

# Developing a proactive, respectful and dignified end of life care culture

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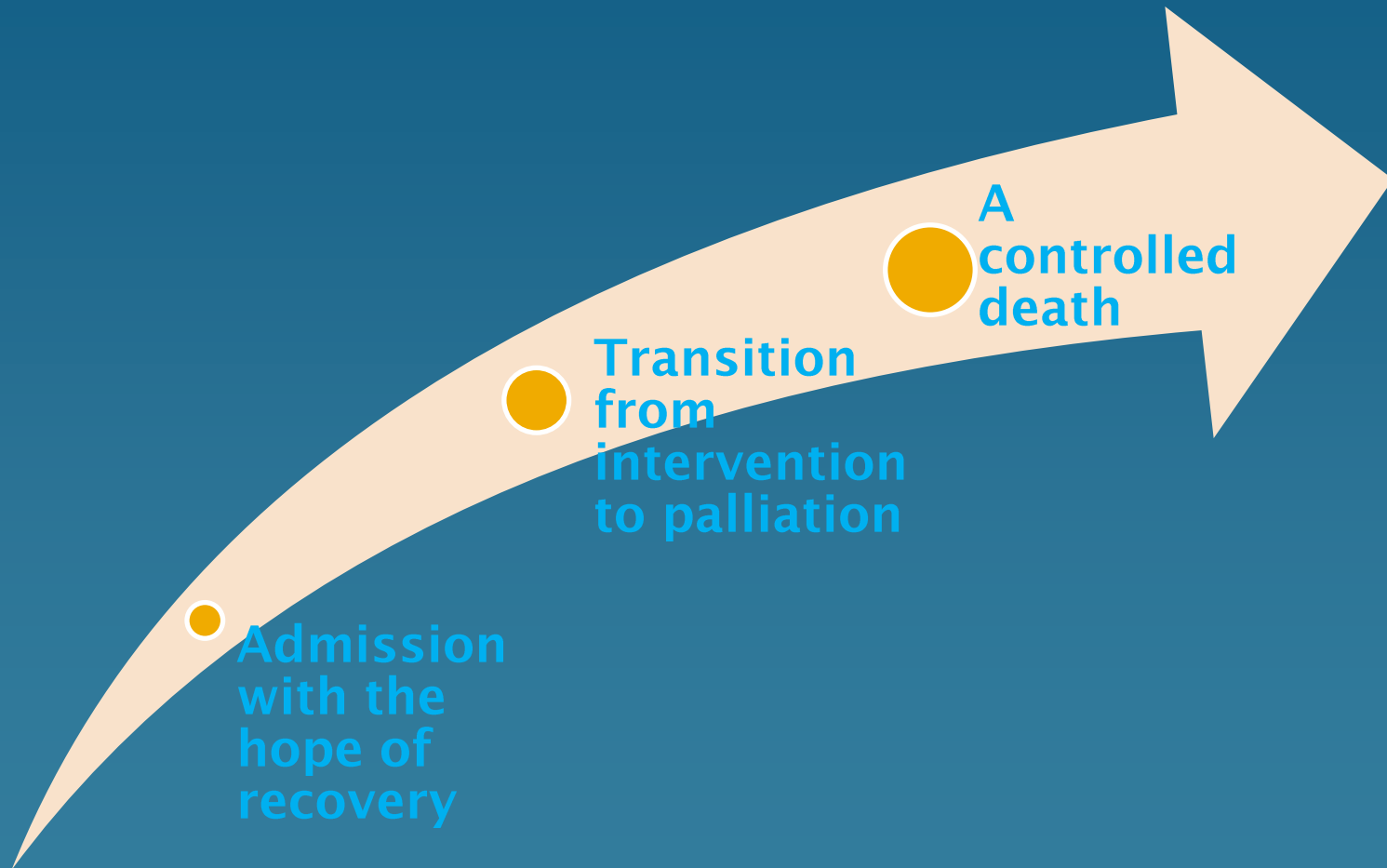
School of Health Sciences



# Background

- Palliative and end of life care (EoLC) increasingly regarded as global public health issue
- The importance of EoLC in prevention of suffering and offering cost effective ways of providing care is acknowledged
- EoLC is a complex, sensitive and intrinsic part of everyday critical care practice

# End of life trajectory in intensive care



La speranza e 'ultima a morire

Proverbi italiani

Hope is the last thing to die

Italian proverb

# Developing a proactive, respectful and dignified end of life care culture for patients

- Back to basics:
  - Symptom control and comfort measures
  - Touch
  - Cleanliness
  - Consistent information for decision making
  - Details of how treatments managed and how care continues

Mon Pierre, la vie est atroce sans toi, c'est  
une angoisse sans nom, une détresse  
sans fond, une désolation sans limites

My Peter, life is atrocious without you, it is  
an anguish without name, a bottomless  
distress, a desolation without limits

Marie Curie 1906

# A proactive, respectful and dignified end of life care culture for families

- Cues to consider what patient would have wanted
- Focus on what will be done, not just on what will not
- Help to interpret clinical signs accurately
- Educate families with what to expect
- Create rituals to make death meaningful



Het verlies, was er al voor het einde,  
de rouw voordat het afscheid kwam

Onbekend

The loss was already there before the end,  
the bereavement was already there before  
the final departure

Dutch Unknown

# Developing a proactive, respectful and dignified end of life care culture for staff

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- Medical speciality differences
- Medical and nursing role tensions
- Personal distress in end of life care
- Inclusivity of end of life discussions

# Developing a proactive, respectful and dignified end of life culture

- Need to consider:
  - the role of advanced planning
  - when end of life is approaching
  - how and who makes decisions about EoLC
  - mechanisms to enable decision making
  - support for medical and nursing staff
  - education to develop end of life skills
  - review end of life pathways

**Developing a proactive,  
respectful and dignified  
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