

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Introduction

A specialist palliative care Dietitian plays a vital role in supporting people with life limiting illnesses by addressing their nutritional needs in a way that aligns with their goals of care, symptom management and overall quality of life. Their work is highly person-centred and responsive to changing needs as a person's condition changes. Specialist palliative care services are those services whose core activity is limited to the provision of palliative care. These services are involved in the care of individuals with more complex and demanding care needs, and consequently, require a greater degree of training, staff and other resources. Specialist palliative care services, because of the nature of the needs they are designed to meet, are analogous to secondary or tertiary health care services.

Purpose

To provide a network for support, education and practice development for SPC Dietitians working in specialist palliative care on the Island of Ireland. The SPC Dietitian Community of Practice (SPC Dietitian) will seek to collaborate, share, network and act as critical friends, staying up to date with developments and challenges which impact on quality-of-care people and those important to them receive.

Key Responsibilities of the Community of Practice

- To provide opportunities for shared learning
- Provide opportunities for collaboration between members
- Facilitate support amongst specialist dietitians working in specialist palliative care roles

Chairperson

The role of the co-chair of the SPC Dietitian will rotate on an annual basis across members in the CoP. The co-chairs for 2025 are:

- Tracy Haylett – South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
- Lisa Cronin – Milford Care Centre

Responsibilities of the co-chairs:

- Liaise with the Programme Manager- Education and Practice (AIIHPC) to develop a rotation system of presenting organisations
- Support members to present at meetings if/as required
- Follow up with member organisations if/as required
- Liaise with key stakeholders and external contributors when required
- Be familiar with the process of presenting and share relevant information/ process documentation with presenters

Membership

Membership of the SPC Dietitian shall include SPC Dietitians working across the Island of Ireland in hospice services, hospitals or community services.

Responsibilities of the members:

- Attend scheduled CoP meetings via Zoom
- Facilitate the two-way exchange of information between members of the SPC Dietitian CoP and their own organisations
- Actively engage in the SPC Dietitian CoP area on the Learning Platform and utilise it as a platform for sharing information with other network members
- Take responsibility for presenting at CoP meetings when agreed
- Inform AIIHPC of colleague's details if they would like to be added to the wider mailing list and Education Network area on the Learning Platform.
- Appoint two co-chairs to serve for a one year period, where possible one from Northern Ireland and one from Republic of Ireland
- Annually when the role of co-chair becomes vacant SPC Dietitian members who are interested, may offer to take over the role of chair

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Responsibilities for AIIHPC:

- Organise a calendar of meetings in consultations with co-chairs and provide notice of meetings to members
- Support the co-chairs to determine a rotation system for presenting organisations who will be responsible for identifying a topic, individual to present and communicate this to members
- Support members to host online workshops/ talks
- Establish and maintain a database of members of the SPC Dietitian with contact details
- Support members to access the Palliative Hub – Learning Platform
- Manage SPC Dietitian area on the Learning Platform including recording and uploading presentations and relevant materials.

Frequency of Meeting

The SPC Dietitian CoP will meet 4 times per year.

Dates for 2025/26:

- 25 September 2025 9:30–10:30am
- 11 December 2025 9:30–10:30am
- 12 March 2026 9:30–10:30am
- 11 June 2026 9:30–10:30 am

Reporting/Communication
An annual review of CoP's including evaluation will be undertaken and a report provided to CoP members, AIIHPC Education and Practice Committee and reported to the Council of Members.

Review of ToR
Will be undertaken annually, this is next due June 2026