PALLIATIVT UTVECKLINGS CENTRUM

LUNDS UNIVERSITET

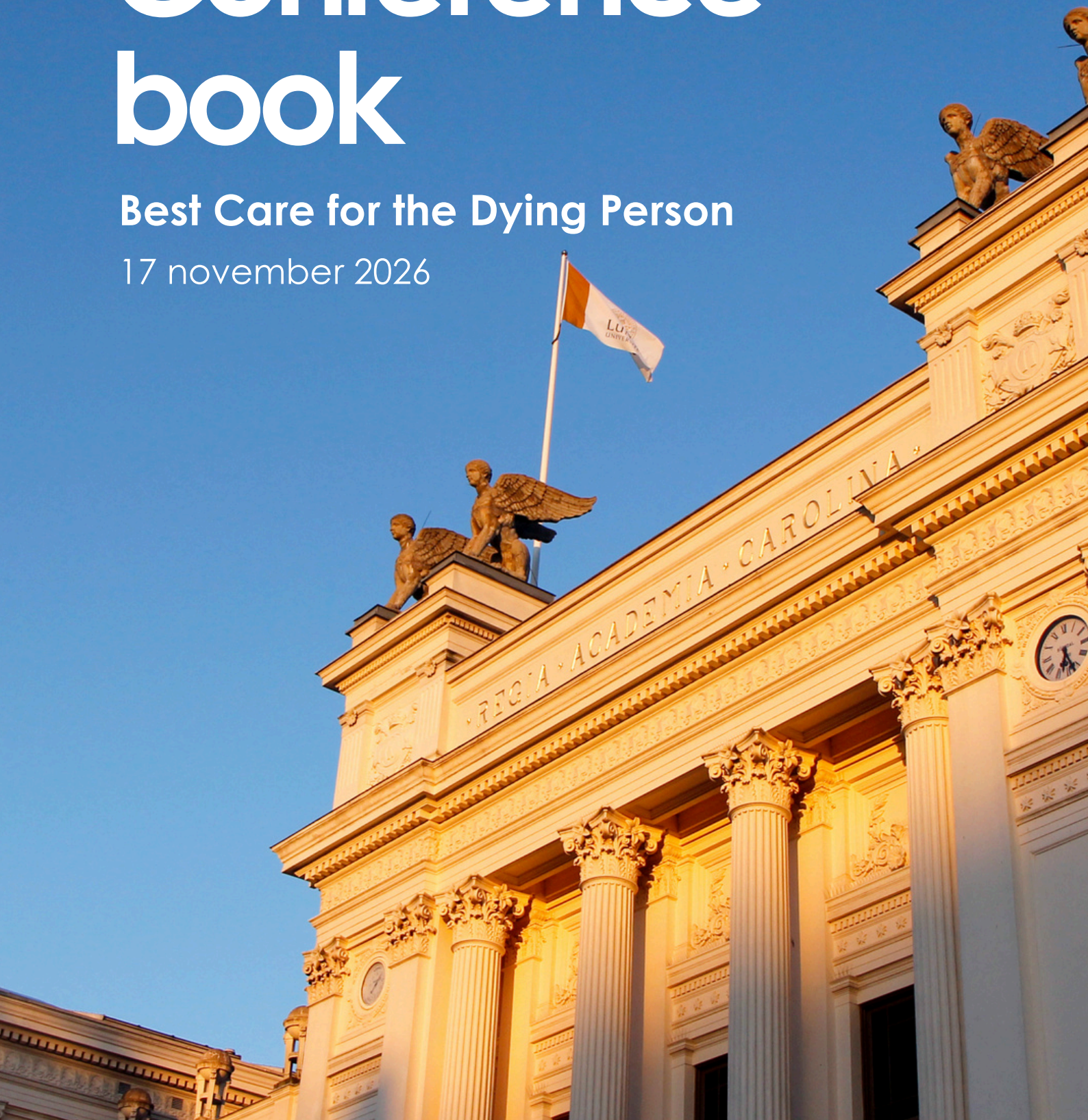
REGION SKÅNE

International Collaborative for Best Care for the Dying Person

Conference book

Best Care for the Dying Person

17 november 2026



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Plenary 9.00 - 10.15

9.15 - 9.45 **Room: Konsertsalen**

Strengthening palliative and end of life care - from advocacy to action

Palliative care has gained increasing recognition as an essential component of universal health coverage. This talk will explore the role of the World Health Organization (WHO) and regional organisations in advancing international policy, supporting national development, and strengthening access to palliative and end of life care. Drawing on international experience, it will examine achievements, persistent challenges and inequalities, and consider how global commitments can be translated into sustainable, equitable and accessible care for all.

Julie Ling - RN, PhD, Consultant Technical Officer for Palliative Care at the World Health Organization European Office

9.45 - 10.15 **Room: Konsertsalen**

Medication for the dying person - benefit or burden

To optimize medications in end-of-life care is essential to achieve relief from symptom in the dying person. Which medications should be prescribed, and which should be deprescribed? Which health care interventions should be used, and which should be avoided? Are there important changes in the physiology of a dying persons the last days of life that could impact the effects of medications and health care interventions?

Linda Björkhem-Bergman - MD, Professor in Palliative Medicine Karolinska Institute in Stockholm

Parallell sessions morning

10.45 - 12.15 **Room: Amfi**

Pharmacological perspectives

In this session pharmacological perspectives will be discussed from different angels. New cancer treatments offer an opportunity to increase survival and prolong life. In palliative care some difficulties may arise, such as new types of side effects and more complicated prognostication. Moreover, studies regarding medication during end-of-life care will be discussed, such as treatment of death rattles and the EU Horizon study iLive – live well die well. Lastly, trends in palliative sedation during end-of-life care will be discussed. Sedation seems to be increasing and the use may differ between countries.

Speakers
Christel Hedman - MD, Associate professor, Karolinska Institute in Stockholm
Lia van Zuylen - MD, Professor, Amsterdam University
Agnes van der Heide - MD, Professor, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam
Ulf Bremberg - Associate professor, Uppsala University
Chair
Linda Björkhem-Bergman - MD, Professor, Karolinska Institute in Stockholm

10.45 - 12.15 **Room: Danssalen**

Death in society

This session focuses on death, dying, and end-of-life care from a public health perspective, highlighting how these experiences are shaped not only by clinical care but by broader social, cultural, and structural contexts. It emphasises the importance of viewing palliative care as a societal responsibility, where communities and social contexts play a central role.

Through a range of perspectives, the session explores how factors such as inequality, diversity, and marginalisation influence experiences at the end of life. It draws attention to the role of communities, social networks, and inclusive approaches in supporting people with palliative care needs. By framing end of life as a public health and societal issue, the session encourages reflection on how palliative care can move beyond healthcare settings to become more integrated, equitable, and responsive to the diverse realities of everyday life.

Speakers
Max Kleijberg - PhD, Karolinska Institute in Stockholm
Vibeke Graven - RN, PhD, Odense University Hospital, University of Southern Denmark
Catriona Mayland - MD, PhD, University of Sheffield
Louisa Wainwright - RN, University Hospitals of Liverpool Group
Chair
Dröfn Birgisdottir - PT, PhD, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund

Parallell sessions morning

10.45 - 12.15 **Room: Konsertsalen**

Prerequisites for best care of the dying person - a proactive approach

This session will take a proactive approach to providing the best possible care for people nearing the end of life. The first and most important step is to identify patients with potential palliative care needs. This will be illustrated through a presentation on the development of a novel tool designed to help clinicians identify such patients. Another key proactive aspect that will be discussed is communication about information needs, prognosis, wishes, and concerns. The session will explore different components of the Serious Illness Care Program and its practical applications. In addition, the session will highlight the role and potential of digital solutions in supporting patient involvement in needs assessment and communication.

Speakers
Carl Johan Fürst - MD, Professor, Lund University
Mikael Segerlantz - MD, Associate professor, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund
Ursula Scheibling - MD, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund
Stephen Mason - PhD, University of Liverpool
Anna Sandgren - RN, Associate professor, Center for Collaborative Palliative Care, Växjö
Maria Giovinazzo Brovall - Professor, Högskolan i Borås
Juliet Jacobsen - MD, Lund University
Chairs
Stephen Mason - PhD, University of Liverpool
Carl Johan Fürst - MD, Professor, Lund University

Plenary 13.30 - 15.00

13.30 - 14.00 **Room: Konsertsalen**

The International collaborative for best care of the dying person - Who, how and what?

Speaker
John Ellershaw - MD, Professor, University of Liverpool
Chairs
Marlene Malmström - RN, Associate Professor, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund

14.00 - 14.30 **Room: Konsertsalen**

Cultural challenges in care of the dying

The presentation will explore the challenges of providing end-of-life care in India, where clinicians must navigate closely connected cultural, religious, and healthcare-system factors. Key considerations include family-centred decision-making and collusion, diverse religious beliefs about dying and suffering, and a widespread reluctance to speak openly about death. These factors can create tension when care is delivered through Western medical models, which often place greater emphasis on individual patient autonomy, evidence-based guidelines, and frameworks developed in Western contexts. These challenges are further compounded by limited awareness of palliative care and inadequate availability of palliative care services.

Gayatri Palat - MD, Professor, Institute of Oncology and Regional Cancer Centre (MNJIO) in Hyderabad, India
Chairs
Eva Brun - MD, Associate professor, Lund University

14.30 - 15.00 **Room: Konsertsalen**

A look into the future of palliative care - best care of the dying in Europe

European healthcare systems face intensifying pressure from an aging population living longer with serious illnesses. While the focus remains on curative, life-saving treatments, providing care for the dying remains an essential and important future imperative.

This presentation discusses the challenges and opportunities for palliative care and care for the dying patients in Europe in the future.

Mette Asbjoern Neergaard - MD, Professor, Aarhus University
Chairs
Marlene Malmström - RN, Associate Professor, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund

Parallell sessions afternoon

15.30 - 17.00 **Room: Amfi**

Walking with the dying –vulnerability and resilience among professionals and significant others

This session will explore the emotional challenges faced by healthcare professionals when caring for people at the end of life and supporting bereaved families. Particular attention will be given to the clinician's spiritual foundation and sense of belonging, as well as the importance of connectedness and relationships in experiences of loss and grief. The session will address these issues throughout the care trajectory, including the moment of death and the period thereafter, and examine the balance between professional responsibilities and the emotional and spiritual dimensions of being human.

Speakers
Piret Paal - PhD, University of Tartu
Vilma Tripodoro - MD, PhD, University of Navarra
Anette Alvariza - MD, Professor, Marie Cederschiöld högskola, Stockholm
Iline Ceelen - MW, NVVE Netherlands
Chair
Gayatri Palat - MD, Professor, Institute of Oncology and Regional Cancer Centre (MNJIO) in Hyderabad, India

15.30 - 17.00 **Room: Konsertsalen**

Structures to facilitate best care

This session explores how palliative care can continue to develop and strengthen over time, with a focus on the infrastructures, data, and collaborative tools needed to support this progress. It brings together perspectives from research and practice to reflect on how high-quality, equitable palliative care can be advanced across different contexts.

Through a range of contributions, the session highlights ongoing work to improve access to care and to better understand key dimensions of palliative care, such as place of death and overall quality. It also draws attention to the role of national data sources and collaborative initiatives in shaping clinically relevant research and supporting quality improvement at both local and national levels.

A central theme of the session is the development of a Core Outcome Set, raising the fundamental question of what constitutes the essence of palliative care. Participants will be invited to engage with this question and reflect on how shared definitions, measures, and frameworks can support more consistent, meaningful, and impactful care.

Speakers
Joakim Öhlén - RN, Professor, Gothenburg University
Mary Miller - MD, Oxford University
Maria Schelin - Assistant professor, Inst. for Palliative Care, Lund
Agnes van der Heide - MD, Professor, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam
Johannes Bükki - MD, Paracelsus Medical University, Austria
Chair
Mark Boughey - MD, Associate professor, The Victorian Government, Australia

Parallell sessions afternoon

15.30 - 17.00 **Room: Danssalen**

Addressing patient needs - science or established clinical practice?

This session explores how palliative care needs are identified and addressed in the final stages of life, highlighting the interplay between scientific evidence and clinical practice. It raises questions about the evidence base for fundamental aspects of care and how clinical experience complements research in guiding everyday practice.

Through a range of perspectives, the session examines challenges such as managing common but often overlooked symptoms, meeting the needs of patients with cognitive impairment, and adopting a palliative approach early in the disease trajectory. It also considers emerging therapeutic approaches and the ethical and evidential questions they bring. Overall, the session invites reflection on how patient needs are understood and acted upon, emphasising both gaps in evidence and the importance of clinical knowledge in shaping appropriate end-of-life care.

Speakers
Birgit Rasmussen - RN, Professor, Lund University
Arianne Stoppelenburg - Associate professor, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Petra Tegman - RN, Betaniastiftelsen Stockholm
Laura Tolboom - RN, Mittuniversitetet
Chair
Birgit Rasmussen - RN, Professor, Lund University