

# PALLIATIVE CARE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A PROMISING CHALLENGE

## CUIDADOS PALIATIVOS EM INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR: UM DESAFIO PROMISSOR

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### ABSTRACT

The new epidemiological profile of the Brazilian population requires changes in the curriculum of Higher Education Institutions concerning the process of training medical professionals. The study aimed to investigate palliative care teaching in Brazilian medical schools. It was guided by the research question: What is the current status of palliative care education in medical schools across Brazil? Searches were carried out in the electronic databases of the Virtual Health Library, using the Descriptors in Health Sciences and Medical Subject Headings: Palliative care; Medical Education and Diseases. As inclusion criteria, English, Portuguese, and Spanish publications were chosen in articles with full-text availability and free access to the searched databases. Results: 55 publications were identified from 2016-2021, of which only 25 documents met the inclusion criteria. The topic of palliative care emerges as an educational incentive capable of promoting essential and surprising discussions throughout graduation and providing educational strategies that can provide opportunities for improving skills and competencies based on integral models centered on the person. This requires a demand for training in this subject as a multidisciplinary approach that prepares the team to deal with patients with life-threatening incurable chronic diseases and infinitude.

**Keywords:** palliative care, medical education, disease

### RESUMO

O novo perfil epidemiológico da população brasileira exige mudanças no currículo das Instituições de Ensino Superior em relação ao processo de formação dos profissionais médicos. Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo realizar uma revisão integrativa sobre o ensino de cuidados paliativos em Instituições de Ensino Superior. Foram realizadas buscas nas bases de dados eletrônicas da Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde, utilizando-se os Descritores em Ciências da Saúde e Títulos de Assuntos Médicos: Cuidados Paliativos; Educação Médica e Doenças. Como critérios de inclusão, foram escolhidas publicações em inglês, português e espanhol, na forma de artigos, com disponibilidade de texto completo e acesso livre nas bases de dados pesquisadas. Resultados: Foram identificadas 55 publicações, do período 2016-2021, das quais apenas 25 documentos atenderam aos critérios de inclusão. O tema dos cuidados paliativos surge como um incentivo educacional capaz de promover discussões essenciais e surpreendentes ao longo da graduação, bem como proporcionar estratégias educativas que possam oportunizar o aprimoramento de habilidades e competências a partir de modelos integrais centrados na pessoa. Isso requer uma demanda de capacitação nesta temática como uma abordagem multidisciplinar que prepare a equipe para lidar com situações de pacientes com doenças crônicas incuráveis, com risco de vida e em finitude.

**Palavras-chave:** cuidados paliativos, educação médica, doença

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The aging of the population and the rise in life expectancy, coupled with the high prevalence of chronic-degenerative diseases and their complications, call for changes in higher education regarding the care of vulnerable populations, including older adults and end-of-life care (Brasil, 2014; WHO, 2020). Terminal illness is a significant challenge that requires reflection on the training of health professionals, especially doctors who care for older adults (Gryscheck et al., 2012; Cal (das et al., 2012), as well as the sick and family members/caregivers (Jorge et al., 2018). The particularities of teaching care for older adults (Jorge et al., 2018) and knowledge of palliative care and end-of-life among teachers (Albuquerque et al., 2020; Brito et al., 2020; Correia et al., 2018; Correia et al., 2020; Freitas, 2017; Lemos et al., 2017; Marques et al., 2019; Malta et al., 2018; Mateus et al., 2019; Orth et al., 2019; Pereira et al., 2019; Sousa et al., 2020) can facilitate essential and thought-provoking discussions in higher education and provide practical strategies to expand educational programs, articulating health benefits, end-of-life care, and quality of life for patients and family members/caregivers.

This study emphasizes the importance of improving higher education programs, particularly regarding care for vulnerable populations and end-of-life care. Medical professionals must be adequately equipped to handle the challenges of the aging population and chronic-degenerative diseases. Developing effective educational strategies could lead to better health outcomes for patients and caregivers. The study also highlights the need for ongoing research and development to ensure that healthcare professionals have the knowledge and skills needed to address the unique challenges of caring for older adults and those at the end of life. It is noteworthy that the literature also pointed out physiological changes inert to longevity, bringing with them diversity in health conditions for the geriatric patient, in addition

to the strong relationship with the path to the end of life of the older persons, which deserves broader attention from health professionals on tactics and techniques that promote quality and acceptability at the end of life (Brito et al., 2020; Malta et al., 2018; Marques et al., 2019; Melo et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016). Palliative Care provides care professionals in a multidisciplinary team that services patients with incurable chronic diseases and/or terminally ill (WHO, 2020). PC must be fully offered to patients, as they attribute to the prevention and treatment of pain, in addition to minimizing client/family suffering (Caldas et al., 2018; Marques et al., 2019; Malta et al., 2018; Freitas, 2017; Pereira et al., 2019; Dalpai et al., 2017; Caldas et al., 2016; Castro et al., 2021). The changes brought about by the evolving epidemiological landscape have led to educational innovation in medical training. The Ministry of Education has institutionalized new national curriculum guidelines to address these changes. Moreover, the changes in the epidemiological landscape have necessitated adjustments to the organization, development, and assessment of medical degrees in Brazil (Albuquerque et al., 2020; Pereira et al., 2019; Melo et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016).

Integrating pedagogical care activities into Palliative Care offers valuable opportunities to train healthcare professionals capable of approaching diverse situations related to life-threatening illnesses with a holistic, individualized, and compassionate approach. Furthermore, this care model offers a superior alternative across all levels of healthcare, minimizing unnecessary costs while prioritizing patient care, as well as the needs of their families and caregivers, in diverse physical, social, cultural, and spiritual contexts. Nonetheless, providing palliative care demands a true calling to attend to individuals with incurable chronic diseases. It involves cultivating essential skills and competencies such as empathy, effective communication, personal maturity, sincerity,

and scientific knowledge (Freitas et al., 2017; Pereira et al., 2019; Melo et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016; Dalpai et al., 2017; Caldas et al., 2016; Castro et al., 2021). Despite its importance, however, gaps remain in the approach to this topic, particularly regarding communicating complex news, managing challenging signs and symptoms, and preparing for the inevitability of death and the ethical dilemmas stemming from religious beliefs (Pereira et al., 2019; Melo et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016). Therefore, this research aims to integratively review how Brazilian medical schools incorporate palliative care into their curricula.

## METHODS

This study is an integrative literature review that aims to provide a descriptive analysis. The methodological approach involves six steps: (1) defining the research question, (2) setting eligibility criteria and selecting articles, (3) choosing a sample, (4) presenting the chosen studies in a table format, (5) conducting a critical analysis of the findings, and (6) interpreting and synthesizing the results.

The PICO strategy was used to construct the research question, representing an acronym for “Patient, Intervention, Control, and “Outcomes.” These four components are fundamental for defining the research question and searching for scientific evidence. The study aimed to investigate palliative care teaching in Brazilian medical schools. It was guided by the research question: What is the current status of palliative care education in medical schools across Brazil?

The study’s literature search was conducted using the Virtual Health Library (VHL), which includes LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences Information), SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online), and Medline (PubMed) databases. The search strategy utilized DeCS (Descriptors in Health Sciences) and MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) terms, including Palliative Care,

Medical Education, and Diseases, all registered in DeCS.

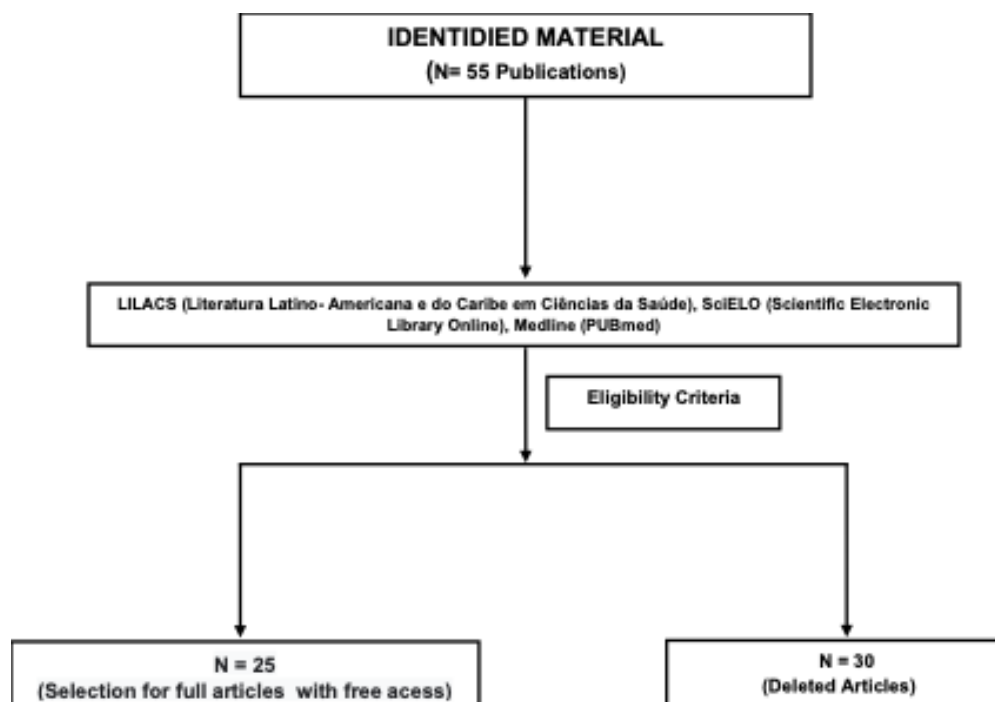
The study used inclusion criteria that required publications in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, in the form of full-text articles that were freely accessible through the Virtual Health Library (VHL) databases LILACS, SciELO, and Medline (PubMed). Dissertations, theses, and book chapters were excluded. The initial screening of the bibliographic material involved reading the abstracts to identify articles that met the study’s objectives. Of the 55 publications identified from 2016 to 2021, only 25 met the inclusion criteria (Figure 1). After the initial screening, each article was thoroughly read to extract and systematize the relevant information according to Table 1 (refer to APPENDIX).

## RESULTS

After identifying and evaluating 55 publications from 2016 to 2021, 25 articles were found to meet the inclusion criteria. The final sample includes publications that were published between 2016 and 2021, which is a period that coincides with the Ministry of Education’s publication of the National Curriculum Guidelines for undergraduate courses in Medicine in Brazil (2014) and the 2nd edition of the Global Atlas of Palliative Care. These publications highlighted the importance of Palliative Care in medical education, emphasizing the positive impact of such education in improving professionals’ decision-making when caring for patients in advanced stages of life with an imminent risk of death (Table 1).

Palliative Care is a broad and significant topic in medical sciences. The literature search for scientific-based studies provided insights into the following main results: 1- The complexity of care for patients with incurable chronic diseases and their families demands a humanized approach and raises reflections and questions about life and death. Palliative Care can help alleviate patients’ physical and emotional suffering, improve their quality of life, and

Figure 1: Flowchart of the Research Process.



support family members/caregivers; 2- The training of future healthcare professionals in Palliative Care during their undergraduate education has limitations, and curriculum innovations are necessary. The proposals of new curriculum guidelines, established by the Ministry of Education in 2014, can provide opportunities to improve skills and competencies for learning the solid principles of care based on comprehensive, person-centered models. This can contribute to tackling the challenges of dealing with people with incurable chronic diseases, frail and dependent older adults, and their families. A humanized approach from the interdisciplinary team is required, bringing reflections and questions about life and, consequently, finitude.

### DISCUSSION

The National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) regulate the training of medical professionals to recognize and solve real problems of individual and collective health at different levels of health care while emphasizing social responsibility and the commitment

to defending citizenship and human dignity. Therefore, academic training should focus on the integral health of the human being and gradually increase the inclusion of palliative care in the curriculum. Several studies support this notion (Brasil, 2014; Correira et al., 2018; Freitas, 2017; Gryscheck et al., 2012; Malta et al., 2018; Pereira et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016). It is important to include palliative care in the curriculum is necessary to prepare future physicians to deal with the complexity of caring for patients with incurable chronic diseases, frail and dependent older adults, and family members/caregivers. This requires a humanized approach from the interdisciplinary team and brings reflections and questions about life and finitude.

However, despite the recognized importance of PC in medical education, several studies have indicated a lack of content and inadequate teaching methods in the area, highlighting the need for curriculum reform and innovation (Belfor et al., 2018; Caldas et al., 2018; Conceição et al., 2019; Pineli et al., 2016). It is also crucial to provide theoretical

**Table 1:** Research results on palliative care in Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

| Authors  | Article name  | Magazine (year)  | Contributions   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Albuquerque, M., Botelho, N., Silva, J.  | Discussing palliative care in medical education: Experience report.                                   | IJHE- Interdisciplinary Journal of Health Education (2020)   | This experience report demonstrated that it is possible to carry out educational activities about death with students at the beginning of graduation and thus prepare them for situations that will inevitably be evidenced in the practice spaces of the medical course.   |
| Belfor, J. et al.  | Faculty teaching skills perceived by medical students at a university in the Brazilian Amazon region. | Ciência & Saúde Coletiva(2018)   | The need to improve essential aspects of medical training and the importance of constantly evaluating this process was highlighted.   |
| Ministério da Educação – Conselho Nacional de Educação/ Câmara Nacional de Educação (Brasil) | National Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate Medicine Course.                                     | Diário Oficial da República Federativa do Brasil, Poder Executivo, Brasília, DF, 23 Junho, 2014. Seção 1, p. 8-11. | Establishes the national curriculum guidelines for undergraduate medical courses.   |
| Brito, P., et al.  | Reflections on the Terminality of Life with Undergraduate Medical Students.                           | Revista Brasileira de Educação Médica (2020)   | Therefore, creating spaces in the curriculum that provide theoretical and practical support and affective support for issues involving terminal illness seems necessary. The proposal of theoretical-practical education on palliative care included in the curriculum would lapidate the confidence and attitude of future professionals towards care. |
| Caldas, G., Moreira, S., Vilar, M..  | Palliative Care: A Proposal for undergraduate education in Medicine.                                  | Rev. Bras. Geriatric. Gerontol (2018)  | The discussion and improvement of skills in Palliative Care suggested in this study will be essential during medical education forums so that we can have more clarity on what is necessary to train general practitioners.   |
| Costa, A., Poles, K., Silva, A..   | Palliative care education: Experience of medical and nursing students.                                | Interface (Botucatu)- (2016).  | The study demonstrates the importance of practical activities in learning about palliative care, the appreciation of multidisciplinary work, the suffering caused by the self-identification process with the end-of-life patient, and the cycle of empathy and distance resulting in the emotional maturity necessary for palliative care.             |
| Castro AA, Taquette SR, Pereira CAR.   | Palliative Care and Medical Education: Systematic Review.   | Research, Society, and Development, (2021)   | The analyzed studies demonstrate the benefits of teaching PC in medical training through longitudinal education, as they enhance the acquisition of essential skills in medicine, particularly in dealing with people with life-threatening diseases.   |
| Conceição MV, Vassconcelos MCC, Telino CJCL, Guedes EVB, Pimentel DMM.                       | Knowledge of palliative care among residents of a university hospital.                                | Revista Bioética (2019)  | These results suggest the failure of medical training in our country concerning palliative care, as good intentions are not enough: having minimal notions and applying them correctly is necessary.  |

Table 1: (continuation)

| Authors   | Article name   | Magazine (year)   | Contributions   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Correia, D. et al.                                | Medical Undergraduate Student's Perception and Experience of Death.  | Revista Brasileira de Educação Médica (2020)                  | The research showed that the students changed their view of death after experiencing it during the course. They know the topic, revealing its importance for their education and the need to expand its discussion during graduation.   |
| Correia, D. et al.                                | Palliative Care: Importance of the Subject for Medical Students.   | Revista Brasileira de Educação Médica (2018)                  | The survey data showed that the students identify the deficiencies caused by the absence or limitation of teaching palliative care at graduation and are interested in seeing the theme included as a subject in the medical curriculum, which suggests the carrying out of further studies on the topic.   |
| Dalpai, D. et al.                                 | Pain and palliative care: The knowledge of medical students and the graduation gaps.                                   | Rev. Dor, São Paulo (2017).                                   | In the end, it was realized that there is a clear need to encourage the medical academy to teach the therapeutic management of pain, both during college and during residency, given its importance and prevalence, therefore, there needs to be a greater focus on academic training on the subject.   |
| Dominguez, R., Freire, A., Lima C., Campos, N.    | Palliative care: challenges for teaching in the perception of nursing and medical students.                            | Revista Baiana de Enfermagem (2021)                           | In the Final Considerations, it was identified that Nursing and Medicine students have difficulties related to communication in palliative care assistance and in end-of-life situations. Their unpreparedness in dealing with death, human suffering, and moral conflicts arising from religious beliefs was also demonstrated.                    |
| Freitas, E.                                       | A manifesto for palliative care in medical education: a study guided by the Prague Charter.                            | Rev. Bioét., Brasília 2017).                                  | The results express a change in the student's perception of death and a new paradigm that palliative care proposes. The incorporation of teaching palliative care in undergraduate medicine is the essential presupposition for good health care practices.   |
| Gryschek, G., Pereira E., Hidalgo G.              | Family Physicians and Palliative Care.   | Revista Brasileira de Medicina de Família e Comunidade (2020) | By analyzing and discussing competencies in palliative care, the authors identified the need for improvement and proposed new and expanded competencies. Periodic review of the curriculum should contemplate changes and advances in the practice of family doctors and meet the demands of care, including providing Palliative Care to everyone. |
| Jorge, R. et al                                   | Older people's preferences for prognostic information in a situation of serious illness with less than a year to live. | Ciênc. Saúde Coletiva (2019)                                  | These results show that most older adults want to be informed in a situation of advanced disease, with less than one year of life. Health professionals need to be prepared to anticipate news about the limited life prognosis and the disease.  |
| Junior, V., Fonseca, S., Gutterres, D., Souza, M. | Palliative care: knowledge of graduation students in nursing and medicine.   | Revista de Saúde (2019)                                       | A significant portion of students do not know the topic of PC adequately, which indicates the need for innovations in the approach to the topic in undergraduate courses in health.   |

Table 1: (continuation)

| Authors   | Article name   | Magazine (year)   | Contributions  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Lemos, C.,<br>Barros, G. Melo,<br>N., Amorim, F.,<br>Santana, A..           | Evaluation of<br>Medical Students'<br>Knowledge of<br>Palliative Care.   | Revista Brasileira<br>de Educação<br>Médica (2017)  | Knowledge in Palliative Care among students is not good, and knowledge gained between the fourth and sixth grades did not show statistical significance. This denotes the need to improve the teaching-learning process in palliative care, especially in internship settings.   |
| Malta, R,<br>Rodrigues, B.,<br>Priolli, D.                                  | End-of-Life<br>Paradigm in<br>Medical Training:<br>Attitudes and<br>Knowledge<br>about Death and<br>Palliative Care.                             | Revista Brasileira<br>de Educação<br>Médica (2018)  | The Palliative Care discipline helps to overcome fears related to death, reducing the anxiety involved in end-of-life care, especially in terms of communication. Students who receive theoretical and practical training in Palliative Care show greater confidence in situations of a terminal illness.  |
| Marques, D.,<br>Oliveira, M.,<br>Santos, M.,<br>Silveira, R., Silva,<br>R.. | Perceptions,<br>Attitudes, and<br>Teaching about<br>Death and Dying<br>in the Medical<br>School of the<br>Federal University<br>of Acre, Brazil. | Revista Brasileira<br>de Educação<br>Médica (2019)  | It is concluded that teaching about death and dying is still concentrated in a few courses in the medical curriculum, especially the humanistic ones, and is excessively theoretical. In contrast, real experiences with death during the medical course are treated with detachment and silence when could be better used to teach and learn about the end of life.   |
| Mateus, A.,<br>Crepaldi, J.,<br>Moreira, R.,<br>Moreira, M.,<br>Martins, A. | Palliative care in<br>medical training.  | Revista Família,<br>Ciclos de Vida e<br>Saúde no Contexto<br>Social (2019)  | This work aimed to reflect on palliative care in medical education. In current academic training, one of the great gaps is the lack of discussion about death and palliative care.   |
| Melo, I., Gomes,<br>J., Drumond, J.<br>Gomes, S..                           | Dealing with<br>suffering and<br>death: assessment<br>of knowledge in<br>palliative care in<br>students during<br>the medicine<br>course.        | e-Scientia (2019),<br><a href="http://www.unibh.br/revistas/escientia/">www.unibh.br/<br/>revistas/escientia/</a> | Knowledge about PC among students is limited, and there was no significant gain in knowledge in the statistical comparison of responses in the sixth and twelfth periods. This highlights the need for this content in medical graduation, demonstrating the need to improve the teaching process.   |
| Oliveira, J., et al   | Reflections on<br>the Teaching of<br>Bioethics and<br>Palliative Care<br>across Medical<br>Schools in the<br>State of Minas<br>Gerais, Brazil.   | Revista Brasileira<br>de Educação<br>Médica (2016)  | It proposes a reflection and a programmatic action for teacher training and subsequent specific and longitudinal curricular insertion in teaching bioethics and palliative care in undergraduate courses at medical schools in Minas Gerais.   |
| Orth, L., et al .   | Knowledge of<br>Medical Students<br>about Palliative<br>Care.  | Revista Brasileira<br>de Educação<br>Médica (2019)  | Teaching palliative care during the undergraduate course in Medicine at Unisul provided adequate knowledge for the internship students. Still, difficulties are observed in the face of death and insecurity in the communication approach and the medical attitude. It is necessary to improve the teaching of skills and abilities in the area, emphasizing universal patient-centered care and not just the cure of diseases, as well as mobilizing efforts to encourage students' self-esteem. |

Table 1: (continuation)

| Authors                               | Article name  | Magazine (year)   | Contributions   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Pereira, E., Rangel, A., Giffoni, J.. | Identifying the Level of Knowledge in Palliative Care among Medical Students in Goiás.    | Revista Brasileira de Educação Médica (2019)  | Although the evaluated academics know some PC principles, these are not enough. Students claim a lack of approach to the topic, emphasizing the need to implement Palliative Care as a mandatory subject in the Brazilian curriculum.   |
| Pineli, P., et al .                   | Palliative Care and Curriculum Guidelines: Necessary Inclusion.                           | Revista Brasileira de Educação Médica (2016)  | The study highlights the PC as a potential training space for acquiring skills and competencies required by official guidelines. In this sense, admission to graduation will expand the professional training of future physicians. It may also contribute to ensuring quality care for patients with serious illnesses, especially in the final stage of life.   |
| Sousa, J., et. Al.                    | Academic approaches related to palliative care in higher education: an exploratory study. | Research Society and Development (2020) <a href="https://rsdjournal.org/index.php/rsd/article/view/11104">https://rsdjournal.org/index.php/rsd/article/view/11104</a> . | Given the results, it was observed that the CP theme is not included in the syllabus and/or objectives of many of the course's subjects. However, the professors insert this theme using methodological approaches in the classroom, such as lectures, case studies, and technical visits. Based on these findings, it is recommended that teachers make use of pedagogical strategies that enable the approach |
| WHO (World Health Organization)       | Global Atlas of Palliative Care 2a ed. 2020.  | <a href="http://www.thewhpc.org/resources/global-atlas-on-end-of-life-care">http://www.thewhpc.org/resources/global-atlas-on-end-of-life-care</a> . (2020)              | The Global Palliative Care Atlas is a source of essential information on the state of palliative care worldwide. This second edition of the Global Atlas reveals some of the changes that have taken place since the publication of the first edition in 2014. WHPCA and WHO published it.  |

and practical training in managing pain and other symptoms in terminally ill patients, as well as improving the communication skills of medical students to address the emotional and psychological needs of patients and their families (Conceição et al., 2019; Correia et al., 2020; Dalpai et al., 2017). In this context, better preparation and training of health-care teams involved in caring for terminally ill patients are necessary to overcome existing gaps in medical education. Furthermore, maintaining the bond between the patient, family, and caregivers during this process remains challenging, affecting the ability to provide optimal care and make informed decisions (Caldas et al., 2018; Freitas, 2017; Malta et al., 2018; Mateus et al., 2019).

The literature highlights the need for educational incentives to promote adequate PC prac-

tice to meet the needs of eligible patients by health professionals in Brazil (Belfor et al., 2018; Brito et al., 2020; Caldas et al., 2018; Correia et al., 2018). However, health professionals tend to have a curative perception of illnesses, and a multidisciplinary approach prioritizing training in this area is required to handle patients with life-threatening and incurable chronic diseases effectively (WHO, 2020; Albuquerque et al., 2020; Brito et al., 2020; Caldas et al., 2016; Conceição et al., 2019; Correia et al., 2020; Junior et al., 2019).

Therefore, it is crucial to implement joint pedagogical and therapeutic actions in PC during health professional training (Castro et al., 2021; Conceição et al., 2019; Oliveira et al., 2016; Sousa et al., 2020; WHO, 2020). The team must experience different patient care situations to provide humanized and



individualized care, thereby maintaining the quality of life for all those involved in the evolution of incurable and life-threatening diseases (Conceição et al., 2019; Dominguez et al., 2021; Junior et al., 2019; Oliveira et al., 2016). Thus, the PC theme must be gradually increased in different educational scenarios to favor the improvement of health professionals (Jorge et al., 2018; Junior et al., 2019; Lemos et al., 2017; Mateus et al., 2019; Melo et al., 2019; Oliveira et al., 2016). This will lead to better care for patients, families, and caregivers in various physical, social, cultural, spiritual, and economic contexts (Dominguez et al., 2021; Pineli et al., 2016; WHO, 2020).

Based on the findings of the integrative review, it is recommended that medical schools in Brazil increase the content on PC in their curriculum and provide better training to health professionals in this area. The training should include theoretical and practical approaches to managing pain and other symptoms in terminally ill patients and maintaining the bond between the patient, family, and caregiver.

To achieve this, joint pedagogical and therapeutic actions in PC should be implemented during the training of health professionals. These actions can be achieved through multidisciplinary approaches that prioritize training in PC. Additionally, medical students should be exposed to different patient care situations to provide humanized and individualized care and maintain the quality of life for all involved in the evolution of incurable and life-threatening diseases.

It is also important to note that the current literature on PC teaching in higher education institutions in Brazil is limited. Further research is needed to encourage multi-disciplinarity in PC and enhance potential research to favor the immersion of this subject in the undergraduate environment. Improving PC education in medical schools can lead to better care for patients/family/caregivers assisted in multiple physical, social, cultural, spiritual, and economic contexts.

## CONCLUSION

The importance of teaching palliative care in medical education cannot be overstated. Preparing future healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive care that focuses on the person, not just the cure of diseases, is crucial. Palliative care provides an approach that emphasizes quality of life and comfort for patients, as well as support for their families and caregivers.

In addition, the complexity of dealing with patients with threatening incurable chronic diseases requires a humanized approach and raises questions about life and death. Healthcare professionals must be adequately prepared to handle such situations, providing the necessary support, comfort, and guidance to patients and their loved ones.

Therefore, it is essential to include palliative care in medical curricula to equip future professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to provide high-quality care to patients and their families. It is a crucial step towards ensuring that vulnerable patients receive the best care possible and that healthcare professionals are prepared to handle the difficult and complex situations that may arise during palliative care.

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