



HPNA Value Statement

Role of Hospice and Palliative Nurses in Advancing Research and Scholarship

The Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA) aims to advance palliative care science and provide high-quality, evidence-based care to patients, families, and communities. Specifically, HPNA believes:

- Research and scholarship are essential to advance the science of hospice and palliative care and must inform clinical practice.^{1,2}
- Hospice and palliative nurses are in optimal roles to lead, participate in, and/or contribute to research,^{1,2} evidence-based practice projects,³ quality-improvement initiatives,^{4,5} and program-evaluation activities⁵ to advance the science and improve hospice and palliative care across the lifespan in all settings.
- Hospice and palliative nurses, who are with patients and families more than any other discipline, provide valuable perspectives on significant clinical issues that should be studied and share key insights into the research process.
- Hospice and palliative nursing research and scholarship should include the perspectives and care experiences of seriously ill individuals and their families⁶ to build the evidence base for person- and family-centered care.⁷ Hospice and palliative nurses play a critical role in patient- and family-centered research.
- Nurse researchers studying clinical problems germane to hospice and palliative care must consider diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in all aspects of the research process, including planning, designing, implementing, and disseminating research. Building a diverse team, prioritizing partnerships with communities, creating equity-focused designs, intentionally recruiting and retaining diverse research participants, and engaging a diverse team in disseminating results are all critical to improving the representation of minoritized, historically underrepresented, and excluded populations in palliative research.
- Hospice and palliative nurses are integral members of interdisciplinary hospice and palliative care research teams⁸ and must be engaged in the dissemination process, including the publication of findings.

Background

The Future of Nursing 2020-2030 report emphasizes that nurses are powerful leaders in interprofessional groups, as well as influencers of change in relevant areas where further research is needed.⁹ High-quality palliative care research and scholarship that aim to improve care for patients and families living with serious illness are the foundation for excellent hospice and palliative nursing care.^{1,4,10} The evidence base for hospice and palliative nursing depends upon rigorous interdisciplinary research in which hospice and palliative nurses play multiple roles.



Consistent with *Palliative Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice*, hospice and palliative nurses must also incorporate research evidence into their practice to ensure that patients and families receive care based on the most current and best available scientific evidence.¹¹ Hospice and palliative nurses promote a climate of clinical inquiry by virtue of their education and clinical expertise, and they should actively participate in research and scholarly activities in their practice settings to the fullest extent of their education and training.⁹⁻¹²

Although there has been tremendous growth in hospice and palliative care research, many gaps remain. Since 2009, HPNA has established research agendas every four years that identify gaps/needs in order to: (1) provide focus for researchers to conduct meaningful scientific and quality-improvement initiatives and inform evidence-based practice, (2) guide organizational funding, and (3) illustrate to other stakeholders the importance of nursing research foci.¹³ Aligned with the *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care*,¹⁴ HPNA research agendas are developed to highlight gaps in care and provide direction for research that can advance expert care in serious illness and improve patient and family outcomes.

Research and Scholarship

- Hospice and palliative nurses should critically analyze, critique, and interpret research for application to practice and inform patients and families of the evidence base guiding their care.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should actively disseminate their research findings through presentations, publications, consultations, and case discussions at professional meetings and conferences at the local, regional, national, and international levels.
- Interdisciplinary hospice and palliative care research teams should strive to include, engage, and collaborate with hospice and palliative nurses who are actively engaged in clinical practice whenever possible.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should lead research teams and advance translational science by:
 - Identifying patient problems sensitive to nursing interventions and palliative care research.
 - Contributing to research designs.
 - Participating in/leading data collection for palliative research.
 - Participating in/leading the informed consent process.
 - Ensuring that studies are ethical in the recruitment and retention of patients with serious illness and their families.



Clinical Practice

- Hospice and palliative nurses should continuously seek educational and experiential learning opportunities to improve their skills in research and translation of research findings into clinical practice.
- Evidence-based practice education and training are essential components of hospice and palliative nurse competencies.³
- Hospice and palliative nurses should share and discuss peer-reviewed research findings with their colleagues to infuse knowledge into nursing practice.

Leadership

- Hospice and palliative nurses should lead teams in developing a spirit of inquiry, creating research infrastructure, prioritizing clinical questions, and launching institutional and community-supported projects.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should mentor and guide fellow nurses and interprofessional colleagues in research and scholarship.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should represent and advocate for the advancement of palliative nursing research and scholarship locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Policy

- Nurses are often the first providers to recognize when and how healthcare policies are not effectively meeting the needs of their patients. As patient advocates, hospice and palliative nurses are well positioned to serve as resources for reliable information on health policy issues in hospice and palliative care and to share stories with lawmakers that demonstrate the impact specific policies have in the communities they serve.^{15,16}
- Hospice and palliative nurses must utilize research findings to inform the development of patient- and family-centered policies that set standards and improve access to high-quality hospice and palliative care.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should be involved in policy conversations by learning about current nursing and palliative care issues being addressed at the local, state, and national levels and establishing relationships with their legislators. By joining HPNA and other professional organizations, nurses can assist with efforts to bring nursing's perspective to policymakers.
- Hospice and palliative nurses should have a basic understanding of legislative and regulatory processes that will effect change, such as writing to their state representatives regarding healthcare policies impacting hospice and palliative care, sharing relevant research, and commenting on regulatory actions that affect the profession and patient care.¹⁵
- Hospice and palliative care nurses should register to vote, vote in all elections, and consider voting for candidates who support nursing and address healthcare issues, including equity (i.e., access to care).



- Hospice and palliative nurses should advocate for adequate funding to recruit and prepare doctorally prepared nurses (PhD nurse scientists and DNP-prepared clinical practice and healthcare leadership experts) to plan and implement vital research, evidence-based practice, and quality-improvement projects. Funding for hospice and palliative nursing research and scholarship is essential to advance the science and the field and to effectively advocate for new policies at the state and federal levels.

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This statement reflects the best available evidence at the time of writing or revisions.

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