



The 11th Palliative Care Congress
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Session Abstract

What can philosophy teach us about dying well?

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Cicero declared that to study philosophy is nothing more than to learn to die. For more than two thousand years philosophers have discussed death, its significance, whether or not it is something to be feared, the morality of taking your own life, and the question of whether death simply removes all meaning or is, perhaps, a pre-condition of our actions having meaning at all. More recently Samuel Scheffler has argued that much of what each of us values in life only matters to us now because we assume that humanity will continue to exist long after our deaths. Our views about the nature of death and dying, and what happens afterwards, can affect how we approach our own deaths and the deaths of others. Philosophy doesn't have all the answers here, but it does ask interesting questions, some of which will be examined and discussed in this session.