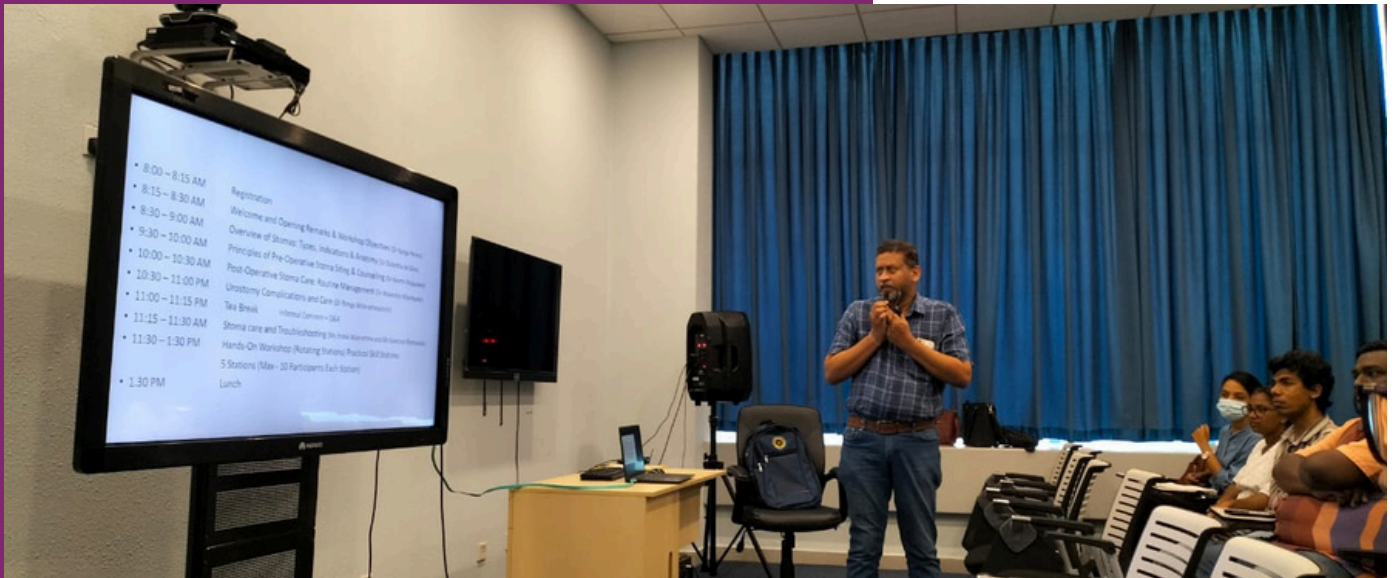


CPMSL NEWSLETTER

COLLEGE OF PALLIATIVE
MEDICINE OF SRI LANKA



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July, 2025



Stoma Considerations in Palliative Care – Workshop at University Hospital KDU

The College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka conducted a highly engaging workshop on Stoma Considerations in Palliative Care on 31st May 2025 at the University Hospital, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU). The event was attended by 25 doctors and nurses, aiming to strengthen both theoretical knowledge and practical competencies in stoma care.

The academic sessions were led by a distinguished panel of experts including Dr. Ranga Perera, Dr. Wasantha Wijenayake (Consultant Colorectal Surgeon), Dr. Keerthi Rajapaksha (Consultant Surgeon), Dr. Dulantha de Silva (Consultant General Surgeon), and Dr. Ranga Wickramarachchi (Consultant Urological Surgeon), who shared their insights on various clinical aspects of stoma care in the palliative context.

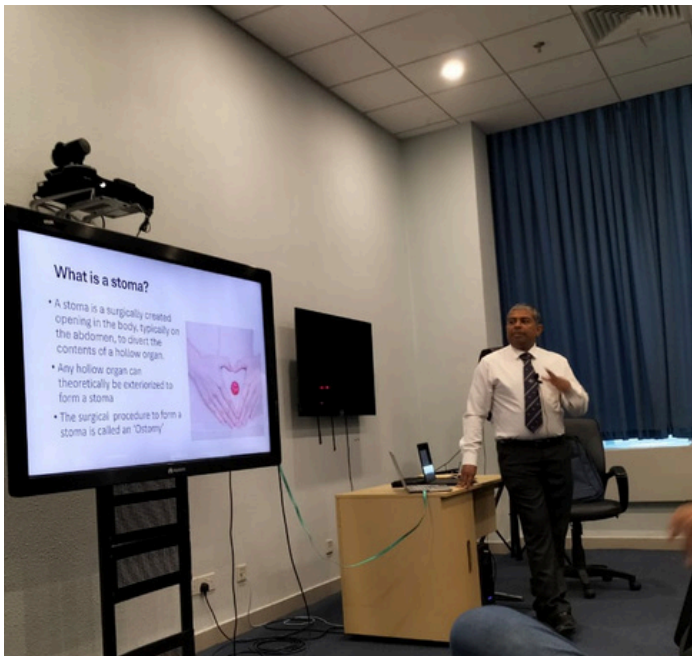
Top News

Stoma Considerations in Palliative Care – Workshop at University Hospital KDU

Consultation on NHSMP 2026–2035: Advancing Rehabilitation and Palliative Care in Sri Lanka

Consultative Meeting on Updating the National Strategic Framework for Palliative Care Development (2025–2030)

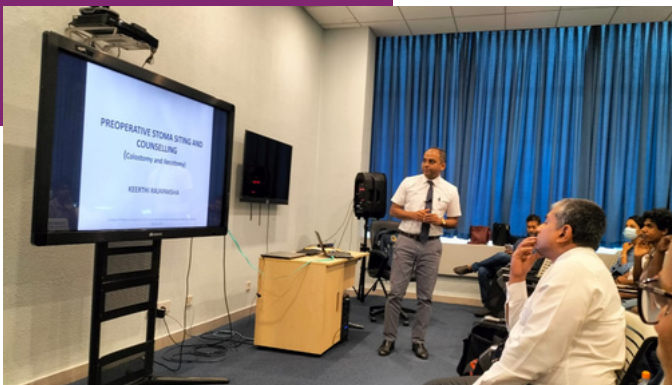
Stepping Forward Together: College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka Joins HealthFest Walk for Healthy Living



Hands-on demonstrations were skillfully conducted by Ms. Geethani Rathnayake and Ms. Enoka Wijeratne, Nursing Officers from KDU, followed by practical training sessions for all participants to enhance procedural confidence and patient-centered care.

This workshop marks another step in the College's ongoing mission to build capacity and improve the quality of palliative care services in Sri Lanka.





Consultation on NHSMP 2026–2035: Advancing Rehabilitation and Palliative Care in Sri Lanka

The fourth stakeholder consultation meeting for the National Health Strategic Master Plan (NHSMP) 2026–2035, focusing on the Rehabilitation Sector, was held on 20th June 2025 at Taj Samudra. Representing the College, President Dr. Ranga Perera and Prof. Samadhi Rajapaksha actively participated and presented key proposals to enhance the structure and delivery of rehabilitation and palliative care services in Sri Lanka.

Key recommendations included the establishment of a separate Directorate under a Deputy Director General (Rehabilitation and Palliative Services), supported by dedicated Directorates for Rehabilitation and Palliative Care. Structural reforms were proposed to streamline governance, improve coordination, and ensure these cross-cutting services receive appropriate visibility within the Ministry of Health.

The College also presented a comprehensive strategy for expanding palliative care services nationwide. This includes developing Palliative Care Consultative Services in major hospitals, establishing Divisional Palliative Care Units in peripheral hospitals, optimizing existing hospices and NGO partnerships, and strengthening home-based palliative care through trained public health nurses. These proposals aim to improve access, quality, and equity in palliative care across all levels of the health system.

Consultative Meeting on Updating the National Strategic Framework for Palliative Care Development (2025–2030)



A consultative meeting to update the National Strategic Framework for Palliative Care Development (2025–2030) was held on 18th June 2025 at Hotel Janaki, Colombo. Organized by the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) under the Ministry of Health, the meeting brought together key national stakeholders to collaboratively revise and strengthen Sri Lanka's roadmap for delivering high-quality, accessible, and sustainable palliative care services over the next five years.

The meeting commenced with a welcome address by Dr. Sudath Samaraweera, Director of the NCCP, followed by remarks from Dr. Champika Wickremasinghe, Deputy Director General – Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD).

A series of technical presentations followed, outlining strategic priorities and ongoing initiatives led by the NCCP and the Directorate of NCD. These included efforts to enhance service delivery, improve access, and build capacity within the palliative care system. Dr. Suraj Perera, Consultant Community Physician (CCP), presented the proposed updates to the strategic framework, setting the stage for broader discussion.

Dr. Bhanuja Wijayathilaka and Dr. Sherine Balasingham elaborated on the roles of their respective directorates in strengthening palliative care services, while Dr. Samantha Ranasingha, Director of Training, emphasised the importance of workforce development through in-service training programmes. He also highlighted budget allocations from the Education, Training, and Research (ET&R) Division for the development of palliative care. During the discussion, several participants raised concerns about gaps in these allocations and proposed improvements to ensure better resource distribution for programme implementation.

A key feature of the meeting was the small group discussions, in which participants were divided into six groups to evaluate various components of the draft strategic framework critically. The interactive format enabled diverse perspectives to be shared and consolidated. Each group presented their findings, promoting a participatory and consensus-driven approach to policy refinement.

The meeting concluded with closing remarks and a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Shreeni Alahapperuma, Deputy Director of the NCCP, who acknowledged the contributions of all attendees. The consultative meeting marked a significant milestone in aligning Sri Lanka's national palliative care priorities with international standards, paving the way for the integrated and sustainable development of palliative care within the health system.

Webinars



The College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka

Monthly webinar

Role of mindfulness and compassion in Palliative Care in Sri Lanka

Friday 25th April 2025 at 8.30 pm



Dr. Kumanga Andrahennadi
Founder and Director of CALM
Centre for the Advanced Learning of Mindfulness
Sri Lanka & U.K.

April 2025

The College of Palliative Medicine in Sri Lanka organized its monthly webinar on 25th April 2025 by, Dr. Kumanga Andrahennadi, a leading expert in mindfulness-based programs. She conducted an insightful lecture on the integration of mindfulness and compassion into palliative care, highlighting how these approaches enhance patient well-being, reduce suffering, and support caregivers. Dr. Andrahennadi shared insights from her extensive work in Sri Lanka and beyond, offering practical tools for healthcare professionals.



College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka

International Webinar

Joining the dots for better Palliative Care

Sarah is a Deep End General Practitioner (GP) in Sheffield, UK, serving a diverse population in a socioeconomically disadvantaged area. She leads policy-relevant research in palliative and end-of-life care as an **Associate Professor of Palliative Care** at the University of Leeds. Additionally, she is the **National Clinical Director for Palliative Care and End-of-Life Care (PEoLC)**, providing strategic leadership for NHS England.



Dr Sarah Mitchell

Join us to explore how population needs, health inequalities, and primary care, backed by national policy, can drive meaningful change in PEoLC

Date : 14.05.2025 (Wednesday)
Time : 8.30 -9.30 pm

May 2025

The College of Palliative Medicine in Sri Lanka organized its quarterly international webinar on May 14th, 2025. The event was honoured by the presence of esteemed speaker Dr. Sarah Mitchell who is a Deep End GP in Sheffield, UK. She leads policy-relevant research in palliative and end-of-life care as an Associate Professor of Palliative Care at the University of Leeds. She also serves as the National Clinical Director for Palliative and End-of-Life Care for NHS England. Her work bridges frontline clinical care, policy, and research, with a strong focus on equity, integrated care, and public involvement.

This webinar provided valuable perspectives on enhancing palliative care practices and addressing healthcare inequities.



College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka
Monthly Webinar

**Palliative care in Advance
Malignancies**



Speaker:

Dr. Ranga Perera (MBBS, MS,
FRCS, FRCS Ed. FCSL)
Consultant Onco-Surgeon & Senior Lecturer
in Surgery
Surg. Captain S.L. Navy (VNF)
Dean Faculty of Allied Health Sciences
Kotelawala Defence University

Join us

Date : 29.05.2025 (Thursday)
Time : 8.30 -9.30 pm

Zoom link

<https://learn.zoom.us/j/93941831605?pwd=LXGwDz60r8Abgh108HOeyhZavQH3m9.1>

May 2025

The College of Palliative Medicine in Sri Lanka organized its monthly webinar on 29th May, 2025. The event was conducted by Dr.Ranga Perera, consultant onco-surgeon and senior lecturer in surgery, Surg.Captain S.L.Navy (VNF), Dean Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Kotelawala Defence University on “Palliative care in advance malignancies”. He shared invaluable insights into palliative care for advanced malignancies, offering expert perspectives on approaches that prioritize patient comfort, dignity, and overall quality of life. The session attracted a diverse audience, who actively participated with thought-provoking questions and meaningful discussions.

June 2025

The The College of Palliative Medicine in Sri Lanka organized its monthly webinar on 19th June, 2025. The event was conducted by Dr. Buddhika Dassanayake, a Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon from BH- Panadura, he provided invaluable insights into the role of oral and maxillofacial care in palliative patients. His expertise shed light on approaches that enhance comfort, dignity, and overall quality of life of palliative patients. on ““The final chapter - A gentle touch of oral and maxillofacial care for palliative patients” The session drew a diverse audience who actively engaged with thought-provoking questions and discussions.



College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka
Monthly Webinar

**The final chapter - A gentle touch of oral
and maxillofacial care for palliative
patients**



Speaker:

Dr Buddhika Dassanayake

BDS (SL), MD (OMFS)
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon
Base Hospital- Panadura

Explore the essential role of oral and maxillofacial care in enhancing the comfort, dignity, and quality of life of palliative patients

Join us

Date : 19.06.2025
Time : 8.30 -9.30 pm

Stepping Forward Together: College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka Joins HealthFest Walk for Healthy Living

Members of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka proudly participated in the walk organized by the College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka as part of the HealthFest festival held on the 7th of June 2025, at Viharamahadevi Park, Colombo 7. The event, aimed at promoting healthy living and community well-being, brought together healthcare professionals, several stakeholders, and members of the public for an energizing morning of physical activity and awareness-building.

The walk served not only as a symbol of unity among different medical specialties but also as a reminder of the vital role health promotion plays in holistic care, including palliative care.



Members of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka walked side by side with colleagues, advocating for healthier lifestyles and emphasizing the importance of preventive care at all stages of life.

Participation in such multidisciplinary initiatives underscores our commitment to collaborative public health action and highlights the palliative care community's engagement beyond clinical care, into advocacy, wellness, and the broader social determinants of health. We thank the College of Community Physicians for this timely initiative and look forward to continued collaboration in promoting health and well-being across the lifespan.

Media Campaign

Palliative Care: A Human Right and a Collective Responsibility

On May 29, 2025, Prof. Samadhi Rajapaksa, Founder of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka, appeared on the live television programme “Happening Now” aired on TV1 of Sirasa TV. During this insightful discussion, Prof. Rajapaksa shed light on the critical importance of palliative care, beginning with



an introduction to the concept of “Sahana Sathkara” – a term encapsulating the ethos of relief and compassion for those facing serious health-related suffering.

Prof. Rajapaksa emphasized that one of the core objectives of palliative care is the alleviation of pain. He asserted that allowing a person to die in pain constitutes a violation of human rights. Citing global data, he noted that approximately 56.8 million people worldwide require palliative care annually, including 25.7 million in their final year of life. However, only about 14% of these individuals currently have access to such care. While palliative care is well-established in many developed countries, Sri Lanka holds a leading position among Southeast Asian nations in the advancement of palliative services.

The discussion further explored the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes mellitus, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory illnesses, renal disorders, stroke, and dementia. Prof. Rajapaksa highlighted that many individuals now live longer with disabilities caused by these conditions, underlining the increasing need for palliative care throughout their lifespans.

He also elaborated on the scope of hospice care services available in Sri Lanka, from pediatric to geriatric populations, offering continued support that bridges the gap between hospital and home. Notably, he spoke about bereavement care and the support extended to caregivers during and after the loss of a loved one.

Prof. Rajapaksa also detailed recent primary healthcare reforms, including the establishment of two dedicated palliative care beds in C-category base hospitals. Additionally, he commended the efforts of the non-governmental sector, particularly the Hospice Sanasadaya initiative, which offers free, community-based hospice care. This service currently operates in Colombo, Matara, Karapitiya, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura, and Jaffna.

The field-level delivery of palliative care through Public Health Nursing was also discussed, emphasizing the importance of integrating palliative care into the primary healthcare system to reach more individuals in need.

Concluding the programme, Prof. Rajapaksa delivered a powerful message:

“Palliative care is everyone’s business.”

He called for greater awareness, policy support, and community involvement to ensure that all individuals in Sri Lanka receive the compassionate care they deserve.

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