

## **Professional Workshop on Advancing Psychosocial Clinical Skills in End-of-life Care: Enhancing therapeutic effectiveness**

Patients with advanced or incurable cancer often express the need for professional help to cope with their complex situation. Furthermore, the support of health care professionals may often be dominated by symptom treatment and its effectiveness and less on the kinds of needs that patients and families consider most important. Distress is a significant problem for individuals who are living with cancer. Responding effectively requires therapeutic sensitivity and skill. This workshop will discuss a model that draws on elements of therapeutic presence and the integration of therapists' personal characteristics to provide effective communication and psychosocial care of patients who are experiencing cancer-related distress.

## **Professional Workshop on Advancing Psychosocial Clinical Skills in End-of-life Care: Facilitating Couple Communication**

Couple based interventions at the end of life may identify gaps in communication about end-of-life issues; facilitate a sharing of new understandings; reduce levels of distress; provide an opportunity for relational growth; while preparing the partner for bereavement. Participants will be introduced to an intervention that was developed and piloted using the Patient Dignity Inventory (PDI) as the focus of a 1-hour clinical interview. The intervention may be an important adjunct in helping to prepare the couple for the challenges inherent toward the end of life. The focus of the clinical interview around the PDI provides a structure which may be particularly acceptable for men.