



Dr. Leah Norgrove: Winner of the 2018 CSPCP Humanitarian Award

The Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians (CSPCP) is pleased to award the 2018 Humanitarian Award to Dr. Leah Norgrove, in recognition of her outstanding work in Canada and overseas in improving palliative care for underserved populations.

Palliative Care in Tanzania

Dr. Norgrove and her husband, Dr. Ambrose Marsh, developed a palliative care and cervical cancer screening program at the Bombo Regional Hospital in Tanzania (2008 through present). The initial objective was to foster a sustainable, capacity-building project focused on palliative care.

Starting with basic education about the founding principles of palliative care, Dr. Norgrove generated interest and acceptance among staff and administrators. She educated champions using curriculum specific to providing palliative care in resource-limited settings and helped raise money to fund a lead physician to complete a Diploma in Palliative Medicine and a number of pharmacists to achieve certification in opioid management. Early on, Dr Norgrove obtained approval for the introduction of oral morphine solution to the hospital palliative care program and this continues as the only strong opioid available to date.

Dr. Norgrove worked collaboratively with receptive hospital staff and government administrators to develop capacity in the palliative care program and services, housed within the HIV services, in an ongoing mentorship relationship. Eight years later, staff are identifying in-patients with palliative needs and they can be referred for palliative care consultations conducted by three advance-practice nurses. There is a robust home visiting component for patients with palliative needs in the community.

An unexpected and more recent expansion in the project was inspired after program data revealed the high proportion of female patients dying from cervical cancer. Dr. Norgrove introduced a cervical cancer screening program focusing on the HIV+ women who are

particularly at risk. It is hoped that the percentage of cervical cancer deaths will decline in future years.

Drs. Norgrove and Marsh formed the Bombo Palliative Care Project Society at home, which continues to raise money to support palliative care education and related services at Bombo Regional Referral Hospital. This funding helps to fill gaps in the programs not currently funded by government while working towards capacity building and self-sufficiency.

Work with First Nations Populations on the Saanich Peninsula (Vancouver Island, BC)

Dr. Norgrove is a dedicated family physician in practice for over 20 years and the palliative care physician consultant at the Saanich Peninsula Hospital. On her own time, she led an innovative project called “*Journey Home: Working Towards Cultural Safety in Palliative Care Services for Four First Nation Communities*”. The two main project goals include improving palliative care capacity within four First Nation communities and cultural safety in the services provided by non-Indigenous health care partners.

The project began with over two years of trust-building conversations and focus groups exploring First Nation experiences of palliative care services. Once this complex set of needs, tensions, and deficits in care were identified, Dr. Norgrove developed a project plan and sourcing funding and participants in collaboration with the Journey Home Project planning team

The first phase of the project (completed fall/winter 2017) focused on cultural competency building in non-Indigenous care providers, including a specialized LEAP for serving First Nations (Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative Care), and six “Community Learning Circles” giving voice to Indigenous traditions and preferences for palliative care.

Activities in early 2018 included co-learning case-based team building and a celebratory feast to engage broader community. Dr. Norgrove’s project has been inspired by principles of the Compassionate Communities movement, EOLFN (Improving End-of-Life care in First Nations Communities, Lakehead University) and principles of *Two-eyed Seeing* and *Co-learning* articulated by a Mi’kmaw Elder.