims to raise awareness and enhance the society's involvement while at the same time provide adequate training for all stakeholders. The project intends to support all patients through their treatment path and although this road might end up to death, INADVANCE is definitely focused in life.