

# Enhancing Palliative Care Education for Medical Students using an Immersive Workbook



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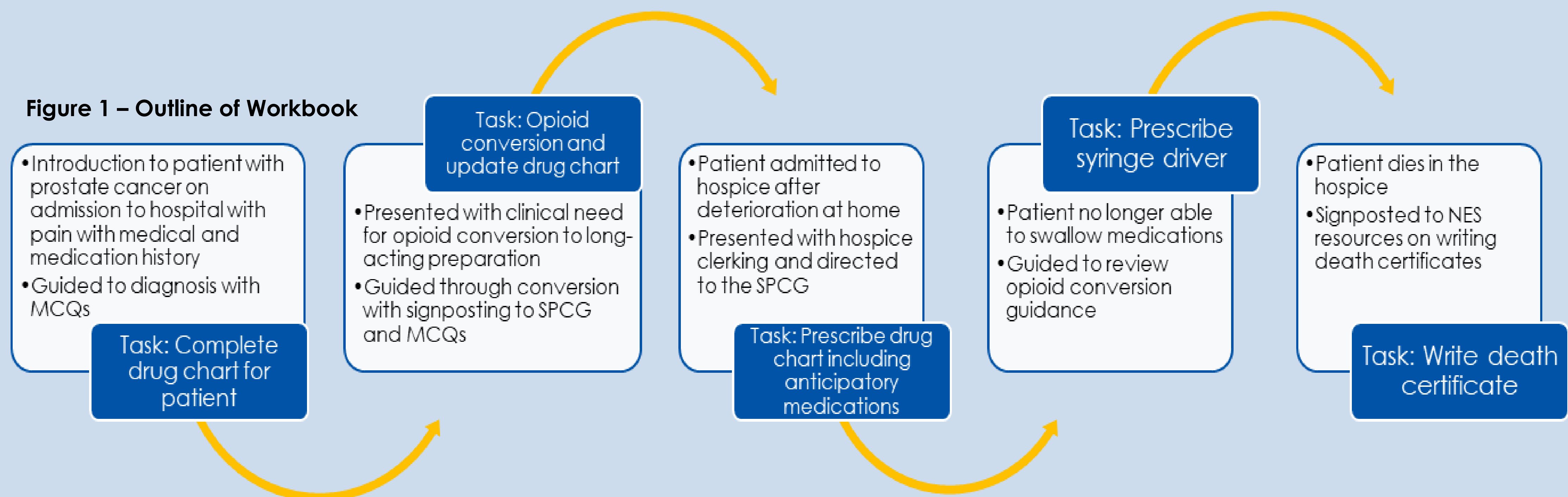
## Introduction

During their one-day placement at Marie Curie Hospice, 4<sup>th</sup> year University of Glasgow medical students attend a consultant ward round and MDT meeting. However, there are limited learning opportunities when staff need to engage in computer-based tasks or when there are no appropriate patients able to speak to students. To address this gap, and to enhance their learning, an interactive and immersive workbook was developed.

## Methods

The workbook guides students through a realistic fictional patient journey from near their diagnosis with cancer to the patient's death and employs a combination of multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and interactive tasks, including prescribing exercises using a drug chart and syringe driver chart, opioid calculations and culminating in the completion of a death certificate (Fig 1). The students are required to reference the Scottish Palliative Care Guidelines (SPCG) and British National Formulary (BNF) throughout. Feedback was sought from students using the workbook using paper forms. The workbook has been updated continuously in line with student and staff feedback.

Figure 1 – Outline of Workbook



## Results

Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive. 100% of students mentioned the workbook as a highlight of their day at the hospice (n=12). Based on white space questions about the workbook, four themes were consistent:

- **Immersive and Practical Learning experience:** students appreciated being guided through a case and the opportunity to practice using drug charts, as many had not done this before.
- **Signposting to Guidelines and Resources:** students were not aware of the Scottish Palliative Care Guidelines prior to using the workbook.
- **Enjoyable Learning:** many students found the workbook fun to work through and wanted to continue after they left the hospice.
- **Appropriate Difficulty Level:** students noted that the workbook's content was suited to their competency level.

It was noted by staff that it was necessary for most students to receive some support with the workbook, but that this could be offered whilst also completing other tasks.

## Conclusions and Future Work

The workbook seems to be an effective adjunct to more traditional learning experiences in a hospice setting for medical students. The success of the workbook has prompted plans for a wider rollout across other Palliative Care settings in the West of Scotland hosting medical students. Additionally, a comprehensive answer book has been created, enabling students to continue their learning independently after their placement.