



BY
 Pallium Canada

The Palliative Care ECHO Project

Semi-Annual Report

May 2024



Palliative Care ECHO Project: Semi-Annual Report

Welcome to the sixth semi-annual report on the Palliative Care ECHO Project.

About the Palliative Care ECHO Project

The [Palliative Care ECHO Project](#) is a national initiative led by Pallium Canada in collaboration with its 13 Hub Partners located across Canada. It serves as a catalyst for cultivating communities of practice and fostering continuous professional development among health care providers dedicated to caring for patients with life-limiting illnesses and their families.

The Palliative Care ECHO Project offers a wide variety of free ECHO programs on both a national, provincial, and regional level. Through this innovative program, participants gain access to specialized training, interdisciplinary support, and evidence-based resources, empowering them to deliver high-quality palliative care.

Palliative Care ECHO Project highlights

Continued spread and scale of ECHO programs

Since launching the Palliative Care ECHO Project in March 2021, Pallium and its Hub Partners, have made significant strides in supporting continuing professional development.

Hosting over 400 learning sessions, the Palliative Care ECHO Project has accounted for more than 22,000 learner encounters and over 29,000 recording views. Over 95% of participants have reported that the sessions offer valuable learning experiences, with over 85% expressing confidence in applying the knowledge gained to real-world practice. These achievements underscore the Palliative Care ECHO Project's commitment to advancing palliative care practices through accessible and engaging learning opportunities.

Looking forward

In the evolving field of palliative care, the Palliative Care ECHO Project has proven to be a transformative initiative, providing thousands of health care providers across Canada with access to the latest knowledge on palliative care and building a national network of health care professionals dedicated to its advancement.

As we move forward, there is an incredible opportunity to build on the early success of the Palliative Care ECHO Project and expand its reach and impact to meet the growing needs of health care providers, community members, and individuals looking to learn more about a palliative approach to care.

Through communities of practice and high-quality programming, the Palliative Care ECHO Project will continue to bring together a dedicated community of palliative care leaders and front-line health care providers to advance palliative care in their communities across Canada.

Hub Partners updates

Hub Partners are at the heart of the Palliative Care ECHO Project and are critical to the creation and delivery of ECHO programs that will meet the needs of their learners. Through the leadership of these amazing organizations, existing programs and resources can reach more learners and new programs can be rapidly developed, shared, and deployed to fill gaps.



Introducing our new Hub Partners

Our network of Hub Partners continues to grow, as we welcome the [Institut de soins palliatifs et de fin de vie Michel-Sarrazin - Université Laval](#), the [Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association](#), and [Nova Scotia Health](#) to the Palliative Care ECHO Project.

- **Institut de soins palliatifs et de fin de vie Michel-Sarrazin- Université Laval** – Located in Quebec, Institut de soins palliatifs et de fin de vie Michel-Sarrazin- Université Laval has been operating an end-of-life care facility for individuals with cancer for over 35 years. They support patients and their families and actively contribute to the development of skills and excellence in palliative care through training, research, and publications.
- **Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association** – The Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association is a leading organization dedicated to representing gerontological nurses, fostering excellence in gerontological nursing through leadership and scholarship, and addressing the health concerns of older Canadians and the nurses involved in their care.
- **Nova Scotia Health** – Nova Scotia Health provides health services to Nova Scotians and some specialized services to Maritimers and Atlantic Canadians. They operate hospitals, health centres and community-based programs across the province.

The addition of these new Hub Partners represents a significant milestone in the continued spread and scale of the Palliative Care ECHO Project and underscores our commitment to fostering a space for collaboration, learning, innovation, and excellence in palliative care across Canada.

Program updates

Over the past six months, Pallium and its Hub Partners have run several high-impact programs.

Communities of practice and series

The Palliative Care ECHO Project delivers the majority of its content through national, provincial, and regional communities of practice and educational series. These bring together health care professionals with shared interests to foster continued knowledge exchange and interactive, case-based learning.

The recordings of all Pallium-run communities of practice and series are available for viewing at echopalliative.com.

Below are highlights from the past six months:

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- [Lung Health Community of Practice](#) – In collaboration with the Lung Health Foundation, we launched a new accredited community of practice for those interested in integrating a palliative care approach for individuals with advanced lung disease. Over the course of five sessions, participants explore topics including symptom management and models of care (including home care, hospice, and palliative care units).
- [Community-Based Primary Palliative Care Community of Practice](#) – This is the third-accredited community of practice geared toward inter-professional primary care clinicians across Canada who are looking to augment their primary-level palliative care skills and connect with and learn from colleagues providing a palliative care approach.
- [Paramedic Community of Practice](#) – This community of practice was brought back by popular demand for a second series after successfully wrapping up the first series in March 2023. This series connects community and ambulatory paramedics from across Canada who have a shared interest in integrating a palliative care approach for patients and their families.

- [Spiritual Care Community of Practice](#) – In the summer of 2024, this community of practice series will return! This five-session series created a space for health care professionals, systems leaders, spiritual care practitioners, and psychospiritual therapists to come together and deepen their understanding of spirituality in palliative and bereavement care.
- [Heart Disease Community of Practice](#) – Returning in 2024 due to popular demand, this accredited community of practice is ideal for individuals with an interest in integrating a palliative care approach for individuals with advanced heart failure. For six sessions, participants explored topics ranging from multi-morbidity and heart failure and implantable cardioverter-defibrillators to de-prescribing cardiac and other medications.

BC Centre for Palliative Care

- **Flexing Your Core: The 30-Minute Palliative Workout** – Brought back by popular demand for a third and fourth time, this series optimized learning in a short amount of time. Eight Learning Hub modules take 15 minutes to complete and are complimented with a short 30-minute session designed for those looking to incorporate the palliative approach to care into their daily practice.
- **Palliative Nurse Coordinators Series** - Recognizing the importance of supporting nurses' specialized consultant roles as Palliative Coordinators, this invitation-only series was launched in 2022 to build competency in their roles and increase connectedness between the nurse clinicians to network, support and share resources.
- **Grief and Bereavement Literacy Series** – This series launched in August of 2023 and includes sessions focused on finding hope and resilience after substance use disorders, grieving the death of a pet. The series is intended for anyone interested in increasing their knowledge around grief and bereavement to support them personally or in their professional careers.
- **All Together ECHO Series** – As part of a compassionate communities initiative, this series is ideal for health care providers, volunteers, community groups looking to explore the opportunities of advance care planning and serious illness conversations with clients, families, in community and health care settings.

- **Advanced Palliative Psychosocial BC Community of Practice: Grief & Bereavement** – A co-creation between Canuck Place Children’s Hospice, BCCPC, Lumara Grief & Bereavement Care Society, and Victoria Hospice, this series is being developed by and for BC psychosocial palliative care providers working in clinical roles providing care to adults, children, and families who are affected by end-of-life issues, grief, loss and/or bereavement.

Canadian Home Care Association

- **Essential Skills for Palliative Care** – This series addressed the priority competency domains in the Canadian Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Competency Framework and shared knowledge, experience, and expertise in specific palliative care domains.

Covenant Health Palliative Institute

- **Psychosocial-Spiritual Series** – This series was developed with Alberta specific content and is ideal for social workers, spiritual care providers, creative arts therapists, occupational therapists, counsellors, psychologists, and other clinicians providing direct emotional and spiritual support. The topics are relevant to emotional, spiritual, and grief support in palliative care and bereavement as well as self-care for clinicians.
- **PalliLearn ECHO Series** – By popular demand, this series returned for a second time. Developed in Australia, this series was adapted for Alberta in partnership with Palliative Care South Australia and an Alberta working group. PalliLearn is a train-the-trainer program that helps people to develop the knowledge and skills to be a supportive friend and neighbour in times of sickness and loss incorporating key research findings and practical ways to put them into action.

Médecins francophones du Canada

- **Fin de vie Webinaire en soins palliatifs (in French)** – Médecins francophones du Canada co-hosted this accredited series with Palli-Science for the second time. This seven-part series is offered in French, covers topics ranging from heart failure to dementia and has been highly attended by health care professionals in Quebec.

Montreal Institute for Palliative Care

- **Family Caregiver Series** – This series, currently being held for a third time, is intended for family caregivers to have a space to learn, exchange ideas, and connect with others who may have caregiving stories that resonate with one another. Topics covered include family caregivers and advance care planning, family support in palliative care, self-care for family caregivers, and more.

North Simcoe Muskoka Hospice Palliative Care Network

- **Taking the Pain out of Pain Management: One Step at a Time (NSMHPCN)** – This ongoing series provides a comprehensive review of the types of pain, assessment of pain, pharmacological and non-pharmacological management, and the concept of total pain in palliative care. To make these ECHO sessions more accessible to individuals with hearing difficulties, NSMHPCN leveraged the power of Descript, an innovative AI tool designed for crafting, recording, transcribing, editing, collaborating on, and sharing captivating videos and podcasts. This cutting-edge technology plays a crucial role in assisting individuals with difficulties of hearing.

North West Regional Palliative Care Program

- **Palliative Care ECHO Lunch & Learn Series** – These sessions are designed for participants to learn about palliative care with special guest speakers covering various topics such as symptom management, communication skills, ethical considerations, and holistic care approaches.

Standalone sessions

Pallium Canada and its Hub Partners have hosted several standalone ECHO sessions, inviting subject matter experts to present on topics relevant to Palliative Care. These sessions include:

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- [Palliative Care Approach to Pain and Shortness of Breath](#)
- [Trauma Informed Care and Cultural Safety](#)
- [World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Special Lecture: Compassionate Communities: Together for Palliative Care](#)
- [Advance Care Planning, Goals of Care and Health Care Consent in Palliative Care](#)
- [Legal Framework versus Clinical Approach: Ethics and Capacity Assessment in Palliative Care](#)
- [Improving Essential Conversations in Long-Term Care: Introduction to the QUIC Toolkit](#)
- [Compassionate Companionship: Navigating Grief Together](#)
- [Compassionate Communities Evaluation Guide – Let's work through some examples!](#)
- [The Edge of Compassion: Sustaining Well-being in High-Stress and Trauma-Exposed Environments](#)
- [Cannabis in Palliative Care: Exploring Benefits and Considerations](#)
- [Navigating Palliative Care at Home: Insights from a Bedside Nurse](#)
- [Exploring Psilocybin in Canadian Palliative Care: Unveiling History, Definitions, and Legal Landscapes](#)
- [Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care: Mapping the Present – Shaping the Future](#)
- [Compassionate Care Continuum: Addressing Ageism, Ableism, and Ethical Challenges in Pediatric and Long-Term Palliative Care](#)
- [Perspectives pour la recherche en soins palliatifs au Québec : projection 2024-2032 \(in French\) – co-hosted with RQSPAL](#)
- [Communication sur les maladies graves en soins palliatifs \(in French\)](#)

Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians

- Breathing Easy - Strategies for Integrating Palliative Care for COPD
- Death, Dying and Dignity in the Emergency Department

Médecins francophones du Canada

- Sédation palliative continue vs soins palliatifs proportionnés (in French)
- Thérapie assistée aux psychédéliques pour détresse en fin de vie (in French)

North West Regional Palliative Care Program

- Supporting Patients Who Identify as Two Spirit-LGBTQ+ Who Could Benefit from a Palliative Approach to Care

Palliative Care Journal Watch

The [Palliative Care Journal Watch](#) is a regular series of webinars that keeps audiences up to date on the latest peer-reviewed palliative care literature. This program is led by subject matter experts from experts from the divisions of palliative care at McMaster University and Queen's University.

In 2023, we added new teams of contributors from McGill University, the University of Toronto, the University of Manitoba, the University of Calgary, the University of Alberta and Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center in Israel. Both the previous and new teams regularly monitor over 30 journals and highlight papers that have the potential to challenge us to think differently about a topic or confirm our current practices.

The Palliative Care Journal Watch program is accessible in multiple formats, including as a live ECHO session, video recordings, slides, and the Palliative Care Journal Watch Podcast. The podcast has published 12 episodes to date, with over 5,500 downloads, reaching listeners from across the world (see map below).



Evaluation and research

Evaluation results to date

Research and evaluation remain at the forefront of the Palliative Care ECHO Project and all that we do. It's critical to ensure we are having the intended reach and impact and are delivering high-quality programs that meet the needs of our target audiences.

Early on this initiative, Pallium and its Hub Partners collected a standardized set of data and post-session feedback survey data; aligning with the Evaluation and Research Framework that was developed by the Dr. Joshua Shadd—Pallium Canada Research Hub in collaboration with an international panel of experts in the field of education evaluation.

In early 2024, the Dr. Joshua Shadd—Pallium Canada Research Hub completed the initial evaluation of the first two years of the Palliative Care ECHO Project, shedding light on its transformative impact. The initial evaluation activity focused on examining Pallium and its Hub Partners, assessing the project's dissemination, gauging learner experiences, and better understanding the value of Pallium's role as a Superhub supporting Hub Partners.

The evaluation revealed several key strengths of the Palliative Care ECHO Project, including its ability to enhance partner organization mandates, offer flexible content, and foster meaningful connections among participants. Additionally, the project's emphasis on connection has facilitated valuable networking opportunities and collaborative efforts, enhancing the overall learning experience.

Evaluation key findings – from mid-2021 to March 2023

- Over 13,000 participants engaged in over 250 sessions.
- The number of sessions increased significantly with a 66% increase between year 1 and year 2.
- Post-session evaluations indicated positive feedback on the learning experience, with 85% of respondents finding the sessions beneficial.
- The project attracted a diverse range of professionals and stakeholders involved in palliative care, including physicians, nurses, support workers, social workers, caregivers, and patients.
- Learners from both Hub Partners' and national sessions reported positive impacts and value added by the Palliative Care ECHO Project, strengthening stakeholder relations and fostering collaboration within the palliative care community.
- Hub Partners achieved significant milestones and accomplishments. Their dedication and efforts have contributed substantially to the overall success and expansion of this initiative.

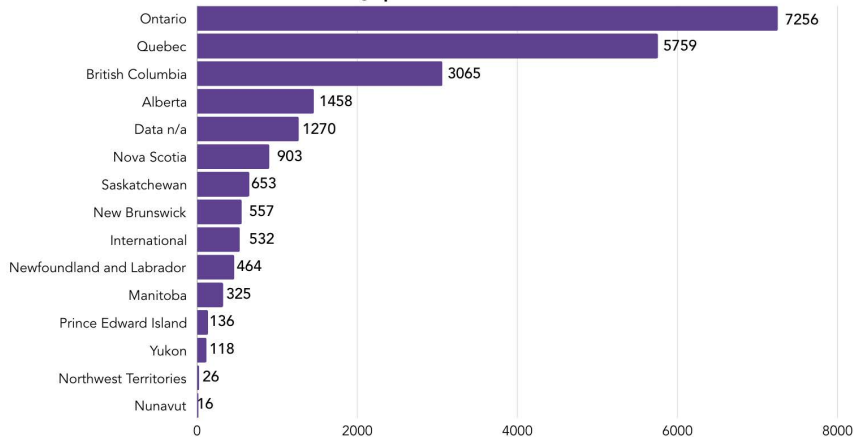
The full results of this evaluation will be shared in the coming year. In our next evaluation activities, we will explore Communities of Practice (COP), examining their evolution, comparing similarities and differences between COPs, and identifying factors that either support or hinder their success.

Results and impact

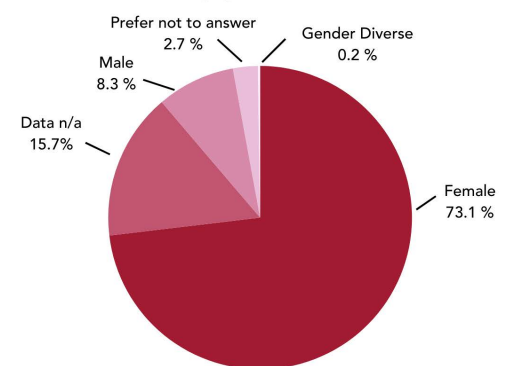
Palliative Care ECHO Project reach

The Palliative Care ECHO Project has continued to reach health care providers from almost every province and territory across Canada and providers from many different professions and settings of care.

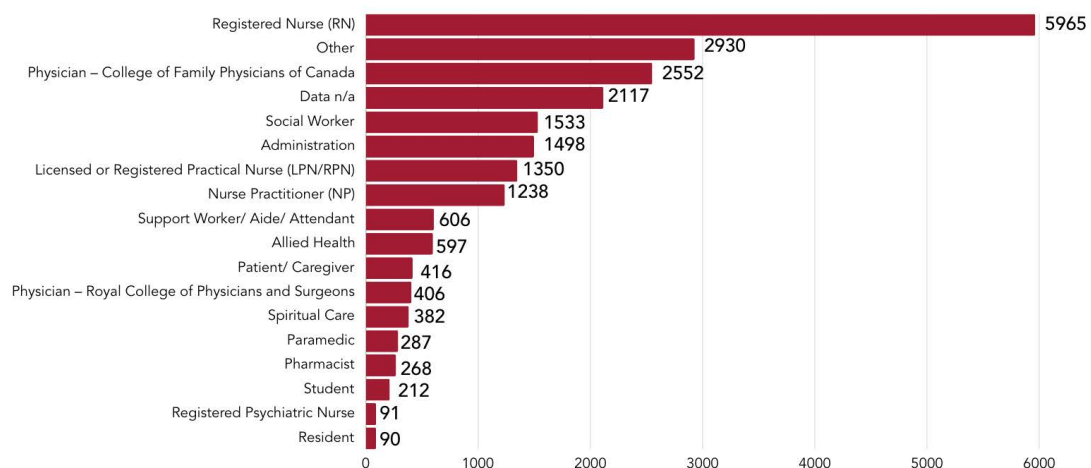
Learners by province (N=22538)



Learners by gender (N=22538)

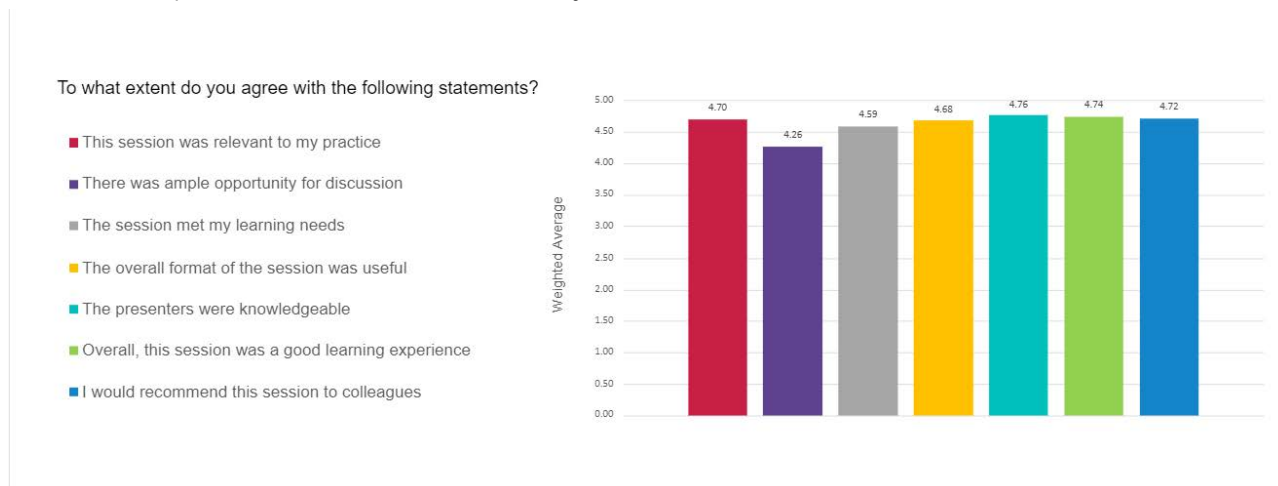


Learners by role (N=22538)



Learner experience

The ECHO programs continue to be well received by learners. Below are results from the initial post-session feedback surveys:



Here's what some of our learners had to say about our ECHO programs over the past year:

"An excellent well-spoken and delivered topic and presentation. I found it very rejuvenating."

«Très enrichissant et très bien présenté - merci. »

"Excellent speakers, great education session, thank you!"

"The speaker was incredible!! I felt 100% engaged through the entire webinar."



"Thank you very much for this presentation. I thought this was a rich presentation of information that was both new and confirming of current practices. I appreciated the references and resources he provided."

"As an educator the Pallium ECHO presentations have been extremely valuable to me and I attend every one I possibly can and pass access into on to my course registrants. Thank you"

« Cette formation était très intéressante. MERCI! »

"Thank you very much for offering this webinar. Greatly appreciated."

Our supporters

Partnerships are at the heart of the Palliative Care ECHO Project and are critical to adapting the Project programming to meet their stakeholders' needs. Through the leadership of these amazing organizations, existing programs and resources can reach more health care providers and learners and new content and programming can be rapidly shared, developed, and deployed to fill gaps and enhance learning opportunities.

Thank you to the following supporters, whose contributions have helped the Palliative Care ECHO Project advance palliative care in Canada in the last few months of 2023–24.

- Arbor Memorial Foundation
- Boehringer Ingelheim LTD

Funding

The Palliative Care ECHO Project is supported by a financial contribution from Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.



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