UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Complexity Medicine and Palliative Care

2627-4-H4101D381

Aims

Provide the student with the skills to address the themes of biopsychosocial complexity and palliative care medicine in a context of profound changes in demographic scenarios and healthcare service organizations, also paying attention to gender differences.

Contents

Advanced economy societies are undergoing profound changes affecting demographic and epidemiological aspects as well as social and economic dimensions. One of the most significant effects is the progressive aging of the population. This increase in life expectancy, unfortunately, does not always accompany a satisfactory quality of life: increasingly older individuals, often alone, live for years with chronic diseases, disabilities, cognitive deficits, and individual suffering. The medicine of complexities addresses people who are simultaneously affected by some or all of these conditions. In some cases, for many of these individuals, palliative care represents the most appropriate approach to relieving suffering and controlling symptoms. Palliative care, historically developed in the care of cancer patients, must now be a fundamental skill for 21st-century doctors who will care for elderly patients with high clinical complexity. In fact, palliative care has proven to provide valuable assistance to such individuals, ensuring early engagement and continuity of care, complementing “active” therapies.

The course aims to provide students with multidisciplinary skills, teaching them to identify fragile and complex patients, recognize and manage palliative care needs, and provide information on epidemiological data of the aging population and independent pathology prognostic tools, also from a gender medicine perspective. The course aims to impact the cultural and educational dimension of future health professionals, providing students with knowledge on team working methods, communication, and family involvement.

Detailed program

Epidemiological data on the aging of the Italian and global populations.
Demographic, epidemiological, and social transitions in the 21st century.
Definition of multimorbidity, comorbidity, and complexity.
Geriatric syndromes and unmet needs.

Introduction to Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment methods.
Polypharmacy, therapeutic and diagnostic reconciliation.
Introduction to the principles of palliative medicine and care.
Identification and Multidimensional Assessment of palliative care needs in adults and children.
Planning and sharing care pathways.
Early intervention and Continuity of Care through clinical governance of care pathways.
Multidisciplinary approach centered on the patient and family, and based on collaboration among professionals: teamwork and the role of volunteering.
Therapeutic relationships and alliance.
Interpersonal communication techniques and delivering bad news.
End-of-life ethics.
Spirituality.

Prerequisites

from 3rd and 4th year of the Medicine and Surgery Degree Course
from 2nd year of the Nursing Degree Course
from 1st year of the Master's Degree Course in Nursing and Midwifery Sciences

Teaching form

The lessons will preferably be delivered "in person" as expository teaching (didattica erogativa, DE). In a smaller percentage of cases, interactive teaching (Didattica Interattiva, DI)will be used, also utilizing clinical cases to be discussed collectively.

Textbook and teaching resource

Manuale di geriatria di Antonelli - Incalzi, Cesari, Leosco, Pedone, Ungar, Volpato - Societa' Italuana di Gerontologia e Geriatria • 2019 Edra - Masson

Il mondo delle cure palliative. Manuale per giovani medici. A. Turriziani, G. Zaninetta, Esculapio 2020

Fondamenti di Medicina Palliativa, C. Chelazzi, R. De Gaudio, I. Iannini, G. VILLA, IDELSON-GNOCCHI 2023

Semester

1st semester

Assessment method

Attendance to the course will be evaluated. There will not be a final exam, but during the lessons, participants will be asked questions about clinical cases (description of a situation or real example in which the interconnections between different elements/variables are analyzed in light of one or more theoretical paradigms). These questions will guide the instructors in assessing the students' acquisition of theoretical-practical concepts

Office hours

By appointment with email to the professors
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Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY