



**AMREF INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY SCIENCES
END OF SEMESTER APRIL 2026 EXAMINATIONS**

COURSE CODE AND TITLE BSM 414: Palliative Care

DATE: 9TH APRIL 2026

Duration: 2 HOURS

Start: 2PM

Finish: 4PM

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This exam is out of 70 marks
2. This Examination comprises THREE Sections. Section I: Multiple Choice Questions (20 marks)
Section II: Short Answer Questions (30 marks) and Section III: Long Answer Questions (20 marks)
3. Answer ALL Questions.
4. Do Not write anything on the question paper -use the back of your booklet for rough work if need be.

SECTION I: MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (20 MARKS)

1. A patient with end-stage lung cancer is receiving palliative care. The primary goal of this care is to:
 - A. Hasten the dying process to end suffering
 - B. Focus on curing the underlying disease
 - C. Improve quality of life through symptom management
 - D. Postpone death using advanced life support
2. The following best describes the “holistic approach” in palliative care?
 - A. Treating only the physical pain with opioids
 - B. Addressing physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs
 - C. Providing care only when the patient is unconscious
 - D. Focusing exclusively on the patient’s family members
3. According to the WHO, when should palliative care be initiated?
 - A. Only in the last 24 hours of life
 - B. When the patient is officially declared brain dead
 - C. Early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies
 - D. Only after all curative treatments have failed
4. This concept of “total pain.” implies that:
 - A. The pain is felt in every organ of the body
 - B. The pain is resistant to all forms of morphine
 - C. Pain is influenced by physical, psychological, social, and spiritual factors
 - D. The patient is exaggerating their symptoms
5. The “gold standard” for managing moderate to severe pain in palliative care?
 - A. Paracetamol
 - B. Ibuprofen
 - C. Morphine
 - D. Diazepam
6. If a patient develops “breakthrough pain,” the nurse should
 - A. Wait until the next scheduled dose
 - B. Administer a rescue dose of immediate-release medication
 - C. Tell the patient to practice deep breathing only
 - D. Increase the basal rate of the infusion without a bolus

7. A nurse observes a dying patient having a “death rattle” (noisy secretions). The best nursing intervention is to:
- A. Suction the patient vigorously every 10 minutes
 - B. Position the patient on their side and consider anticholinergic medication
 - C. Perform chest physiotherapy and percussion
 - D. Intubate the patient immediately
8. In the “work of the dying” (Byock), which phrase is essential for emotional reconciliation?
- A. “I want more treatment.”
 - B. “I forgive you.”
 - C. “Where is my lawyer?”
 - D. “I am not ready.”
9. Member of the palliative care team primarily responsible for addressing “theodicy” and the meaning of suffering?
- A. The physiotherapist
 - B. The nutritionist
 - C. The spiritual counselor/chaplain
 - D. The pharmacist
10. A patient’s family is exhausted from 24-hour care at home. The nurse suggests a short-term stay in a facility to give the family a break. This is called:
- A. Terminal care
 - B. Respite care
 - C. Bereavement care
 - D. Curative care
11. The “rule of thumb” recommended by the facilitator when managing symptoms in the elderly or frail palliative patient?
- A. Start with high doses to ensure pain relief
 - B. “Start low and go slow”
 - C. Always use intravenous routes first
 - D. Avoid all opioids to prevent respiratory depression
12. A patient with terminal throat cancer is having difficulty swallowing, The nursing intervention most appropriate for comfort;-
- A. Insert a nasogastric tube for forced feeding
 - B. Provide frequent mouth care and small sips of water or ice chips
 - C. Administer a high-calorie solid meal
 - D. Restrict all oral intake and provide IV fluids only

13. The primary social challenge of home-based care in many communities?
- A. Too much medical equipment in the house
 - B. Stigma associated with diseases like HIV/AIDS or cancer
 - C. High salaries for family caregivers
 - D. Excessive support from the government
14. Adjuvant medication used in palliative care to enhance the effect of pain relievers is;-
- A. Normal saline
 - B. Corticosteroids (e.g., Dexamethasone)
 - C. Distilled water
 - D. Vitamin C supplements
15. A nurse is caring for a patient who is agitated and restless in their final hours. This condition is often referred to as:
- A. Terminal weaning
 - B. Terminal restlessness/delirium
 - C. Active recovery
 - D. Respiratory alkalosis
16. When providing skin care for a bedbound palliative patient at home, the nurse should prioritize:
- A. Using strong detergents to kill bacteria
 - B. Frequent repositioning and keeping the skin dry and clean
 - C. Massaging bony prominences vigorously
 - D. Applying heavy perfumes to mask odors
17. Bereavement care involves:
- A. Treating the patient's physical pain
 - B. Supporting the family after the death of the patient
 - C. Providing legal advice on the patient's will
 - D. Assisting with the patient's funeral expenses only
18. A patient states, "I am not afraid of death, but I am afraid of how I will die." This indicates a need for the nurse to discuss:
- A. Financial planning
 - B. Advance care planning and symptom control
 - C. Funeral arrangements
 - D. The history of their illness

19. Mouth care is emphasized as a vital nursing task in palliative care because;-
- A. To ensure the patient can speak clearly to lawyers
 - B. Because dry mouth (xerostomia) is common and causes significant distress
 - C. To prepare the patient for surgery
 - D. To prevent the spread of COVID-19
20. Palliative care regards dying as:
- A. A medical failure
 - B. A normal process
 - C. An event to be postponed at all costs
 - D. A strictly biological event without spiritual meaning

SECTION II: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (30 MARKS)

1. Describe the "WHO Analgesic Step Ladder" and explain how it guides a nurse in escalating treatment for a patient with cancer pain. (6marks).
2. Outline the components and importance of care advice in palliative nursing (6 marks).
3. Identify three advantages and three challenges of providing palliative care within the patient's home environment compared to a hospital (6 marks).
4. Outline the nursing management for a palliative patient suffering from chronic dyspnea without using a ventilator (6 marks).
5. Explain the nurse's role in supporting the family after the death of the patient (6 marks)

SECTION III: LONG ANSWER QUESTION – (20 MARKS)

1. Mr. X is a 55-year-old patient with metastatic breast cancer. He is bedbound at home, has severe difficulty swallowing, ascites and is crying because he feels he is a "burden" to his children,
 - a) Develop a Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Mrs. X covering the four domains of Palliative Care, Physical, Social, Psychological and Spiritual (8 Marks).
 - b) Describe the Nursing Management of Anorexia and Cachexia for this patient, focusing on comfort rather than forced nutrition (6 Marks).
 - c) Explain how you will facilitate Reconciliation and Legacy Work for Mr. X and his family to ensure a "Good Death." (6 Marks)