Module Descriptor

Title	Psychosocial Concerns in Serious Illness		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	Published
Code	NURS11036	**SCQF Level**	11
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Elaine Stevens		

Summary of Module

Serious illness is a health condition that carries a high risk of mortality AND either negatively impacts a person's daily function or quality of life, OR excessively strains their caregivers". Kelly and Bollens (2017). This includes illnesses such as cancer, COVID-19, COPD as well as a range of neurological and rare conditions.

This module explores the experience of illness and the concept of suffering in its widest form. Values and belief systems will be explored within the theories of uncertainty, adjustment, anxietty and burden. Reactions to loss, grief and bereavement will be explored as will current best practice in bereavement support. The emotional burden experienced by professional carers will be investigated and support for professionals during and after care episodes will be examined.

The module discusses the importance of psycho-social assessment and specific psychological intervention strategies when individuals expereince serious illness. Ethical decision making knowledge and skills will be woven throughout the module and will relate to the professionals ability to make ethically sound decisions about treatment choices.

The module content maps onto the enhanced/expert level of the NHS Education for Scotland Palliative and End of Life Care Framework to Support the Learning and Development Needs and Social Service Workforce.

The above skills acquisition, contributes to the development of the UWS Graduate Attributes: Universal- critical thinking, analytical, inquiring, culturally aware, emotionally intelligent, ethically-minded, culturally aware, collaborative, research-minded and socially responsible; Work-Ready -knowledgeable, digitally literate, effective communicator, motivated, potential leader; and Successful -autonomous, incisive, creative, resilient and daring.

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☐	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☒	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☒ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☐	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☒
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the psychosocial challenges encountered in the serious illness.
L2	Exhibit effective use of a significant range of skills, techniques and practices in addressing psychosocial concerns in serious illness.
L3	Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills, practice and thinking relating to the experience of illness and the concept of suffering.
L4	Extend their critical understanding of the identification and management of more complicated loss, grief and bereavement.
L5	Demonstrate critical reflection on one's own and others' roles and responsibilities when responding to psychosocial concerns of the seriously ill.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 11** Extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding of the main principles and theories of psychosocial care in serious illness. Critical understanding of some of the more specialised challenges facing patients and families where there is a diagnosis of serious illness.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 11**

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

	Use of originality and creativity in the application of knowledge, understanding and practices in relation to decision making during serious illness. Use of specialised skills, techniques and practices to solve challenging psychosocial issues.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 11** Critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of issues which are at the forefront of psychosocial care and informed by developments in serious illness.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 11** Communicate effectively with patients, families and the multi-professional team about psychosocial issues.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 11** Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional activities; take responsibility for own and/or significant responsibility for the work of others.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours. This module is delivered as hybrid learning module as well as by full distance learning utilising a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Hybrid learning students will participate in a range of synchronous and asynchronous activities supported by the quality assured resources received by distance students. Students who are learning fully online and are supported by the VLE will receive: Core quality assured module resources; individual and group tutorial support and directed learning via the VLE system. This will be aided by synchronous online classroom sessions, asynchronous discussion boards; directed wider reading including access to electronic library and e-books. All students have access to direct individual and tutorial support from their tutors and will be directed to wider reading, including access to electronic library and books.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	20
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	10
Personal Development Plan	6
Asynchronous Class Activity	6

Independent Study	158
n/a	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes: There is no core text for this module. All are considered recommended reading. Cherny, N.I., Fallon, M., Kaasa, S., Portenoy, R.K. and Currow, D.C. (Eds.)(2015) Oxford Textbook of Palliative Medicine. 5th Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chochinov H, Breitbart W (Eds) (2012) Handbook of Psychiatry in Palliative Medicine (2nd Ed). Oxford university Press: Oxford. Hutchison, T.A. (2011) Whole Person Care: A New Paradigm for the 21st C. New York: Springer Kelly, A.S. and Bollens-Lund, E. (2018) Identifying the Population with Serious Illness: The "Denominator" Challenge. Journal of Palliative Medicine, 1(21) Suppl 2, S7-S16. Stroebe M, Schut H, van den Bout J (Eds) (2012) Complicated Grief and Scientific Foundations for Healthcare Professionals. Abingdon: Routledge Worden J.W. (2018) Grief counselling and grief therapy for the mental health practitioner (5th Ed). New York: Springer. In addition students will be directed to a range of international resources on the psychosocial concerns of people with cancer and those with advanced illness.
(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements
In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are attending and participating in all timetabled programme activities including on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, placement, work-based elements, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time. **For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:** Attendance at synchronous sessions (lectures, workshops, and tutorials), completion of asynchronous activities, and submission of assessments to meet the learning outcomes of the module.Attendance at synchronous sessions (lectures, workshops, and tutorials), completion of asynchronous activities, and submission of assessments to meet the learning outcomes of the module.

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. n line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate. Module materials comply with University guidance on inclusive learning and teaching, and specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and

regulations. Where modules require practical and/or laboratory based learning or assessment required to meet accrediting body requirements the University will make reasonable adjustment such as adjustable height benches or assistance of a 'buddy' or helper.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Biological Sciences Health**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Health
Moderator	Constantina Papadopoulou
External Examiner	A Lannie
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	2

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Practical - PowerPoint Presentation: 30% of the module total - 1300 words
Assessment 2
Assignment - Review – 70% - 3150 words
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Presentation	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	30	0

Component 2

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Review/ Article/ Critique/ Paper	☒	☐	☒	☒	☐	70	0

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	0 hours

Change Control

What	When	Who