

# CPMSL NEWSLETTER

COLLEGE OF PALLIATIVE  
MEDICINE OF SRI LANKA



Volume 4, Issue 1  
December, 2024



## Induction of the 4th President of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka

The induction ceremony of the 4th President of the College, Dr. Ranga Perera, Dean, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, was held on 26th October 2024 at the Hilton Colombo Residencies.

Dr Palitha Maheepala, Secretary to the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka, was the chief guest of the event while Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka was the guest of honour. In addition, the event was graced by, chancellor of the Uva Wellasa University, Prof Jayantha Balawardena; Vice Chancellor of the Kothalawala Defence University, Rear Admiral Dhammika Kumara. Furthermore, several other high officials of the Ministry of Health, presidents of other professional colleges, members of the College and representatives from other partner agencies were also among the attendees.

## Top News

3rd Annual Academic Sessions  
of the College of Palliative  
Medicine of Sri Lanka

Induction of the 4th President  
of the College of Palliative  
Medicine of Sri Lanka



The theme of the College this  
year is, "*Progress and  
Reflections: Celebrating the  
Past and Shaping the Future*".



**Senior prof. Chandrika Wijeratne was awarded the prestigious Palliative Care Excellence Award – individual category, while Sri Sathya Sai Suwa Sewana Hospice received the Palliative Care Excellence Award – hospice category, in recognition of the outstanding contribution made to the field of palliative care in Sri Lanka.**





## Presidential Address by Dr. Ranga Perera, President of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka 2024/2025

Palliative care is central to medical practice, embodying two-thirds of a doctor's duty: relieving suffering and comforting patients. Inspired by Hippocrates, the speaker highlights the importance of this field. In 2014, the UN resolution WHA67.19 emphasized palliative care as a core component of health systems. The College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka, inaugurated in October 2021, aligns its activities with global themes and set its 2024/25 theme as "Progress and Reflections of Palliative Care: Celebrating the Past and Shaping the Future."

### End-of-Life Care

End-of-life care ensures a dignified and peaceful transition, addressing physical, emotional, spiritual, and social aspects. In Sri Lanka, 87% of deaths involve prolonged illness, underscoring the need for structured end-of-life care. However, the absence of formal legal frameworks for DNR orders and national policies complicates this effort. The College prioritizes establishing standards and legal coverage for end-of-life care, aligned with the National Health Strategic Master Plan (2016–2025).

### Capacity Building

To enhance accessibility, the Ministry of Health has allocated Grade C hospitals and provincial facilities for palliative care. The College fosters public awareness, family support, holistic care, and compassionate communication. Training healthcare professionals at all levels is vital. The College's initiatives include outreach programs, awareness campaigns, and collaboration with local and international entities. Efforts to integrate palliative care into primary healthcare and establish hospices, such as the Hospice Sri Lanka Alliance, further this mission.

### Collaborations and Training

The College collaborates with the National Steering Committee, international universities, and SEARO for capacity building. It supports educational programs, including a Postgraduate Diploma (initiated in 2015), an upcoming MD program, and an MSc in collaboration with the University of Moratuwa. Plans are underway for a Master's course for nurses under the Erasmus Program, aiming for launch by 2025.

## Resource Allocation

Effective palliative care requires sufficient financial, human, and material resources. Advocacy for increased government and private funding, better staffing, and availability of essential medications and equipment is critical. The College recommends prioritizing medical officers with postgraduate qualifications in annual transfers and accelerating the implementation of the MD program.

## Research

Research is pivotal for evidence-based practices. The College promotes local studies on cultural attitudes, symptom management, and care models while encouraging young researchers through training programs. Collaborations with international institutions and comprehensive data collection systems aim to enhance palliative care services.

The College commits to advancing palliative care in Sri Lanka through capacity building, training, resource allocation, and research. Despite challenges, it strives to ensure compassionate, holistic care for every terminally ill patient, advocating for systemic improvements to achieve this vision.



# New council members of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka for the 2024/2025



President

Dr. Ranga Perera

President-Elect

Dr. Renuka Jayatissa

Vice President

Dr. Pushpa Weerasinghe

Secretary

Dr. Sashiprabha Nawaratne

Treasurer

Dr. Ishara Premathilake

Editor

Dr. Kithsiri Senanayake

Assistant Secretary

Dr. Densil Gunasekara

Assistant Editor

Dr. Dakshila Galappatti

Ex-officio

Dr. Janaki Vidanapathirana (Immediate Past President)

Dr. Ishanka Talagala

Dr. Senitha Liyanage

Council

Prof. Samadhi Rajapaksa

Prof. Saman Nanayakkara

Prof. Jayantha Balawardena

Dr. Buddhika Mahesh

Dr. Thushan Gooneratne

Dr. Suneth Karunaratne

Dr. Prasadini Karunaratne

Dr Lalantha Senaratna

Dr. N Jeyakumar

Dr. Hilary Fernando

Dr. Thusitha Kahaduwa

Dr. Dineshan Ranasinghe

Dr. Lihini Wijerathna

Dr. Dhanuja Mahesh

Dr. Shanaz Thasleem

Co-opted

Dr. Wasantha Rathnayake

Dr. T. Skandaraja

Dr. Nurad Joseph

Dr. Upul Vidanagama

Dr. Chathuri Jayawardena

Dr. Keerthi Rajapaksa

Dr. Chamini Senatunga

Dr. Kelum Pelpola

Dr. Priyanthi Premaratne



## The Inauguration Ceremony of the 3rd Annual Academic Sessions

The inauguration ceremony of the 3rd Annual Academic Sessions of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka (CPMSL) took place on October 4, 2024, at the Union Ballroom of Hilton Residencies. The event, graced by the President of CPMSL, Dr. Janaki Vidanapathirana, was attended by approximately 140 invitees, including members and distinguished guests.

The Chief Guest of the occasion was the Honourable Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Dr. P.G. Mahipala, while the Guest of Honour was Mr. Kunle Adeniyi, UNFPA Representative in Sri Lanka.

The ceremony commenced with a formal procession followed by the traditional lighting of the oil lamp by the Chief Guest, Guest of Honour, and other dignitaries. After the national anthem, Dr. Janaki Vidanapathirana welcomed the gathering with her opening address. The Guest of Honour, Mr. Kunle Adeniyi, and Chief Guest, Dr. Mahipala, delivered their remarks, with Dr. Mahipala commending the College's contributions to palliative medicine and wishing them success in their future endeavors.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Kithsiri Senanayake, a renowned academic from the Department of Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences, Rajarata University. He spoke on the impactful topic, "Revolutionizing Comfort: Innovations and Challenges in Wound Care within the Palliative Setting."



Two fellowships were conferred during the event: one to Dr. Palitha Mahipala, Secretary to the Ministry of Health, and the other to Prof. Samadhi Rajapakshe, founder and former President of CPMSL. A highlight of the ceremony was the launch of the Advanced Care Plan Booklet, a comprehensive guide aimed at enhancing palliative care delivery.



Another noteworthy moment was the awarding of a palliative care grant to Dr. Chiranthi Dhanasinghe, Registrar in Community Medicine, in recognition of her outstanding thesis, which was selected through a competitive process.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by the Secretary of CPMSL, Dr. Ishanka Thalagala, marking the end of a memorable and impactful day for the College.

## 3rd Annual Academic Sessions of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka

The 3rd Annual Academic Sessions of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka, held on the 5th of October 2024, showcased an impressive confluence of expert knowledge and emerging research in the realm of palliative care. With the theme of fostering innovation and addressing complexities, the sessions brought together healthcare professionals, researchers, and postgraduate trainees to discuss the latest advancements in palliative medicine.



### Plenary Sessions

The plenary sessions explored key aspects of palliative care, starting with “Do Not Count the Days, Make the Days Count: End Stage Heart Failure,” which emphasized improving quality of life for advanced heart failure patients. “Navigating Through Palliative Care Emergencies” highlighted timely interventions for crises like pain and respiratory distress, alongside psychosocial care. “Place of Fortification for Palliative Care” addressed policy-level strategies to strengthen services, focusing on collaboration and resource optimization. Lastly, “Turn Tears to Smile” explored emotional dimensions, offering counseling techniques to help patients and families find joy and resilience amidst challenges.



### Free Paper Session

A highlight of the event was the free paper session, where postgraduate trainees, under the guidance of Dr. Buddhika Mahesh, presented systematic reviews related to palliative care, innovative approaches in integrating palliative care at primary care setting and poster presentation of case studies. The meticulous analysis and evidence-based insights shared during these presentations highlighted the evolving research landscape in palliative medicine and its implications for clinical practice.

### Symposiums: Bridging the Gap

The thematic symposium sessions, aptly titled “Bridging the Gap,” addressed interdisciplinary challenges in palliative care.

1. Harmonizing Diabetes Management with Palliative Care Challenges: This session illuminated the complexities of managing diabetes in palliative patients, focusing on balancing glycemic control with quality of life.
2. Decoding Diabetes Management: A Strategic Approach: Building on the previous session, this discussion elaborated on practical frameworks for personalized diabetes care in terminally ill patients.
3. Navigating Through Complexities: Managing Patients with Impaired Renal Functions: Renal complications in palliative settings often pose unique challenges, and this session offered actionable insights for optimizing care in patients with renal impairment.
4. Interlacing Wound Care in Palliative Patients: The symposium concluded with an expert-led discussion on advanced wound care techniques, emphasizing patient comfort, infection prevention, and the aesthetic aspects of wound management.



College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka

### 3rd Annual Academic Sessions 2024

5th OCTOBER 2024

#### Registration for session

Early bird registration:  
(Up to 15th September 2024)  
LKR 5000.00

Afterwards and onsite  
registration: LKR 6000.00

#### Plenary sessions

Do not count the days, make  
the days count: End stage  
heart failure

Navigating through palliative  
care emergencies

Place of fortification for  
palliative care

Turn tears to smiles

Free Paper Sessions

#### Symposium

Bridging the gap: Harmonizing  
diabetes management with  
palliative care challenges

- Piecing together the puzzle: Integrating challenges in palliative patients with diabetes
- Decoding diabetes management: A strategic approach in palliative care
- Navigating through complexities: Managing patients with impaired renal functions
- Interlacing wound care in palliative patients



Union Ballroom,  
Hilton Colombo Residences

SCAN TO REGISTER



The 3rd Annual Academic Sessions of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka marked another milestone in the pursuit of excellence in palliative care. By addressing both clinical and research dimensions, the event reinforced its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for patients facing life-limiting illnesses



## Activities by CPMSL

### Visit to the Shantha Sevana Hospice, Maharagama

Established in 1996 by the Sri Lanka Cancer Society, the Shantha Sevana Hospice Maharagama, provides optimum care for cancer patients at end of life, irrespective of their cultural, social, ethnic or religious backgrounds. The members of CPMSL visited the hospice on 1.12.24, with the aim of gaining insights into the ongoing activities at the hospice, understand challenges, foster collaboration and explore potential areas where the CPMSL could provide technical support and assistance.

### Consultative meeting on Updating the National Strategic plan on prevention and control of cancer (2025–2030) in Sri Lanka

The consultative meeting to update the National Strategic Framework for Palliative Care development for Sri Lanka for the year 2025–2030, was held on the 28.11.24 at Hotel Janaki Colombo 05. Members of the CPMSL provided technical inputs on each of the strategic directions and development of major activities.





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