

Invitation

The Palliative Centre, HammondCare
February 2025 Research Meeting

Hope dies last?

Supporting patients' illness understanding in palliative care

Hope is a vital psychological resource for patients and families navigating serious illness, yet it is often misunderstood or overlooked in clinical settings. The dynamics of hope are neither static nor simplistic; rather, they reflect complex and adaptive responses to the challenges posed by life-threatening conditions. In this talk, I draw on extensive research, including systematic reviews, qualitative studies, and cross-sectional surveys with patients facing advanced cancer, to explore how hope is shaped, sustained, and sometimes diminished in palliative care. Highlighting the flexibility and resilience of hope, I discuss its role as a defense mechanism that helps individuals find meaning and emotional stability, even in the face of uncertainty. This perspective offers practical implications for healthcare providers on how we can better support patients and their families in achieving a sense of purpose and dignity at the end of life.

- Who:** Dr Martin Loučka
Centre for Palliative Care & Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic
- Session Chair:** Prof Josephine Clayton
- When:** Tuesday 4th February
1-2pm
- Where:** Teams videoconference
- RSVP:** Via Teams Invite



Martin Loučka is a psychologist and researcher, Founder of the Centre for Palliative Care in Prague, Czech Republic. He is the Head of Division of Medical Psychology at the 3rd Faculty of Medicine at Charles University in Prague and board member of the European Association for Palliative Care, where he also co-chair a Task Force on Palliative Care and Emergency Medical Services. He got his PhD at Lancaster University in the UK and was a Fulbright Schuman Fellow at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. In his research, he focuses on communication, hope and prognostic awareness among patients with advanced disease. With his colleagues, he has developed communication skills program ESPERO, attended by more than 1000 clinicians across the Czech Republic. In 2024, Martin received Ashoka Fellowship, an international award for social changemakers.