



FOUNDATION
OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL
Dedicated to Education, Dedicated to Health



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PALLIATIVE CARE IN ALBANIA

Bringing Science, Practice and Partnership Together

30 September 2026

Aula Magna, Catholic Hospital
"Our Lady of Good Counsel", Tirana

In the spirit of
European Palliative
Care Day 2026
**"Palliative Care:
It's About Living,
Not Just Dying"**
Simultaneous
interpretation:
Italian – English

08:30 – 09:00

| **REGISTRATION**

09:00 – 09:40

| **OPENING AND STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES**

Welcome remarks and strategic perspectives on advancing sustainable, integrated and person-centred palliative care in Albania.

Hon. Klodiana Spahiu

Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Albania

Fr. Ruggero Valentini / Prof. Ass. Fabian Cenko

Catholic Hospital "Our Lady of Good Counsel" (OLGC)

Mrs. Anna Perolls

CEO, Hospices of Hope, United Kingdom

International Partnership for Sustainable Palliative Care Development

Prof. Ass. Rudina Rama

Ryder Albania Association, Tirana (Albania)

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

KEYNOTE LECTURES

09:40 – 10:10

| **BIOETHICS, HUMAN DIGNITY AND PALLIATIVE CARE**

Dignity, Autonomy and Ethical Decision-Making in Serious Illness

Msgr. Renzo Pegoraro

President, Pontifical Academy for Life (Vatican City)

A broad perspective on the overall Conference theme, focusing on bioethical issues, the protection of human dignity, autonomy and ethical decision-making in serious illness.

10:10 – 10:40

| **ONCOLOGY AND PALLIATIVE CARE – NATIONAL CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Beyond Cancer Treatment: Integrating Palliative Care into the Oncology Pathway

Prof. Dr. Helidon Nina

Director, Albanian National Institute of Oncology

University of Medicine, Tirana

Oncology Service in Albania, Its Transformation and Palliative Care

10:40 – 11:10

| **PALLIATIVE CARE DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY**

Palliative Care: It's About Living – From Global Evidence to Better Care

Prof. Ass. Daniela Mosoiu, MD, PhD

Hospice Casa Speranței/ Transilvania University, Faculty of Medicine, Romania

A contemporary perspective on the development of palliative care, early integration, education and quality of care, and the role of palliative care in supporting people to live as well as possible throughout serious illness.

11:10 – 11:40

| PERSON-CENTRED PALLIATIVE CARE

Living with Serious Illness: Person-Centred Care beyond Symptoms

Prof. Dr. Maria Grazia De Marinis

Campus Bio-Medico University – Rome (Italy)

Moving beyond disease and symptoms to understand the person as a whole, including physical, psychological, relational and family dimensions of serious illness.

11:40 – 12:10

| COFFEE BREAK & FINGER FOOD

12:10 – 12:30

| PAIN AND SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT

Pain Management in Palliative Care: From Assessment to Effective Symptom Relief

Dr. Manjola Luzi

Catholic Hospital "Our Lady of Good Counsel" (OLGC)

A practical clinical approach to pain assessment, treatment and symptom control, recognising pain management as an essential component of quality palliative care.

12:30 – 13:00

| CLINICAL EXCELLENCE IN PALLIATIVE CARE

What Makes Excellent Palliative Care? Lessons from Hospice Practice

Dr. Alison Landon

Hospices of Hope, United Kingdom

Clinical quality, continuity, teamwork and person-centred approaches that contribute to high-quality palliative and hospice care.

13:00 – 13:20

| NURSING AND PALLIATIVE CARE

The Palliative Care Nurse: Being There Throughout Serious Illness

Sister Ardiana Kolaj

Catholic Hospital "Our Lady of Good Counsel" (OLGC)

The role of the palliative care nurse throughout serious illness, supporting comfort, dignity, communication, symptom management and continuity of care for patients and families.

13:20 – 13:40 | PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE

Living with Serious Illness: Psychological Distress, Identity and Coping

Dr. Skerdi Zahaj

Department of Psychology and Pedagogy

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tirana

Understanding psychological distress, identity, coping and adaptation during serious illness, and the contribution of psychological care to comprehensive palliative care.

13:40 – 14:00

| PALLIATIVE CARE AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Palliative Care at Home in Albania: Three Decades of Experience and Lessons Learned

Anila Sinani

Ryder Albania Association, Tirana (Albania)

Lessons from the development of home-based palliative care in Albania, highlighting continuity of care, multidisciplinary teamwork, family support and the importance of bringing care closer to where people live.

14:00 – 14:15

| CLOSING SESSION

From Better Care to Better Living: Key Messages for Palliative Care in Albania

Summary of the main scientific and clinical messages emerging from the Conference.

Closing Remarks

Ryder Albania

Catholic Hospital "Our Lady of Good Counsel"

CONFERENCE INFORMATION & CONTACT

Ryder Albania Association

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Email: info@ryderalbania.org

Scientific Focus

The Conference reflects the 2026 European message: "Palliative Care: It's About Living, Not Just Dying." Through clinical evidence, professional experience and multidisciplinary perspectives, the programme will explore how palliative care can support people to live as well as possible throughout serious illness and how Albania can strengthen access to high-quality, integrated and sustainable palliative care.