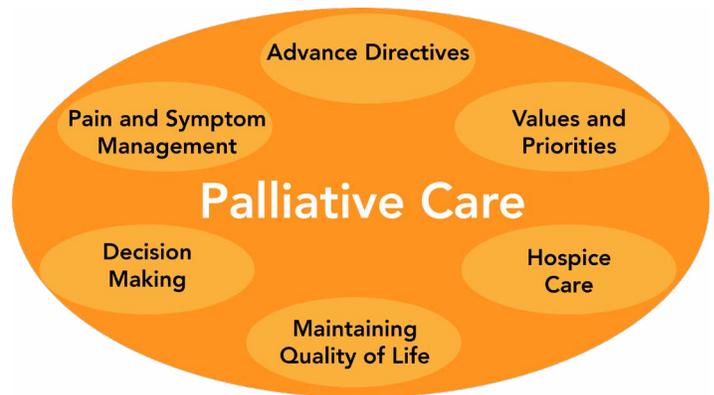


# Palliative Care Outreach Project- UND Center for Rural Health

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses, and other specialists who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. Palliative care is based on the needs of the patient, not on the patient's prognosis. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and can be provided along with curative treatment.

Palliative Care may or may not include hospice care

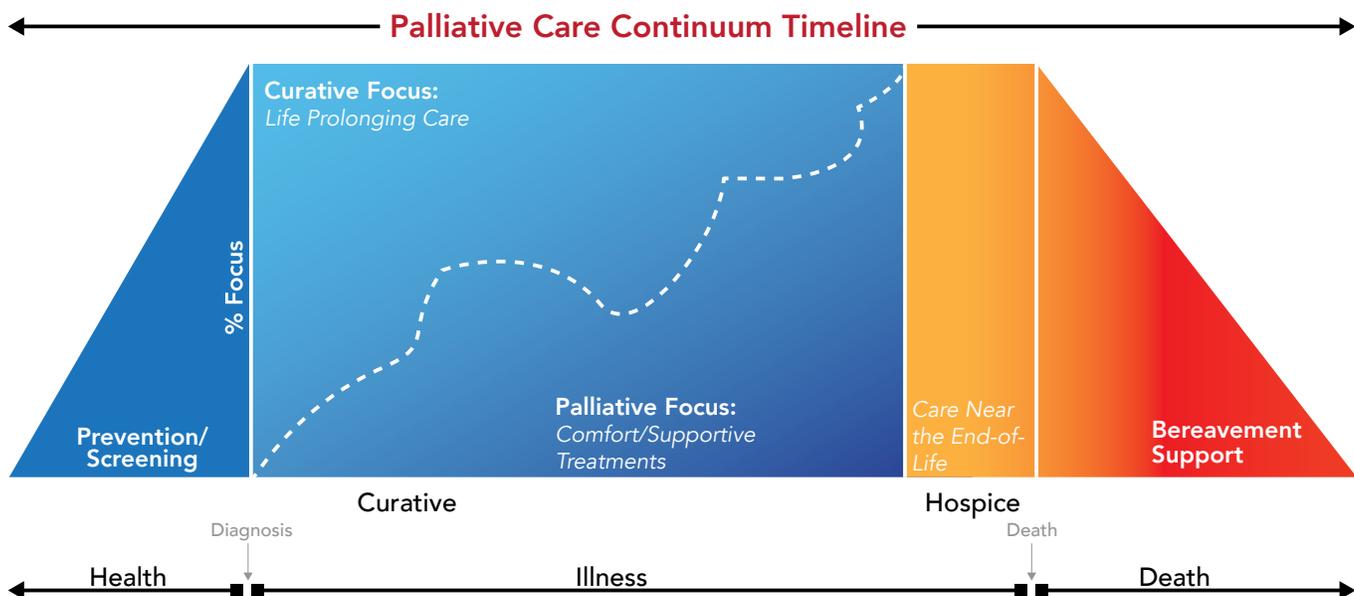


Serious illness is defined as a "health condition that carries a high risk of mortality and either negatively impacts a person's daily function or quality of life, or excessively strains the caregiver," (Kelley and Bollens-Lund, 2018). It is a condition that is progressive and irreversible.

The University of North Dakota Center for Rural Health's (CRH) goals for this project are to:

- Provide awareness, education, and implementation of palliative care throughout North Dakota;
- Assist in delineating [palliative care and hospice care](#);
- Create easy access to the location of palliative care services through the [Palliative Care Provider Directory](#);
- Disseminate awareness and use of the [North Dakota POLST medical orders](#) for patients facing seriously illness and their families; and
- Improve the number of Advance Care Planning conversations and Healthcare Directive completion of all adults living in North Dakota, in collaboration with [Honoring Choices® North Dakota](#).

## North Dakota Rural Community-Based Palliative Care Training



## CRH offers online virtual training sessions with Critical Access Hospitals to build local palliative care teams while working on the following goals:

- Form community-based teams of interdisciplinary representatives from rural hospitals, clinics, home health agencies, nursing homes, hospice programs, and other community organizations in each of the eight rural communities;
- Have each rural community complete an asset and gap analysis related to palliative care services implementation at the beginning and end of the project;
- Provide networking opportunities, planning workshops with community teams, and ongoing mentoring calls;
- Develop individualized community action plans to enhance and implement palliative care services; and
- Provide ongoing education and resources related to palliative care through the [CRH Virtual Library of Shared Tools](#).

Success for each of the participating rural communities and individual care providers depends on the mutual commitment and collaborative efforts. This undertaking is a valuable journey which requires a strong team leader. Ongoing mentoring and support are critical.

## Organizing Palliative Care for Rural Populations TeleECHO



**Palliative Care**  
Center for Rural Health  
University of North Dakota

CRH offers ongoing [Project ECHO](#) teleconferences. For palliative care, sessions are recorded for basic [palliative care themes](#), and current live sessions are for rural specific populations.

Learn about the importance of providing palliative care to rural populations, how to have a serious illness conversation, how to use Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST), and other topics that will assist in facilitating statewide growth of rural palliative care. The goal of the teleECHO™ series is to provide insight on how to organize and better understand palliative care services for patients in rural and underserved communities throughout North Dakota by building and strengthening capacity among primary care and other providers responsible for supporting patient well-being.

## POLST Awareness, Education, and Implementation

The North Dakota Medical Association, Quality Health Associates of North Dakota, and CRH have been instrumental in developing a POLST program presence through [Honoring Choices® North Dakota](#). The standardized form for advance care planning can be used for patients diagnosed with serious illnesses throughout North Dakota.

CRH offers [online CME](#) and [live virtual continuing education](#) for providers, nurses, social workers, chaplains and EMS regarding POLST.

## Affiliation with the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)

CRH works year-round to increase access to quality palliative care services in North Dakota. One way we have amplified our commitment to the mission is by becoming a member of the [Center to Advance Palliative Care \(CAPC\)](#). The [benefits of CAPC membership](#) are rich, and one membership provides **unlimited access** to CAPC resources for the **entire staff** of your organization from continuing education, virtual office hours, ready-to-use tools and resources, as well as webinars and a network of peers to share ideas and insights, build partnerships, and solve problems.

### For more information:

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