

Project Title	End of Life Care Conversations: Current Junior Doctor Experiences
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Lead discipline (please select one)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing and Midwifery | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Economics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Biostatistics |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Value-based Healthcare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-clinical | <input type="checkbox"/> Epidemiology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Outline of the project 250 words max

: Are there more team members to support the student, and who will do the psychometric analysis, the student?

Q: Can we confirm ultimate benefit? Will this be to improve teaching for junior doc to have better conversations? How will questionnaire will be used, locally and or internationally?

Q: How will the survey be validated?

Comment: Can you define the work that will be done by the student in the 6 weeks?

End of life conversations are challenging. Despite attempts by educational institutions, undergraduate and postgraduate, to deliver well structured end of life care communication programs, many junior doctors continue to find end of life care conversation confronting and difficult. Additionally, senior and junior nurses do not have confidence in junior doctors' ability to deliver well-constructed end of life care conversations. This suggests that the patient and family experience is sub-optimal during these end of life care conversations. Given the ongoing likelihood of junior doctors to deliver end of life care conversations, it is critical to understand the barriers and enablers to an optimal conversation. By understanding the barriers and enablers, it may be possible to create an environment, which enables junior doctors to deliver better end of life care conversations, which in turn lends itself to a better patient and family experience.

The project will be in two phases:

- ✓ Developing **a questionnaire for junior doctors**, informed by literature and a small focus group of junior doctors, to understand their experiences, potential associations with previous experience, life experiences, work related stress, degree of support, degree of supervision and role modelling, access to a communication framework. These data will provide an understanding of the barriers and enablers to deliver well-constructed end of life care conversation.

- ✓ Developing a ***semi-structured interview*** and interviewing 10 junior doctors, using purposeful sampling. This will allow a deep dive of junior doctor experiences to identify key barriers and enablers to deliver well-structured end of life care conversations.

The student will be expected, in the six weeks, to help design the questionnaire, implement the questionnaire and undertake a preliminary analysis. Subsequent work, will involve developing a semi structured interview for junior doctors, undertaking the interviews and thematic analysis.

The survey will gain face validity, piloted with a few junior doctors prior to be implemented to the wider junior doctor group for subsequent analysis.

Proposed research methods

A ***mixed methods*** design will be used, allowing for triangulation of data between the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study:

- ✓ The ***quantitative phase***, a questionnaire investigating junior doctors' experience with end of life care and related conversations at the Canberra Hospital.
- ✓ The ***qualitative phase***, in depth semi structured interviews of junior doctors about their experience of end of life care. A primary analysis of the transcripts will be undertaken using a combination of inductive and deductive coding techniques. This will involve developing a thematic coding framework. The data will undergo a thematic analysis using the key enablers and barriers to facilitate summarization and cross referencing of emergent themes.

Preferred study discipline being undertaken by the student

Medicine

Benefits to the student and to the department

Student:

- ✓ Be able to design the research question
 - ✓ Be able to learn and submit a human research ethics application
 - ✓ Be able to design a survey tool for junior medical officers to appreciate their end of life experiences
 - ✓ Be able to learn to undertake quantitative analysis of the data
- If time allows:
- ✓ Be able to design a semi structured interview to gain an in-depth appreciation of their end of life experiences
 - ✓ Be able to learn to undertake qualitative analysis of the data
 - ✓ Be able to construct abstracts and articles related to the research undertaken

All clinical departments at the Canberra Hospital:

- ✓ Identify the key enablers and barriers to deliver well-structured end of life care conversations
- ✓ The enablers and barriers can help inform the development of structures, processes, education and policies to support the delivery of well structured end of life care conversations by junior doctors.

Alignment with Government Research Priorities 100w max

This project aligns with a number of the ACT Government research priorities but specifically with palliative care, which invariably involves speaking with patients and families around end of life care. The impact of being able to design an environment, which enables junior doctors to deliver better end of life care conversations, will in turn create a better patient and family experience at such a difficult time in their lives. By partnering with a student, it builds research capacity within the Territory. The questionnaire piloted can be promulgated to other health care organisations for use and understanding of their own organisations through national networks already established. By understanding the barriers and enablers for junior doctors to deliver quality end of life care conversations, education conversation frameworks may not be the entire answer and it may need to be in addition to changing their environment.

Department within ACT Health Directorate / Canberra Health Services where the student will be based

Office of Education and Research, Canberra Health Services

Please submit form to preclinical.research@act.gov.au