

Medical Student Palliative Care Elective

Objectives:

1. To develop a basic understanding of the fundamentals of Palliative Care.
2. To articulate the distinction between the scope of Palliative Care from that of hospice care.
3. To understand the criteria for hospice and the services it provides.
4. To understand basic principles of pain management including a basic familiarity with opioids and adjuvant pain medications.
5. To learn how to assess and manage symptoms such as dyspnea, anxiety and agitation in patients with advanced chronic illness.
6. To develop an awareness of the psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients and family members coping with advanced chronic illness and available resources for assistance.
7. To be familiar with tools to aid in the prognostication of patients with terminal disease.
8. To understand the role of life sustaining treatments such as feeding tubes, ventilators, dialysis and other aggressive treatments in treating patients near the end of life.
9. To develop an understanding of advanced care planning, e.g., advanced directives, designation of power-of-attorney for health care, and long-term care options.
10. To practice communication skills.

Student Responsibilities:

1. The student will round with the Palliative Care Service daily.
2. The student will function as a full member of the Palliative Care team: seeing patients, writing notes, presenting to the Palliative Care team and communicating with the primary team about palliative care recommendations.
3. The student will be responsible for self-study of a Palliative Care module.
4. The student will have the opportunity to spend time at an inpatient hospice/home hospice.
5. The student will participate in weekly palliative care conferences.
6. The student will be expected to present a case report during the Palliative Care conference at the end of the rotation.
7. The student will have an opportunity to participate in ongoing research projects or to start their own research project.
8. The student will participate in a family meeting to discuss goals of care and/or end of life decisions.

Interested Students: Please contact any member of the Palliative Care Service or page at 877-656-4509.