

# Participant's Guide

## "Care at the End-of-Life"



**Module One**  
**Managing Resident Care**



**Module Two**  
**Preparing the Family**



**Module Three:**  
**After Death**



THE INSTITUTE FOR  
PALLIATIVE MEDICINE  
*at San Diego Hospice*

CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEARNING



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## Agenda

This participant's guide is for students completing the Module 3: After Death in the End-of-Life Care course. The agenda is as follows:

Topic	Time
Welcome	5
Introduction	5
<b>Module Three: After Death</b>	
PPT Bite 1: Environmental Control	15
PPT Bite 2: Signs and Symptoms of Dying	15
Break	5
PPT Bite 3: Giving Comfort	15
PPT Bite 4: Food and Fluids	15
Review	15
Test	30
<b>Total Time:</b>	<b>2 hours</b>

## Activity: Welcome

### Introduce yourself.

Describe your background, experience and something that gives the class insight into **you** (e.g. how you came to do this work, your interests or hobbies).

**IMPORTANT:** Every state has different laws regulating LTC, and it is *your* responsibility to know your specific job duties. The content presented in this course is comprehensive and not tailored to meet the specific needs of LTC professionals in any one state. If you are unsure how it applies to you, ask your supervisor.



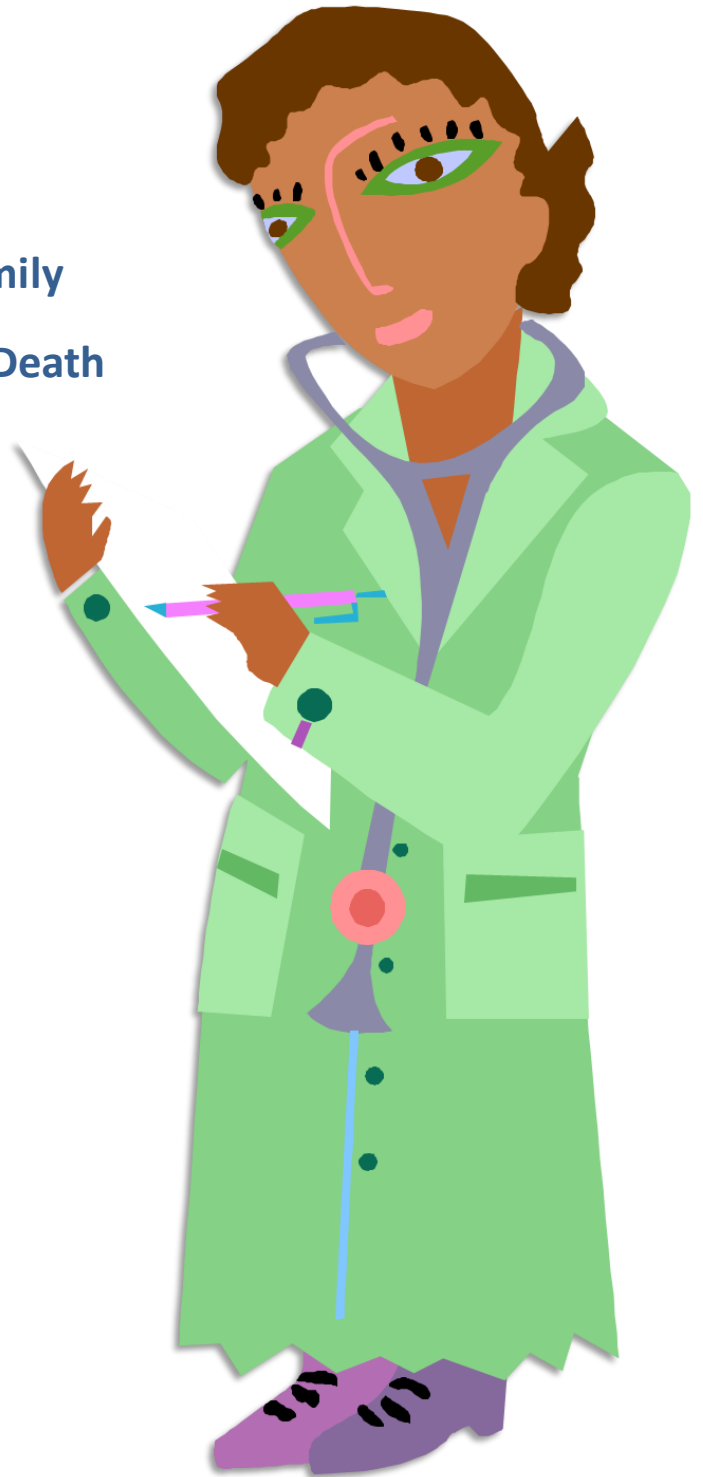
# Module Three: After Death

**Bite 1: Care of the Body**

**Bite 2: Grief**

**Bite 3: Supporting a Grieving Family**

**Bite 4: Community Response to Death**



## Bite 1: Care of the Body



### Activity: Read Objectives

As a professional who provides end-of life care, your job does not end when a resident dies. You are also responsible for providing post mortem care for the resident. In this bite, you will learn about the physical signs of death and how to take care of the resident's body after they pass away.



After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Identify the six signs of death
- Identify who can legally pronounce a resident dead
- Explain the goal of post-mortem activities
- List typical post-mortem activities

### Module Three, Bite 1

#### Reflect on it

Have you taken care of a resident after they have died?

How did you feel about it?



## Six Signs of Death

How do you know when a resident has died?  
What are the 6 signs?

1.



2.



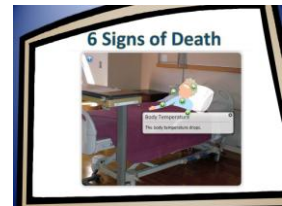
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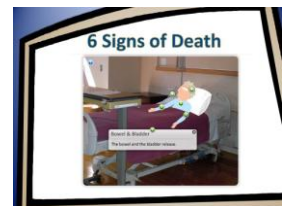
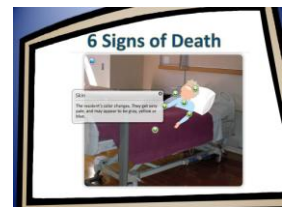
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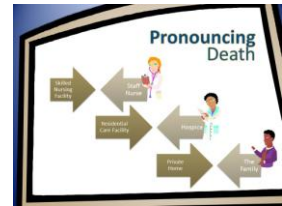
6.





## Pronouncing Death

After a resident dies, what happens next?



## Post-mortem care

After a resident dies, the caregiver provides “post-mortem” care.

The goals of post mortem are:

1.

2.

Post mortem care includes:



## Case Study

Recently you have been caring for Mrs. Bernstein, who has been actively dying for 2 days. Her family is at the bedside and is tearful, but appear to be coping appropriately. As you enter the room to check on the resident, you note that she does not appear to be breathing and may have just died. The family also notices that she no longer appears to be breathing and asks you anxiously if she has died.

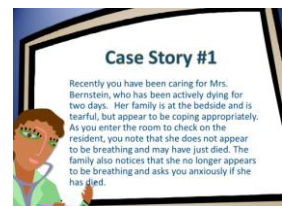
### Discussion

**Question:** What signs do you look for to determine she has died?

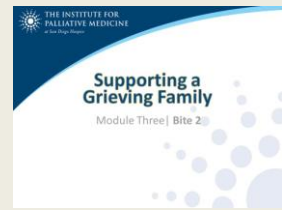
**Answer:**

**Question:** What do you tell the family?

**Answer:**



## Bite 2: Supporting a Grieving Family



### Activity: Read Objectives

After completing this bite, you will be able to:

- State comforting words you can say to support a grieving family
- List actions you can take to support a grieving family



### Module Three, Bite 2



### Focusing on the Family

After the resident dies and the body has been cared for, the focus of care shifts to the resident's family. What should you do?



What role does culture play in how people react to death?



## Support with words

After death, you can support the family with comforting words like:



## Support with Actions

You can also support a family by your actions, including:

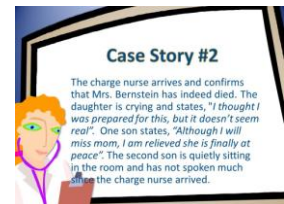


## Case Study

The charge nurse arrives and confirms that Mrs. Bernstein has indeed died. The resident's 2 daughters, son, and grandson are present.

One daughter is crying and states "I thought I was prepared for this, but it doesn't seem real". The other daughter states "Although I will miss mom, I am relieved she is finally at peace".

The son and grandson are sitting quietly in the room and have not spoken much since they arrived.



## Discussion

**Question:** What grief reactions can you briefly identify in Mrs. Bernstein's family?

**Answer:**

**Question:** Are any of these reactions unusual or of concern?

**Answer:**

**Question:** How can you support this family?

**Answer:**

## Bite 3: Grief

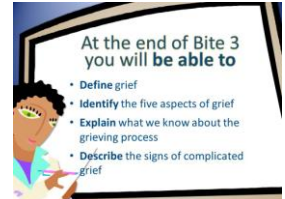


### Activity: Read Objectives

Grief is a normal reaction to the loss of a loved one. As an end-of-life caregiver, it is important that you understand what grief is and how it is expressed.

After completing this bite, you will be able to:

- Define grief
- Identify the stages of grief
- Explain what we know about the grieving process
- Describe the signs of complicated grief



### Module Three, Bite 3

*Time: 15 minutes*

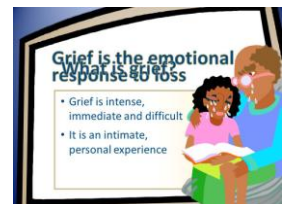
### Reflect on it

- What is grief?
- How have you seen others grieving?



### What is grief?

When a loved one passes away, most people experience Grief. Grief is:



## Stages of Grief

There are 5 stages of grief:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



## How We Grieve

We used to think that everyone experiences grief the same way: by passing through all five stages, one after another, starting with denial.

We now know this is not true; we have learned that:

## Complicated Grief

Some people experience “complicated grief,” and need extra help to recover from a loss.

Symptoms of complicated grief may include:



## Case Study

Several days after Mrs. Bernstein's death, her daughter comes to the facility to say "hello" to everyone and pick up the last of her mother's belongings. This is the same daughter who was present when Mrs. Bernstein died, and was very upset and tearful.

Today, she seems to be very cheerful and states that she is doing well. She acts as though nothing happened and is laughing and joking with the staff. You are thinking to yourself "How can she be so happy? Shouldn't she be crying that her mom has died?"

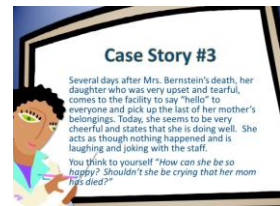
## Discussion

**Question:** What stage of the grieving process could Mrs. Bernstein's daughter could be experiencing?

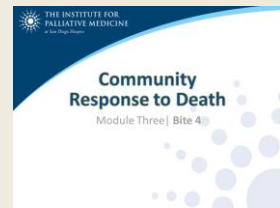
**Answer:**

**Question:** What do we know about grief that indicates the daughter is reacting normally?

**Answer:**



## Bite 4: Community Response to Death



### Activity: Read Objectives

At the end of this bite you will be able to:

- Identify ways to help residents cope with the loss of another resident in their facility
- Describe ways to help ourselves when a resident passes away



### Module Three, Bite 4

*Time: 15 minutes*

### Reflect on it

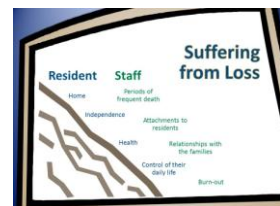
- Who is affected by the death of a resident in your facility?



### Suffering from Loss

#### Residents.

Many residents have already suffered a lot of loss in their lifetime, including:

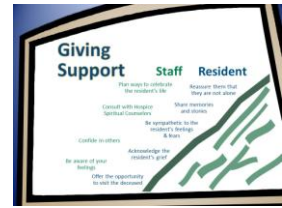


#### Staff.

Staff has also endured a lot, including:

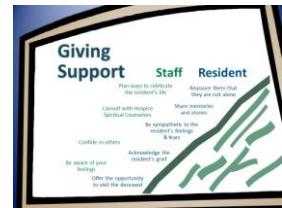
## Supporting Residents

You can help residents cope with a death at their facility by:



## Supporting Ourselves

You can help yourself and other staff at your facility by:

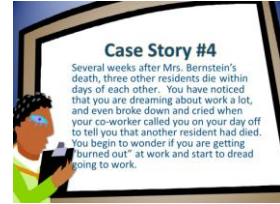




## Case Story

Several weeks after Mrs. Bernstein's death, three other residents die within days of each other. You have noticed that you are dreaming about work a lot, and even broke down and cried when your co-worker called you on your day off to tell you that another resident had died.

You wonder if you are getting "burned out" at work and start to dread going to work.



## Discussion

**Question:** Is it possible you are grieving the loss of your residents and the recent deaths?

**Answer:**

**Question:** What can you do to help yourself cope with grief?

**Answer:**

## Activity: Review



**Time: 30 minutes**

**Goal: To prepare the class for the module Assessment.**

Review Bites 1- 4.

Ask questions at this time.

### **Bite 1: Care of the Body**

In this bite you learned:

<b>Signs of Death</b> No heartbeat No breathing Cool skin Pale skin that may be white, gray, yellow or blue A strong odor Release of the bowels and bladder Eyes and mouth stay open	<b>Pronouncing death</b> Skilled Nursing Facility: Licensed Nurse Residential care Facility: Staff Nurse Home: Family member	<b>Goals of post-mortem care</b> Make resident presentable for family Create a pleasing environment
<b>Post-mortem Care</b> Cleanse the resident Close their eyes and mouth Position the body Control odor	<b>Different Cultures</b> Expect differences Treat all families with respect	

## Bite 2: Supporting a Grieving Family

In this bite you learned:

After a resident dies, the focus shifts to the family.

After the resident dies:	Comforting Words	Comforting Actions
<p>Call the family to the bedside</p> <p>Ask if they want to say goodbye. Expect a strong emotional reaction</p> <p>Expect different cultures to respond differently</p>	<p>I'm sorry for your loss</p> <p>Can I get you some water?</p> <p>I know this is a hard time for you</p> <p>Is there anyone I can call?</p>	<p>Stay calm</p> <p>Offer family members a hug</p> <p>Hold their hand</p> <p>Quietly sit with the family.</p> <p>Allow them to express their feelings</p> <p>Being patient</p>

## Bite 3: Grief

In this bite you learned:

Grief

Definition of Grief	Stages of Grief	The Grieving Process	Signs of Complicated Grief
<p>Grief is the emotional response to loss.</p> <p>Grief is intense, immediate and difficult</p> <p>It is an intimate, personal experience</p>	<p>Denial</p> <p>Bargaining</p> <p>Sadness</p> <p>Anger</p> <p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Everyone experiences grief differently</p> <p>Every person does not experience every stage of grief.</p> <p>There is no "right or wrong" way to grieve.</p> <p>Most people actively grieve for about 13 months</p>	<p>Intense grief lasting longer than 13 months</p> <p>Difficulty accepting the death</p> <p>Chronic yearning that disrupts daily life</p> <p>Suicidal thoughts</p> <p>Sense of meaninglessness</p> <p>Numbness and detachment from everyday life</p> <p>History of mental illness in the family</p> <p>Drug or alcohol abuse</p> <p>Desire to cause harm to themselves or others</p>

#### **Bite 4: Community Response to Death**

In this bite you learned:

Supporting residents and ourselves after a resident dies is very important to the grieving process.

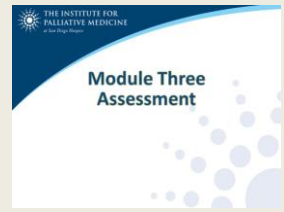
##### **Support residents by:**

- Letting them talk about their feelings and actively listening
- Letting them say goodbye
- Sharing memories and stories with other residents
- Reassure them that they are not alone

##### **Support yourself and other staff:**

- Be aware of your own feelings
- Consult with Hospice Spiritual Counselors
- Speak with trusted others
- Plan ways to celebrate the resident's life

## Activity: Complete Module Test



***Time: 30 minutes***

***Goal: To evaluate learning and retention***

## Activity: Complete Course Evaluation

***Time: 10 minutes***

***Goal: To gather feedback on the course that will be used to improve future sessions.***

## Activity: Closure