

Student Worksheet: Palliative Care



Part 1: speaking

Discuss questions 1 and 2 with your partner or group.

1. What is palliative care?
2. Who is it used for?

Part 2: vocabulary

A. Match the words (1–5) to the definitions (a–e).

1. prognosis	a) care which treats the whole person, not just the disease
2. holistic care	b) a service that gives the carer a break from caring
3. palliative care	c) a medical judgement about how a disease may progress
4. degenerative	d) care which supports a patient but does not cure a disease
5. respite care	e) describes a disease where parts of the body stop working

B. Read the description of palliative care and complete it with words from the box.

carer comfortable distressing holistic manage prognosis support treatment
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Palliative care is for people who have a serious illness regardless of the 1) _____ for this condition. The aim is to help them to cope with their condition and 2) _____ to maintain a quality of life. If you need palliative care, you can get help to 3) _____ any pain you might have. The specialist nurses will monitor any possible 4) _____ symptoms and will keep you as 5) _____ as possible. You will also be offered spiritual or psychological 6) _____ if you would like it because it is recognised that a 7) _____ approach is needed. If you have a 8) _____, he or she will also receive help and advice.



Part 3: listening and speaking

A. Relatives may have questions about the care that someone is receiving, particularly if this individual has a serious disease. For example,

Will she suffer?

I hate seeing my mother like this, can you do anything?

Can you think of some more questions a relative might ask? Work with a partner and make a list.

B. Listen to a conversation between a doctor and a relative. Match the beginnings and endings to make some of the things the doctor says.

1. I can talk to you now about your mother and	a) about your mother's treatment at the moment?
2. I'm not sure what you've already been told,	b) seeing your mother like this.
3. What do you understand	c) to make sure that we keep your mother as comfortable as possible.
4. I imagine that it's very difficult for you,	d) but your mother had all the antibiotics we intended giving her.
5. We can tell if she is in any discomfort	e) so you and your family can stay with her as long as you like and have some privacy.
6. We are also going to move your mother into a side room	f) explain what has been happening with her treatment.
7. I'm sorry, but it's impossible to say. All we can do is	g) by her facial expressions.

B. Listen to the conversation again. What do you notice how about how the doctor speaks? Practise saying what the doctor says.

C. You are going to work with a partner and play the roles of a doctor and the relative of a dying patient. Before you start, make some notes that you can use when you play the doctor and the relative. Use the list of questions you wrote in A to help you.

doctor: try to anticipate the kind of questions the relative will ask and be ready with a sensitive response.

relative: think about the things you want to know about your relative's treatment and care

D. Now use language that you have practised in this lesson to have a conversation. Then swap roles and practise again.