IPU or ITU? It all starts with PCT (Palliative Care Training)

Summary
All healthcare professionals have the potential to work with people who are dying from day one after completing their undergraduate course. This is why it is **vital to ensure they receive adequate training** to do so. This survey of UK undergraduate courses show the high degree of variability in training currently being offered. It also identified that most courses were acutely aware of the changing population they were working with and were keen to connect with other institutions to enhance their current course content.

1. Background
Impending death is not well recognised.\(^1\)
Due to improvements in technology and medicine, people are living longer with more complex health conditions\(^2\) and because of this, the death of a patient is an experience that many people entering a healthcare profession will have little of. As death occurs in any setting, at any time, it is vital that all healthcare professionals are able to cope with the recognition of dying and communication of imminent death.

2. Method
We contacted all UK institutes providing undergraduate training in:
- Medicine
- Adult Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Social Work

Form the core specialist palliative care team\(^3\)

We emailed each course and asked about the provision of training and time dedicated to the recognition and communication of imminent death.

3. Results
198 contacted
73 (37\%) responded
80\% of these courses provided teaching on working with terminally ill people in the last days of life

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1. Do you provide any specific training on the recognition of dying in patients who are terminally ill?

   ![Graph showing recognition of dying training across different healthcare professions]

   - **Yes**
   - **No**

   - **Medical**: 18
   - **Nursing**: 13
   - **OT**: 5
   - **PT**: 5
   - **SW**: 13

   **How much time over the course?**

   - **Medical**: 12
   - **Nursing**: 10
   - **OT**: 8
   - **PT**: 4
   - **SW**: 2

2. Do you provide any specific training on how to talk about prognoses with patients who are dying and/or their relatives?

   ![Graph showing how to talk about prognoses training across different healthcare professions]

   - **Yes**
   - **No**

   - **Medical**: 17
   - **Nursing**: 19
   - **OT**: 4
   - **PT**: 4
   - **SW**: 19

   **How much time over the course?**

   - **Medical**: 18
   - **Nursing**: 16
   - **OT**: 4
   - **PT**: 4
   - **SW**: 2

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**Feedback**
- Courses with more content about dying typically had a champion with palliative care experience.
- Time, Resources, and funding were key barriers which limited the opportunity to include more in the curricula across all specialties.

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4. References