

## **Palliative Care Nursing Education Across the EU: Results from an International Survey Study**

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**Background:** In 2004, an EAPC taskforce on palliative nurse education presented guidelines for the preparation of nurses for practice in palliative care (PC). There was an indication that the document was useful, but no systematic evidence of its impact through the EU was undertaken. Since its publication, there have been considerable national and international developments in relation to PC education.

**Aims:** To determine education and competencies of nurses working in PC in Europe; to assess the impact and uptake of the EAPC 2004 document for the development of PC nursing practice.

**Methods:** International online survey study with expert nurses (ie, nurses with relevant experience in nurse education and/or role in PC nursing) recruited via the EAPC collective associations and members of the current EAPC Nursing Taskforce Steering and Advisory Groups. The survey was built de novo for this study. Data collection was performed throughout 2016. All data were pseudo-anonymized. Descriptive analyses were conducted; country reports were built based on country-level descriptive analyses.

**Results:** A total of 135 expert nurses from 25 countries completed the online survey. In the majority (n=14; 56%) of the countries represented in our sample, PC was not identified as a mandatory subject within undergraduate nursing education. Post-graduate educational programmes for PC nursing were offered in 19 (76%) of these countries, and were mostly interdisciplinary. In the majority of the participant countries (n=13; 52%) there was no specialization in PC nursing with formal recognition and certification. A vast majority (n=20; 80%) of the participants was aware of the EAPC 2004 document. Large variations were found across and within country responses.

**Conclusions:** Palliative care nursing education varies largely in Europe. This taskforce will contribute to the work of the education stream of the EAPC and help to inform future initiatives for member associations and EAPC itself.

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