

## **Education on Palliative and End-of-Life Care (2003)**

*The Education on Palliative and End-of-Life Care* was produced by the Project to Educate Physicians on End-of-Life Care (EPEC). EPEC was developed by the Institute for Ethics at the American Medical Association. It is designed to educate all US physicians on the essential clinical competencies required to provide quality end-of-life care.

Now sponsored by Northwestern University Medical School, the EPEC Project comprises several complementary components. At the heart of the project is a core curriculum that provides physicians with the basic knowledge and skills needed to appropriately care for dying patients. The EPEC Curriculum consists of four 45 minute plenary modules and thirteen 45-minute workshop modules, and is uniquely practical, transportable, and self-contained. It combines didactic sessions, videotape presentations, interactive discussions, and practical exercises. It teaches fundamental skills in communication, ethical decision-making, setting goals, advanced directives, psychosocial considerations, pain and symptom management, and care in the final hours of life.

*The Trainer's Guide* is presented on CD-ROM and includes:

- 4 plenary sessions with supporting Power Point slides, 3 of which begin with videos
- 12 “break-out” modules with supporting Power Point slides and “trigger” case study enactments
- Evaluation-of-outcomes forms to be used by physician-trainers and the EPEC Team to evaluate program effectiveness and the impact of new learning
- Medication tables, guide to hospice and palliative care billing and reimbursement, and basic techniques for successfully teaching EPEC material

The *Participant's Handbook* mirrors the text of the Trainer's Guide without the slides within the text. It is intended for use by participants during the training sessions and includes copies of slides for note taking on separate pages.

This training program is divided into the following sections:

### **Plenary Modules:**

- Gaps in End-of-Life Care
- Legal Issues
- Elements and Models of End-of-Life Care
- Next Steps

### **Workshop Modules:**

- Module 1: Advance Care Planning
- Module 2: Communicating Bad News
- Module 3: Whole Patient Assessment
- Module 4: Pain Management

- Module 5: Physician-assisted Suicide
- Module 6: Depression, Anxiety, Delirium
- Module 7: Goals of Care
- Module 8: Sudden Illness
- Module 9: Medical Futility
- Module 10: Common Physical Symptoms
- Module 11: Withholding/Withdrawing Treatment
- Module 12: Last Hours of Living
- Module 13: Professional Self-Care (Note: this module does not appear on the CD-ROM)

There is also a section entitled Medication Tables that focuses on adverse effects of medications, lists commonly accepted abbreviations and symbols, analgesics commonly used in the United States, equianalgesic doses of opioid analgesics, and medications commonly used in palliative medicine in the United States.

The didactic material is intended primarily for physicians. However, nurses, social workers and other members of the long term care health care team will find the material contained in the *Participant's Handbook* very informative.

The training program products may be purchased from the Project to Educate Physicians on End-of-Life Care (EPEC) website at <http://www.epec.net>. EPEC also offers Become an EPEC Trainer conferences and Professional Development Workshops several times a year. More information about these conferences and workshops can also be found at the EPEC website.