

What the workshop covers?

The workshop follows a practical communication structure and includes short teaching inputs, discussion, video observation and repeated skills practice.

1. Opening and setting the context

Participants explore what makes these conversations especially difficult for parents, children and staff.

2. Preparing and starting well

The workshop considers how to prepare yourself, the environment and the information before meeting with a parent or caregiver.

3. Gathering understanding

Participants practise asking what the parent already understands, what the child has been told, and what words the family is currently using.

4. Explaining and planning

Participants learn how to support parents to use clear language, avoid confusing euphemisms, and plan how, when and where to talk with their child.

5. Closing the conversation

The workshop explores how to summarise clearly, check remaining questions, agree next steps and reassure parents that support is available.

6. Staff debrief and self-care

Participants reflect on the emotional impact of this work and the importance of peer support, supervision and self-care.

Practical phrases explored in the workshop

"Please tell me what you understand about what is happening at the moment?"

"What have you explained to your child so far?"

"What words have you been using?"

"Would it be helpful if we thought together about some words you might use?"

"Some parents find it helpful to say, 'Mummy is very ill, and the doctors cannot make her better. This means your mum's body will stop working, her heart will stop beating, she won't be able to breathe anymore; that is called dying.'" *"How would that feel to say in your own words?"*



MODULE 10.1

END-OF-LIFE CONVERSATIONS:

Guiding Parents to Prepare Children/Young People when Someone Close is Dying

Why this workshop matters?

When someone close to a child is dying, parents and caregivers often want to protect the child from distress. They may avoid words such as **dying** or **death**, or feel unsure about what to say.

Children, however, often notice more than adults realise. They may notice changes in routines, atmosphere, emotions and conversations around them. Without clear information, children may feel confused, excluded, frightened or blame themselves.

This workshop helps staff support parents to have conversations that are:

- honest
- gentle
- age-appropriate
- family-centred
- emotionally supportive

The aim is not to take away distress, but to help parents and children understand what is happening and feel less alone.

Next workshop

VENUE:

DATE AND TIME:

CPD Credits (Awaiting approval)

Who should attend?

This workshop is suitable for healthcare professionals who support patients, parents, caregivers, children or families during serious illness and end-of-life care. It may be particularly useful for:

- doctors
- nurses
- health and social care professionals
- palliative care teams
- paediatric and adult services
- oncology, hospice, hospital and community teams
- staff involved in family support or bereavement care

No previous specialist training in talking with children about death is required.

What participants will learn?

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe a structured approach to conversations with parents about talking to children/young people when someone close is dying
- Use key phrases to explain end-of-life in clear, age-appropriate language
- Support parents to plan what they will say and how they will involve their child
- Gain a better understanding of your own communication through reflection and facilitated feedback
- Set yourself up to three realistic goals for using your learning in your own work