

INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF PALLIATIVE CARE

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: III

THE ACADEMY OF PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

(An Academic and Research Wing of IAPC)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Academy of Palliative Medicine (APM) is an academic and research wing of the Indian Association of Palliative Care (IAPC). It was established on 1st May, 2022, under the aegis of IAPC and in partnership with two charitable trusts, Suprajit Foundation and Karunashraya Bangalore Hospice Trust. It will serve as a national forum to enhance the reach of palliative medicine education and research in India. The APM will be organised as an independent body for its internal affairs but shall in no way act in a manner prejudicial to the aims and objectives of IAPC as per its bylaws, which shall take precedence over this SOP.

VISION

2. To be the leading academic and research body in Palliative Medicine in India, advancing excellence in education, training, and innovation to ensure compassionate, equitable, and holistic care for people and their families facing advanced, terminal or life-limiting illnesses and serious health-related suffering.

MISSION

3. Our Mission, as the academic and training arm of the Indian Association of Palliative Care, is dedicated to:

- a.** Delivering high-quality, competency-based education and training in palliative care.
- b.** Building the capacity of healthcare professionals across disciplines to integrate palliative care into all levels of healthcare.
- c.** Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration in education and research to ensure comprehensive care for individuals with serious illnesses.
- d.** Driving research and innovation, creating intra and interdisciplinary research networks and promoting evidence-based practices to improve the quality and accessibility of palliative care.
- e.** Advocating for policy integration and systemic reforms to embed palliative care into national health priorities.

CORE VALUES

4. They are as under:

- a. **Compassion:** Anchoring all actions in empathy and respect for human dignity.
- b. **Excellence:** Striving for the highest standards in education, research, and service.
- c. **Innovation:** Embracing new ideas, tools, and methodologies for continuous improvement through cutting-edge research.
- d. **Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships across disciplines and health sectors.
- e. **Integrity:** Upholding ethical principles and accountability in all endeavours.
- f. **Sustainability:** Building long-term impact through resilient systems and practices.

OBJECTIVES

5. The Academy of Palliative Medicine is an initiative aimed at advancing competency-based education and research in palliative medicine across India. This endeavour fosters collaboration within multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary teams in various clinical environments, emphasising the development of communication skills, decision-making abilities, procedural expertise relevant to palliative care, and adherence to ethics-based best practices. Additionally, it focuses on enhancing teaching methodologies, leadership skills, implementation science, quality improvement, and research capabilities.

6. Through the Academy of Palliative Medicine, we will:

- a. Develop and deliver standardised, evidence-based educational modules in palliative care.
- b. Train and mentor generalists and specialists in integrating palliative care into their practice.
- c. Expand palliative care education across all healthcare levels—primary, secondary, and tertiary.
- d. Encourage and support research initiatives and networks to inform best practices.
- e. Facilitate nationwide capacity building and policies through collaborations.

GOALS

7. Short-Term (Within 1 Year)

- a. Hold Postgraduate (PG) Assemblies, annually, for final-year students.

- b. Establish structured collaborations with neurology, paediatrics, geriatrics, and nephrology societies to develop integrated palliative care education programs.
- c. Facilitate and support the implementation of AETCOM modules in medical colleges.

8. Medium-Term (Within 2 Years)

- a. Formally partner with critical care and cardiac societies to develop specialized palliative care curricula.
- b. Host annual interdisciplinary meetings, dedicating sessions to key specialties.

9. Long-Term (Within 3 to 5 Years)

- a. Secure government accreditation for all APM educational programs.
- b. Achieve national recognition for APM from relevant governmental authorities.
- c. Award fellowships to APM-trained professionals and other selected candidates to promote advanced learning.

GOVERNING COUNCIL (APM)

10. APM will have its Governing Council of 12 members as follows:

- a. **President, Indian Association of Palliative Medicine**
- b. **Chairperson, Academy of Palliative Medicine**
 - i. Be a doctor in modern medicine with MD/DNB)
 - ii. Be an uninterrupted member of IAPC for seven years
- c. **Secretary General, APM**
 - i. Be a doctor in modern medicine with MD/DNB)
 - ii. Be an uninterrupted member of IAPC for seven years
- d. **The Honorary Secretary, IAPC**
- e. **Chairperson for the Board of Studies.**
 - i. Be a doctor in modern medicine with MD/DNB
 - ii. Be an uninterrupted member of IAPC for seven years
- f. **Members:** It will consist of 7 members as under:

The members of the Governing Council shall be selected by a four-member committee comprising the President of IAPC, Chairperson of APM, the Secretary General of APM, and the Honorary Secretary of IAPC. In case of a tie, the President, IAPC shall have the casting vote.

- i. **Two Members:** Immediate past Presidents of the IAPC with a background of modern medicine. If not available, the four-member committee comprising the President of IAPC, Chairperson of APM, the Secretary General of APM, and the Honorary Secretary of IAPC, shall select a senior IAPC member suitable for the post.
- ii. **Four Members:** Indian nationals and doctors in modern medicine with a postgraduate qualification (MD/MS), and be uninterrupted members of IAPC for five years. Additionally, they should have been working in the field of palliative care in India for at least five years.
- iii. **One Member:** International representative of eminence who has worked in palliative care education and research for at least ten years.

TENURE

11. The tenure of each member of the Governing Council will be as follows:

- a. **The Chairperson:** One term only, i.e. three years.
- b. **The Secretary General:** One term, i.e. three years, and the person holding this position can have two successive terms if he/she so desires and is elected.
- c. **The Chair of the Board of Studies:** One term, i.e. three years, and the person holding this position can have two successive terms if they so desire and are selected again.
- d. **Members of Governing Council:** One term, i.e. three years, and the person holding this position can have two successive terms if they so desire and are selected again.

ELECTIONS

12. The process of election for the members of the Governing Council will be as follows:

- a. The elections for the Chairperson and Secretary General will be conducted in the same manner as the election of office bearers of the IAPC. The next **election will be conducted in 2026**, along with the election of the IAPC office bearers.
- b. The Chair of the Board of Studies shall be selected by the Governing Council of APM. In case of a tie, the President, IAPC shall have the casting vote.
- c. The members of the Governing Council shall be selected by a four-member committee comprising the President of IAPC, Chairperson of APM, the Secretary General of APM, , and the Honorary Secretary of IAPC. In case of a tie, the President, IAPC shall have the casting vote.
- d. **The Governing Council Voting:** All of them have the voting rights in the governing council meetings of APM. In case of a tie, the President, IAPC shall have the casting vote.

ROLES OF MEMBERS OF GOVERNING COUNCIL

13. Roles of the Members are as under:

- a. **President, Indian Association of Palliative Care**
 - i. The President, IAPC will be overall in charge of APM, however, he / she will provide reasonable independence to APM for its internal affairs and academic growth.
 - ii. Provides strategic guidance and oversight consistent with the aims and objectives of the IAPC.
 - iii. Acts as a link between IAPC and APM; ensuring alignment of objectives.
 - iv. Participates in key decision-making and approves major policy directions.
 - v. Vested with final powers in matters of governance, structure, financial oversight, policies and collaboration with other organizations.
 - vi. Represents APM at official forums, whenever required.
- b. **Chairperson, APM: The roles** will be formulated by the APM keeping this SOP in full consideration.
- c. **Secretary General, APM:** Roles will be formulated by the APM.

d. The Honorary Secretary, IAPC

- i. Helps the President, IAPC to carry out his/her roles in the APM effectively.
- ii. May assist in resource mobilization, funding appeals, or official correspondences if the President, IAPC so desires.

e. Chairperson, Board of Studies: Roles will be formulated by the APM.

f. Members: There will be total 7 Members and their roles will be formulated by the APM.

MANAGEMENT OF APM

14. Administration of the APM will be through the Governing Council of 12 members. The Governing Council will work out the detailed roles for each member. The Governing Council will focus on:

- a. Commencing and approving new courses (as per the new course template)
- b. Monitoring the progress of the current courses and academic activities of the APM
- c. Reviewing the course leads and faculty pool of various courses and programs
- d. Reviewing the course feedback and suggesting remedial measures
- e. Identification and accreditation of training centres
- f. External endorsement and accreditation of various APM courses and programs
- g. Developing a model for active fund generation for APM
- h. Reviewing the progress of various research initiatives and APM research networks
- i. Actively pursue external collaborations to enhance the reach and scope of APM

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

15. A separate bank account of APM will be opened on the name of “The Indian Association of Palliative Care”. One IAPC office bearers from the Executive Committee will be one of the signatories to the account, alongside TWO representatives of APM. The annual financial audit will be done by the appointed CA of the IAPC.

16. Fund Generation: The IAPC will financially help APM to establish itself during initial years. However, maximum efforts should be made to make APM financially viable at the earliest. The following steps should be taken:

- a. Contribution from various entrepreneurs (CSR) particularly from Pharmacy industry.
- b. Maximum enrollment of students should be tried out to generate enough fees collection.
- c. Research and consultancy income.
- d. Stringent Financial Discipline.

MEETINGS

17. The Governing Council shall meet every quarter to discuss updates and share views on the development of activities, and at least once a year in person, preferably before or during the Annual Conference of IAPC. 1/3 of the total members of the Governing Council shall form a quorum. They can have additional online meetings whenever the situation demands

REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

18. The SOPs will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the IAPC every 3 years or earlier if so required, to ensure relevance and effectiveness; proposed changes may be initiated and amended by the Executive Committee of the IAPC.

CONCLUSION

19. In developing countries like India, there is an increasing need for well-educated and motivated medical staff to provide palliative care. However, despite the availability of both short and long palliative care training programmes, there remains a lack of awareness and sensitivity among healthcare providers. This contributes to a poorer quality of life, higher healthcare costs, and inappropriate treatment at the end of life. With sincere intent and shared interest in advancing palliative care in India, the APM acknowledges the urgent need in this sector to develop skills and strengthen capacities within the field of palliative care.

“Advancing Excellence Palliative Medicine Education and Practice”