

ENHANCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK IDENTIFICATION, COMMUNICATION, AND MANAGEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY IN THE LAST YEAR OF LIFE

In Gloucestershire the *enhance* framework aims to provide staff with training and education to enable them to:

- **Enhance collaborative working**
- **Help people and those important to them plan for the future**
- **Support continued learning, development and reflection**
- **Understand the factors that impact on a person's health and wellbeing**

Working with people in their last year of life or who have uncertainty with their prognosis and illness trajectory can be demanding and place additional demands on staff.

It is important to recognise the value of staff and support them to develop the knowledge and skills to equip them to deal with these often complex situations.

To achieve this, the framework objectives are to:

- Help staff to identify when someone may be in their last year of life.
- Develop confidence to talk with people to understand what matters to them, so their care reflects their needs.
- Support people and those important to them to plan ahead for their future care and avoid crises.
- Build staff confidence to handle uncertainty and respond when situations feel difficult.
- Understand the wider factors that affect someone's health and the impact of inequalities.
- Encourage ongoing learning, reflection, and improvement within teams and services.
- Support staff to look after their own wellbeing and resilience.

The three key areas for the training are :

1. Identification
2. Communication – with people and those important to them, and within teams and professional relationships
3. Managing Uncertainty

**ENHANCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
IDENTIFICATION, COMMUNICATION, AND MANAGEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY IN THE LAST YEAR OF LIFE**

TIER ONE	
Identification	
Aim	To understand where a person is in their life cycle and using a proactive and systematic approach to identifying those in their last year of life in order to reduce the likelihood of unplanned care.
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness and recognition of changes and signs of deterioration - Physical and mental health signs and symptoms, Common indicators that a person may be entering the last year of life 2. Awareness of tools to assist with identification (specific to work area) e.g. gold standards framework, SPICT, SHADOW (care homes) Clinical Frailty Scale/Rockwood 3. Understanding the benefits of early identification and advance care planning in the context of ‘life planning’ 4. Understanding what to do once identified someone is in the last year of life. 5. Awareness of the ‘surprise’ question - “Would you be surprised” if the person were to die in the next year 6. Self-awareness in personal resilience and indication of increased vulnerability and understand where to find support(e.g. peer support, supervision)
Communication	
Aim	<p>Communication with people (and those important to them) - Increasing staff confidence in talking to people and those important to them that may be approaching end of life. Supporting awareness and knowledge of people (and those important to them). Enabling a more personalised approach</p> <p>Professional Communication - Improving communication and understanding between MDT members and the wider health and social care system. How to communicate and influence decision making including being able to increase staff confidence to challenge other professionals when necessary</p>
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of cues that may indicate EOL conversations, and discussions required. 2. Develop basic communication skills to discuss end-of-life care including non-verbal communication, use of plain language and checking understanding. Learn to listen actively and empathetically to people (and those important to them) 3. Understanding of your role in starting the conversation. 4. Awareness of personalised care approach and able to have “what matters” conversations. 5. Understand the role of empathy and compassion – showing genuine care and sensitivity to emotional distress and respect for individual values. 6. Able to advocate for the person (and those important to them) to share ‘what matters’ to the individual. 7. Understanding of Shared decision making and empowering staff at all levels to share information within the MDT. 8. Awareness of tools to support advance care planning (e.g. ReSPECT)
Managing Uncertainty	
Primary Outcome	Developing skills for managing uncertainty so that staff have confidence to have honest and open conversations and people are aware of their potential health outcomes.
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognise the common uncertainties in end-of-life care. 2. Learn to provide clear and honest information to people and those important to them (within own competence and scope). 3. Awareness of boundaries – recognising when to refer to senior or registered colleagues for clinical or complex discussions.

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Tier 1 Training Available		
Gloucestershire <i>enhance</i> Resources	Last Dance film	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MhGDI5XGDE
	Last Dance Resource Guide (for teams or individuals)	https://extranet.nhsglos.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Last-Dance-Film-Resource-Guide-Final-as-at-April-2026.pdf
	<i>enhance</i> Podcast episodes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification • Communication • Managing Uncertainty 	https://extranet.nhsglos.nhs.uk/enhance/
Suggested Additional Resources		
Identification	ReSPECT training Framework -Tier 1 Awareness	ReSPECT Training Framework : NHS Gloucestershire ICB
	Signs and symptoms last year of life	What to expect in the last year of life Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust
	Assessment tools: EARLY (primary care), SHADOW (care homes) SPICT, NEWS, EOL care	Professional Resources – palliative, end of life and bereavement care : NHS Gloucestershire ICB
	Gold Standards Framework	Free GSF Proactive Identification Guidance for Professionals
	EARLY Toolkit	NHS England — North West » EARLY Identification in Primary Care (EARLY toolkit)
	SHADOW Tool	NHS England — North West » Early Identification in Care Homes (SHADOW)
	SPICT – Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool	Supportive and Palliative Care Tool
Communication	Skills for Health – the importance of empathy	The importance of empathy Skills for Health
	Marie Curie – Talking to someone about dying	Talking about dying to someone with a terminal illness Marie Curie
	Marie Curie – Communication needs in palliative care	Communication needs in palliative care For professionals Marie Curie
	Effective communication in health and care	Effective Communication in Health & Social Care – Overcoming barriers
	Cornwall Hospice Care – Communication skills in end-of-life care	End of Life Communication Skills
	E learning for health – communicating with empathy	Communicating with Empathy – e-learning for healthcare
Managing Uncertainty	Universal Principles for advance care planning	universal-principles-for-advance-care-planning.pdf
	Gold Standards Framework – Advance Care Planning	Advance Care Planning - Gold Standards Framework

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TIER TWO	
Identification	
Aim	To understand where a person is in their life cycle and using a proactive and systematic approach to identifying those in their last year of life in order to reduce the likelihood of unplanned care.
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance skills in identifying complex signs and symptoms. 2. Use advanced assessment tools and collaborate with multidisciplinary teams. 3. Master the identification of subtle and complex signs indicating the last year of life. 4. Lead and mentor other staff in using assessment tools and making accurate identifications. 5. Understand the potential impact of health inequalities for those in their last year of life
Communication	
Aim	<p>Communication with people (and those important to them) - Increasing staff confidence in talking to people (and those important to them) that may be approaching end of life. Supporting awareness and knowledge of people (and those important to them). Enabling a more personalised approach</p> <p>Professional Communication - Improving communication and understanding between MDT members and the wider health and social care system. How to communicate and influence decision making including being able to increase staff confidence to challenge other professionals when necessary</p>
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve skills in discussing sensitive topics related to end-of-life care. 2. Focus on understanding and respecting a person's personal values and preferences supporting shared decision making. 3. Sensitivity to timing and setting – choosing appropriate moments and environments for these conversations. 4. Excel in advanced communication techniques, including conflict resolution and mediation. 5. Lead discussions that align end-of-life care with a person's personal values and goals. 6. Skills to undertake difficult conversations and able to break bad news in a personalised and sensitive way 7. Importance of Interdisciplinary Meetings: working with a range of health & care professionals from various disciplines to discuss and update care plans. 8. Importance of shared Decision-Making: Involve the person (and those important to them) in care decisions, ensuring their values and preferences are respected.
Managing Uncertainty	
Primary Outcome	Improving skills for managing uncertainty so that staff have confidence to have honest and open conversations and people are aware of their potential health outcomes.
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop strategies to manage and communicate uncertainties effectively. 2. Recognise the role of a person's family and/or those important to them, and support networks in care coordination. 3. Learn to support people (and those important to them) in decision-making processes and contribute to shared care planning. 4. Skills to undertake /initiate Able to have ACP conversations/what matters 5. Develop and implement policies to manage uncertainty in end-of-life care. 6. Train and support other staff in handling complex and uncertain situations 7. Proactive and reactive identification of changes in the person, managing and anticipating symptoms including parallel planning. 8. Understand psychological safety and the importance of this within MDT working.

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Tier 2 Training Available		
Gloucestershire <i>enhance</i> Resources	Last Dance film	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MhGDI5XGDE
	Last Dance Resource Guide (for teams or individuals)	https://extranet.nhsglos.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Last-Dance-Film-Resource-Guide-Final-as-at-April-2026.pdf
	<i>enhance</i> Podcast episodes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification • Communication • Managing Uncertainty 	https://extranet.nhsglos.nhs.uk/enhance/
	Managing Uncertainty: Approaches for Practice Study Day	https://extranet.nhsglos.nhs.uk/enhance/
Suggested Additional Resources		
Identification	ReSPECT training Framework – Tier 2 and or 3 based on job role	ReSPECT Training Framework : NHS Gloucestershire ICB
	Signs and symptoms last year of life	What to expect in the last year of life Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust
	Assessment tools: EARLY (primary care), SHADOW (care homes) SPICT, NEWS, EOL care	Professional Resources – palliative, end of life and bereavement care : NHS Gloucestershire ICB
	Gold Standards Framework	Free GSF Proactive Identification Guidance for Professionals
	EARLY Toolkit	NHS England — North West » EARLY Identification in Primary Care (EARLY toolkit)
	SHADOW Tool	NHS England — North West » Early Identification in Care Homes (SHADOW)
	SPICT – Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool	Supportive and Palliative Care Tool
	Dementia screening, e.g. 4AT	Screening for Cognitive Impairment (Cognitive Function Tests)
	Carers Hub Resources	Home - Gloucestershire Carers Hub
Communication	Skills for Health – the importance of empathy	The importance of empathy Skills for Health
	Marie Curie – Talking to someone about dying	Talking about dying to someone with a terminal illness Marie Curie
	Marie Curie – Communication needs in palliative care	Communication needs in palliative care For professionals Marie Curie
	Effective communication in health and care	Effective Communication in Health & Social Care – Overcoming barriers
	Cornwall Hospice Care – Communication skills in end-of-life care	End of Life Communication Skills
	E learning for health – communicating with empathy	Communicating with Empathy – e-learning for healthcare
	Imperial college London – compassionate communication at the end of life	PowerPoint Presentation
	Marie Curie – Good communication at end of life	Good communication at end of life Information for professionals
Managing Uncertainty	Universal Principles for advance care planning	universal-principles-for-advance-care-planning.pdf
	Gold Standards Framework – Advance Care Planning	Advance Care Planning - Gold Standards Framework

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Embedding the learning - continued professional development

Enhance handbook		Enhance Programme Handbook
Person-centred practice	Personalised prescribing - which may include deprescribing or anticipatory prescribing	
	NHS National Enhance - Person Centred Practice Module	Catalogue
Complex multimorbidity	NHS National Enhance – Multimorbidity Module	Catalogue
Population health	NHS National Enhance – Population Health Module	Catalogue
System working	NHS National Enhance – System Working Module	Catalogue
Social justice and health equity	NHS National Enhance – Social Justice and Health Equity Module	Catalogue
Environmental sustainability	NHS National Enhance – Environmental Sustainability Module	Catalogue
Leadership	NHS National Enhance Leadership Resource Guide	Catalogue
Digital	NHS National Enhance Digital Resources	Catalogue
Multidisciplinary Team	NHS England MDT Toolkit	Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Toolkit NHS England Workforce, training and education
	Social Care Institute for Excellence	Multidisciplinary teams working for integrated care - SCIE
Reflective practice	NHS England Enhance	Transformative Reflection Resource Guide FINAL.pdf
	NHS England Reflective practice resources	Reflective practice resources
Resilience	Skills for Care – Building Resilience	Building resilience
	Hospice UK – wellbeing and resilience	Wellbeing and resilience Hospice UK
Staff wellbeing support	NHS Enhance – Wellbeing Resource Guide	HEE Wellbeing Resource Guide FINAL.pdf
	NHS National Enhance Wellbeing Resources	Catalogue
Psychological Safety	Royal College of Nursing Resource	Psychological safety Royal College of Nursing

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The *enhance* programme - Context

Healthcare workers had to quickly adapt during the pandemic, working across different roles and learning new ways to communicate. The focus now is on long-term health needs, which means doctors and healthcare teams need strong generalist skills. Building on past programmes like Future Doctor and MERP, a new training approach has been developed. It brings different professionals together and starts early in their careers, helping them feel ready to handle the complex and changing demands of healthcare.



The 6 domains of the Enhancing Generalist Skills programme are:

- Person-centred practice
- Complex multimorbidity
- Population health
- System working
- Social justice and health equity
- Environmental sustainability

The *enhance* programme also has 4 cross-cutting themes or “golden threads,” considered core to the ethos and delivery of the programme:

Wellbeing

Leadership

Digital

Transformative Reflection