



RCP's response to the All-Wales Competency Framework for Palliative and End of Life Care

About RCP

The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) is the membership body for physicians, doctors who work in the medical specialties. We are the largest professional association for hospital doctors in Wales, England and Northern Ireland, supporting physicians to deliver the best healthcare possible for patients and improve standards of care. We represent around 40,000 members and fellows in the UK and internationally, including specialist doctors treating palliative care patients and the overwhelming majority of hospital doctors caring for terminally ill patients.

The Framework


The RCP welcomes the opportunity to respond to the HEIW All Wales Competency Framework (The Framework) for Palliative and End of Life. The RCP recognises the importance of improving all aspects of end-of-life care and we welcome the development of The Framework to support health professionals to improve delivery of care at end of life.

The basic structure of the Framework and the competencies broadly make sense. **The RCP's two recommendations are:**

1. **We need far greater investment in end-of-life care, including expert decision makers in Specialist Palliative Care in both community and acute settings.** Implementation of the Framework will require significant workforce investment, service development and clinical engagement with related training.
2. **Given the breadth and the depth of the Framework, we recommend that a thorough consultation process should now take place to ensure wide-spread feedback amongst all health professionals and organisations involved in the delivery of end-of-life care in Wales.**

Question 4: Are the definitions and terminology used through the document understandable and consistent? Y/N (If no, please explain)

Whilst definitions and terminology are consistent, we would urge consideration to be given to those with multimorbidity, frailty and those who die of natural process (or are recognised as entering a final phase of



life). Multimorbidity and frailty are not included as explicit terms in The Framework **and we recommend that they should be explicitly mentioned.**

While inclusion of diverse cultural and ‘different backgrounds’ are included in The Framework, many communities experience inequalities or stigma and discrimination, including at end of life – **reference to this should be explicitly mentioned in The Framework.**

Question 5: Does the Framework clearly communicate its purpose? Yes/ No (if no, please state why)

It is likely that each professional will look at their own section of competencies within the overall document and, to that end, a table rather than a list would be helpful especially for those developing curricula and for staff supervision and development.

Delivery of the competencies will require the development of practical training to accompany this document so that health professionals are able to apply it to ‘real world’ situations.

Question 9: Can you see how this framework would be used in practice (e.g. in training, supervision, service planning and curriculum development)?

Yes, but we suggest presenting the competencies in a table for each profession cited, rather than as a list. Investment is needed in all aspects of end of life care provision so that the competencies can be used as intended in training, curriculum development, supervision and service planning.

Question 10: Do the profession-specific competencies accurately reflect the knowledge and skills required in your profession?

Some specifics of the competencies for medicine:

- P28/29 could include elements of multimorbidity and frailty.
- On the list of interventions on p36-37, we recommend including more generic interventions so that all patients receive compassionate care even when more aggressive treatments are not appropriate.
- Related to this, advanced care planning with those who have advanced frailty should be included as part of the final phase of life; while many may have a life limiting condition, this is not always the case.

For more information, please contact Wales@RCP.ac.uk.