



Canadian Nursing Students' Association  
Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

## ***Resolution***

### **Quality End of Life Care in Nursing Education**

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**Submitted to:** CNSA National Assembly  
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#### Introduction / Background

The registered nurse's scope of practice includes providing quality end of life care to patients. This care is *"best provided through the collaborative practice of an interdisciplinary team to meet the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the person and their family"* (CNA, 2008). Registered nurses are an integral part of the interdisciplinary team and play an important role in end of life care. There is evidence to suggest that novice nurses are feeling uncomfortable with or lacking the knowledge and skills needed to provide end of life care to their patients (Brajtman, Fothergill-Bourbonnais, Casey, Alain, & Fiset, 2007). In 2011, the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) began a two-year pilot project to incorporate end of life care education into undergraduate nursing programs (Vogel, 2011).

Whereas, despite improvements in the teaching and learning opportunities surrounding end of life care, evidence suggests that new nursing graduates feel uncomfortable with or lack the required knowledge/skills to provide the quality level of end of life care that is expected of them (Brajtman et al., 2007)

Whereas, Canadian nurse educators have identified barriers to teaching end of life care, including a lack of a formal plan to integrate teaching of end of life care into the current curriculum, as well as a lack of adequate time to incorporate this topic into already overcrowded clinical and theory courses (Brajtman, Fothergill-Bourbonnais, Fiset, & Alain, 2009).

Whereas, registered nurses spend more time with patients at the end of life than any other health care discipline thus it is imperative that nursing students be educated so they can provide high-quality, holistic end of life care (Wallace et al., 2009).

Whereas, registered nurses must convey respect, preserve dignity, and recognize the intrinsic worth of each person while promoting the right to informed decision-making during end of life care (CNA, 2008).



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Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

Whereas, registered nurses have the duty to establish, maintain, and promote the standards of practice of the profession and provide care in a manner that fosters respect and dignity to patients at the end of life (ARNNL, 2013),

Whereas, registered nurses have the responsibility to practice the use of effective therapeutic communication techniques when providing quality end of life care to support both the patient and the family (Arnold & Boggs, 2007)

Whereas, quality end of life care is a priority for registered nurses when caring for patients at the end of life (While, 2012) and requires a coordinated process, which covers important care tasks, in order to provide quality end of life care (Covington, 2013)

### Resolution

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that CNSA refer to the documents, "*Providing Nursing Care at the End of Life*" (CNA, 2008) and "*Palliative and End of Life Care: Entry-to-Practice Competencies and Indicators for Registered Nurses*" (CASN, 2011) to develop a CNSA position statement on the importance of formalized, purposeful nursing education curriculum content that addresses quality end of life care.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that CNSA use that position statement to encourage official delegates to advocate for formalized, purposeful nursing education curriculum content that addresses quality end of life care.

### Conclusion

There is evidence to suggest that student nurses are feeling uncomfortable with or lacking the knowledge and skills needed to provide end of life care to their patients. As the voice of nursing student across Canada, we would like CNSA to create a position statement on the importance of formalized, purposeful nursing education curriculum content that addresses quality end of life care and use that statement to advocate to include this topic within the nursing curriculum.



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Canadian Nursing Students' Association  
Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

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