Palliative nursing reflects a holistic philosophy of care and services for patients and families who face serious or life-threatening illness in a wide variety of settings and conditions.

Hospice and palliative nurses work side-by-side with patients and their families as well as with numerous interdisciplinary colleagues, and provide consistent responsibility for the round-the-clock care of palliative patients. Attending to the patient's end-of-life physiological and psychological responses and requirements as well as to the social and cultural factors and the spiritual aspects of care is the essence of palliative nursing.

This up-to-date guide reflects the specialty's development into practice that encompasses hospice and palliative nursing. It specifies the who, what, where, when, why, and how of palliative nursing practice, and provides essential guidance in the form of standards and competencies for all levels of practice.