

2026

Education & Training Courses



Welcome to Pilgrims Hospices:

Inspiring professional learning

At the heart of our work is a commitment to fostering a culture of learning, respect, and inclusivity. Through teaching and education, we strive to extend our mission of compassion and excellence in hospice care to the wider community.

Focusing on compassion, innovation, and expertise, the department delivers a wide range of training opportunities tailored to meet the needs of individuals and organisations across east Kent and beyond.

Our team of experienced educators and facilitators collaborate closely with clinical services to ensure that training programs are grounded in best practices and the latest advancements in palliative care.

From specialist courses for healthcare professionals to workshops for volunteers and community partners, our offerings are designed to enhance understanding, improve communication, and elevate the standard of care for patients and their loved ones.

Meet the Clinical Education team

Katy Stephens, Clinical Quality & Education Lead

Before joining Pilgrims Hospices, Katy dedicated 23 years to nursing with the NHS, specialising in cancer care and chemotherapy. Her extensive experience includes roles as both a clinician and a training lead for east Kent.

Katy spent five years as an IV Access Specialist Nurse and served as Matron for inpatient and outpatient chemotherapy services across East Kent Hospitals.



Lisa Hagger, Clinical Skills Facilitator

Lisa qualified as a nurse in 1996 with a Diploma in Nursing Studies, she then gained her BSc in Interprofessional Practice and MSc in Global Public Health.

Lisa has worked within the acute setting, social services and primary care. Lisa then combined her passion for nursing and education through working as a senior lecturer in the School of Nursing at Christ Church University, where she gained an MSc level qualification in teaching.



Lisa joined Pilgrims Hospices in 2024 as a clinical skills facilitator, supporting both internal and external healthcare staff with their clinical development.

Sophie Van Walwyk, Head of Psychosocial & Bereavement Services

Sophie is a registered social work practitioner with 10 years' experience in hospice care. In her current role, Sophie is responsible for all social work, counselling and chaplaincy teams and bereavement services at Pilgrims, and is the designated lead for safeguarding. She oversees our bereavement education and training programme, which includes grief awareness, assessing bereavement risk and compassionate communication skills.



Annie Hogben, Expert Volunteer Development Lead

Annie brings a nursing background to her role as Expert Volunteer Development Lead, she collaborates closely with clinical teams to design and implement volunteer roles that support patients, carers, and bereaved families. She also oversees the integration of new volunteer positions, enhancing Pilgrims' services and strengthening the charity's dedicated volunteer workforce.

As a trained facilitator for SAGE & THYME communication training, Annie equips individuals with skills for handling sensitive conversations.



2026 at a glance

Upcoming courses for you



January

- **21st** Syringe Driver (Half day)

February

- **12th** Palliative & EOL Care (Non Reg)
- **18th** Advanced Communications Skills
- **25th** Principles and Practices (5 day)

March

- **10th** Verification of an Expected Death
- **11th** Enhanced Communications
- **12th** Syringe Driver

May

- **14th** Verification of an Expected Death

June

- **10th** Syringe Driver (Half day)

July

- **1st** Syringe Driver
- **9th** Palliative & EOL Care (Non Reg)

Verification of an Expected Death

This course is designed to give you the confidence to verify an expected death. The face-to-face training now includes an optional competency assessment to support practical application.

Course aims and learning outcomes:

- Understand the distinction between verification and certification of death
- Define the term expected death
- Develop an understanding of the legal considerations related to verifying death, including when and how to refer to the coroner
- Recognise the professional accountability involved in the verification process
- Identify the physiological signs of death
- Follow the correct procedure for verifying death, ensuring all steps are accurately documented in the relevant clinical notes

Who is it for?

This course is suitable for registered nurses and paramedics.



Date:

10th March & 14th May

Time: 13:30 - 15:45

Fee: £60

Venue:

Ann Robertson Centre

Syringe Driver (Half day)

This interactive half-day workshop is designed specifically for Registered Nurses with **previous experience** who are looking to refresh and update their knowledge and practical skills in managing Continuous Subcutaneous Infusions (CSCI).

What You'll Learn

Through a blend of theory and hands-on practice, this session will cover:

- Indications for using a CSCI
- Safe administration and ongoing monitoring
- Practical setup and operation within the classroom of a syringe pump
- Calculating infusion rates for accurate medication delivery
- Overview of commonly used drugs, combinations, and compatibility in CSCI

Participants will have the opportunity to engage in practical exercises, ensuring confidence in both the setup and troubleshooting of syringe drivers.

Please Note: This half-day workshop does **not** include competency sign-off. Following the session, nurses are expected to undertake **repeated, supervised practice** within their clinical setting. Competency must be formally assessed and signed off by their employing organisation **before** independently managing CSCIs.

Who is it for?

This course is ideal for nurses who have previous experience in end-of-life care and are looking to refresh or update their skills.



Date:

21st January

10th June

Time: 9:00-13:00

Fee: £50

Venue:

Ann Robertson Centre

Syringe Driver (Full day)

This comprehensive, interactive full-day workshop is designed for Registered Nurses supporting patients at the end of life who have **little or no prior experience** with Continuous Subcutaneous Infusions (CSCI).

What You'll Learn

This practical and engaging session will cover:

- The **indications, benefits, and challenges** of CSCI use
- **Detailed discussion** on safe administration and effective monitoring
- How to **calculate infusion rates** for accurate and safe medication delivery
- An **in-depth review** of commonly used drugs, drug combinations, and compatibility
- **Step-by-step guidance** on setting up and managing syringe drivers
- A **simulation-style session** offering ample opportunity for hands-on practice in a supportive classroom environment
- **OSCE-style assessments** of competence, where appropriate

Please Note

A practical competency assessment is included in this workshop and delegates are required to meet safe standards in order to pass the competencies. If a delegate does not meet the required standard further training will be recommended.

Who is it for?

Registered Nurses working in EOL care.



Date:

12th March

1st July

Time: 9:00-17:00

Fee: £100

Venue:

Ann Robertson Centre

“Do you know how to talk to someone who is worried or distressed?”

This foundation-level SAGE & THYME workshop is designed to equip those in both clinical and non-clinical roles with the confidence and communication skills to support individuals experiencing emotional distress.

Learning outcomes:

- Learn a simple, memorable structure for starting and ending supportive conversations
- Gain skills to help others who are worried or upset
- Understand and apply evidence-based communication techniques

This interactive workshop combines short lectures, small group discussions, and rehearsals to teach participants how to engage in structured, person-centred conversations.

Who is it for?

Suitable for anyone, regardless of role or experience, who may encounter individuals with emotional concerns.

Date:

TBA

Fee: £50

Venue:

Ann Robertson Centre

Palliative & End of Life Care

We're pleased to introduce a new course starting in June 2025, specially designed for unregistered healthcare workers seeking an introduction to palliative and end-of-life care.

Blending practical care knowledge with key communication skills, this course aims to equip carers with the confidence and understanding needed to offer compassionate, person-centred support at the end of life.

Content

- SAGE & THYME workshop
- Recognition of dying
- Bereavement support
- Symptom management
- Practical care at end of life

Who is this course for?

Unregistered healthcare professionals



Date:

12th Feb

9th July (Virtual)

Fee: £100

£75 (Virtual)

Time: 9:00-17:00

Venue:

Ann Robertson Centre

Enhanced Communications Skills

This engaging one-day online training is aimed at strengthening your communication skills and increasing your confidence in handling difficult conversations. By exploring real-life examples drawn from your own experiences, you'll have the chance to reflect on the communication challenges you face in your everyday work. The session will introduce practical models and effective strategies to support you in navigating these situations with greater ease and impact.

Content

- Pre-learning (2–3 hours total)
- 1-day workshop

Join a dynamic, experiential learning session delivered online. The day is designed to be engaging and participatory, building your confidence and skills through practice.

Who is this course for?

Healthcare professionals (Band 4+)



Date:
11th March

Time: 9:00–16:00

Fee: £280

Venue: Virtual

Principles & Practices in EOL Care



This five-day course provides registered nurses and allied health professionals with the foundations of end-of-life and palliative care, to support their patients and families, in any setting during their final months, weeks and days.

Attendees will have the opportunity to increase and evaluate their knowledge and practice in a supportive environment, with experienced palliative care professionals.

The course consists of five, in-person days of training.

Content

- Palliative care emergencies
- Non-pharmacological approaches to symptom management
- Evidence-based practice and pain management
- Equity in access
- Ethical challenges
- ReSPECT
- Communication

Who is this course for?

Registered nurses and allied health professionals.

Date:

25th Feb, 4th, 11, 18th, 25th March

Time: 9:15-16:15

Fee: £495

Lunch & refreshments included

Advanced Communications Skills

Effective communication is essential for delivering high-quality patient care. This course provides a supportive environment to explore challenging communication issues drawn from your own practice.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Reflect on your personal response to communication challenges and develop strategies to manage them effectively.
- Apply active listening skills to recognise and respond to verbal and non-verbal cues.
- Support patients, families, and colleagues in articulating their concerns with confidence.
- Deliver information in a clear, compassionate way, tailored to individual needs.
- Navigate complex conversations with sensitivity, working towards a shared and meaningful conclusion.

Content

- Pre-learning (2–3 hours total)
- Individual coaching (20 mins)
- 2-day workshop

Who is this course for?

Senior health care professionals (Band 6 or equivalent and above)



Date:

18th & 19th February

8th & 9th April

Time: 9:00 - 14:30

Fee: £650

Venue: Virtual

Touch Therapy

Hand massage is a gentle, effective technique that offers comfort and connection through safe, non-invasive touch. It can help to soothe anxiety, ease tension, and provide moments of calm for patients.

This practical half-day course introduces the key techniques of hand massage, focusing on its role as a supportive aspect of patient care. Participants will have the opportunity to practise the skills on real-life 'models' in a relaxed and supportive environment.

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Recognise and respond to patients' needs for therapeutic touch through hand massage
- Understand the benefits of hand massage and be aware of any contraindications
- Confidently perform a simple hand massage treatment using practical, hands-on techniques

Who is it for?

This course is ideal for healthcare professionals and non-registered staff who wish to enhance patient care by incorporating therapeutic hand massage into their daily practice.



Date:
20th March

Time: 9:30-12:30

Fee: £40

Venue:
Ann Robertson Centre

Grief Awareness & Compassionate Conversations

Join us for an engaging and supportive session where we will:

- Explore how grief can affect us and learn to recognise typical emotional responses.
- Gain insight into why bereavement support matters and what effective support looks like.
- Develop communication skills through practical listening exercises to better support those who are grieving
- Discover strategies for self-care when supporting others through loss.

Who is this course for?

This course is ideal for non-clinical staff, voluntary organisations, community groups, and corporate teams - anyone who may come into contact with bereaved adults and wants to feel more confident offering support.

Whether you're supporting colleagues, clients, customers, or members of your local community, this session will help you better understand the normal grief process, explore what kind of bereavement support can be helpful, and build your confidence in having compassionate conversations.



Date:

**Bespoke sessions
available upon request**

Grief Awareness & Bereavement Risk Assessment



Understanding grief is essential for providing compassionate care and support to those experiencing loss. This course explores the concepts of bereavement, grief, and mourning, delving into theories that explain the grieving process. Participants will learn to recognise normal and prolonged grief responses, understand anticipatory grief, and appreciate the importance of bereavement support. The course also highlights risk and resilience factors in grief, alongside the impact of compassion fatigue, emphasising the need for self-care.

What will I learn?

You'll gain an understanding of bereavement, grief, and mourning, explore key grief theories, recognise normal and prolonged grief responses, understand anticipatory grief, identify support needs and risk/resilience factors, and learn the importance of self-care and recognising compassion fatigue.

Who is this course for?

This course is for anyone working in health and social care who supports bereaved adults within their role.

Date:
Bespoke sessions
available upon request

How to book

Plus Terms & Conditions

Booking

To secure your place on a course, please contact the education team to check availability and request a booking form.

To confirm your booking, course fees must be paid in full within 7 days. Where a purchase order is provided, payment is required within 30 days.

Cancellations

All fees are liable for payment unless cancellation is notified in writing at least 14 days before the event. No refunds will be made within 14 days of the event. If you are unable to attend a substitute may attend in your place.

Advanced Communications Course:
Due to high demand and limited places, cancellations must be made at least 6 weeks in advance to receive a full refund or transfer.

Insufficient bookings

We reserve the right to cancel a course if there are insufficient bookings. Where possible this decision will be made no later than one week before the course date.

Delegates will be informed promptly and offered either an alternative date (if available) or a full refund.

You can reach the team on
education@pilgrimshospices.org
or call us on 01227 812 616.

Stay in touch

If you would like to receive updates about our education and training opportunities, please email education@pilgrimshospices.org to request to be added to our mailing list.

By contacting us, you are giving consent for your email address to be stored securely and used solely for this purpose.

You can unsubscribe at any time by contacting the same address.

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 pilgrimshospices.org/education



Find out more about
our work and other ways
you can support us.

Email: eastkent@pilgrimshospices.org

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