

Clinical Network news

December 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of 'Clinical Network news'. This newsletter will be published every three months to provide a snapshot of activities within the five networks, which are:

- Cancer
- Maternity & Newborn
- Stroke
- Emergency Care
- Renal Health

Our website is now up and running and information regarding Clinical Networks can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks or by contacting one of the clinical network contacts.

Clinical Networks are in the relatively early stages of development and, as you will see further on in this newsletter, are just getting initial projects off the ground.

The Clinical Network program area was established in December 2007 and this first 12 months has seen the development of the Clinical Networks framework and the establishment of an initial five networks; with the appointment of clinical leads and membership to the leadership and working groups for each of the networks.

We are really pleased by the response from health services and others to the establishment of the networks and the commitment demonstrated by the clinical leads and members of each clinical network to providing high standard clinical care.

The Clinical Network program is committed to engaging broadly with health services and other stakeholders and we look forward to working with you in many different capacities, including:

- implementing and sustaining evidence based change

- data collection
- education to support staff to provide the best available care.

Cancer update

The Integrated Cancer Services (ICS), partnerships between health services for the purpose of planning and service improvement across a specific geographic area, are integral to the Cancer Clinical Network.

The ICS support the work of tumour groups and are the platforms through which improvements in patient care can be implemented. The ICS have established mechanisms of communicating with their stakeholders such as websites, annual reports and annual forums. Information about work by the individual ICS can be accessed through these sources.

A Cancer Clinical Network Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice, analysis and feedback to the department regarding statewide performance, risk management, planning, policy direction and implementation. This committee is currently involved in a project to develop cancer clinical indicators; determining appropriate indicators, and methods of analysis.

Supportive care is a priority in Victorian cancer care, covering the areas of physical, social, psychological, information and spiritual needs. A consultancy has been undertaken across the state to develop a supportive care policy and associated documents, including a literature review. These resources will be launched in the New Year.

For further information contact Patricia McGarrity ph: 9096 2185 or by email at patricia.mcgarrrity@dhs.vic.gov.au

Maternity and Newborn update



The Maternity and Newborn Clinical Network (MNCN) was established in August 2007 following a state-wide forum for people interested in perinatal care. The MNCN now

has four projects underway. The projects are:

- The Victorian Maternity and Neonatal Capability framework
- Induction of labour
- Vaginal birth after caesarean
- Admission and transfer to special care nurseries.

The Victorian Maternity and Neonatal Capability framework is based on the existing Rural Birthing Services framework, which is due for review this year. The statewide framework describes service capability across the state using common language for rural, regional and metro services. The framework will be disseminated later this month for comment.

Three projects with a focus on clinical practice are induction of labour, vaginal birth after caesarean and admission and transfer to special care nurseries.

Perinatal audits will be conducted in March and the theme for **March** is **Maternity audits reduce clinical harm**.

Two expert clinical advisory groups have been established to guide the development of audit tools against agreed principles of clinical and organisational practices.

MNCN audit forum

On **12 February 2009** there will be a forum in Melbourne to introduce the perinatal audit tools. Experts will work with small teams providing simulated learning using the tools. For further information, please contact Debbie Rogers (0421684984) or Sue Sinni (90962151/0417391239).

Numbers will be limited so rsvp is essential. Please rsvp to debbie.rogers@dhs.vic.gov.au

MNCN audit

As noted, audits will be conducted in participating hospitals during March. Combined de-identified audit results will be considered by the expert groups. Practice gaps that require intervention will be agreed by the expert groups. These improvement strategies will form the work for 2009-10.

Health services will be expected to analyse their audit results locally with assistance available from the Clinical Expert groups.

The audit tools will be used to assess progress and improvement over time.

Statewide application of the improvement strategies and audits to evaluate progress is planned for the future.

For further information contact Debbie Rogers ph: 0421 684 984 or Sue Sinni ph: 9096 2151/0147 391 239 or by email at debbie.rogers@dhs.vic.gov.au or sue.sinni@dhs.vic.gov.au

Stroke update

In September last year the Department of Human Services launched the *Stroke Care Strategy for Victoria* (the strategy).

The strategy makes 28 recommendations to improve the delivery of public acute and sub-acute stroke services in Victoria over the next five to 10 years in support of an integrated state-wide approach to care of people within stroke. The government has committed \$5 million over three years to implement the recommendations. The strategy is available on the Department of Human Services website: www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks

Implementation of these recommendations is being overseen by the 'Victorian Stroke Clinical Network Committee' (VSCN Committee). The committee is chaired by Professor Chris Bladin, Director of Neurosciences at Box Hill Hospital and membership comprises of clinical, senior health service management and organisational representatives (the full list of VSCN members is at the end of this newsletter).

The VSCN currently meets monthly and has established (or is in the process of establishing) sub-committees to help address specific issues.

The following sub-committees have already convened:

- Data
- Subacute project.

Sub-committees being established include:

- Resources
- Medical education
- TIA management
- Consumer working party
- Nursing and allied health education.

National Stroke Week

The VSCN has provided the National Stroke Foundation (NSF) with \$300,000 to augment its mass media 'FAST' campaign in Victoria to enhance public awareness of the signs and symptoms of stroke, and emphasize the message that stroke is a medical emergency.

The Minister for Health launched Victoria's Stroke Week on 16 September 2008 at the invitation of the Stroke Foundation.



Health Minister Daniel Andrews promoting the dial 000 message

Post graduate scholarships

In 2009 the VSCN will provide its *Nursing and Allied Health Post Graduate Scholarship Program* to encourage and enable Victorian public sector nursing and allied health employees working in stroke care to undertake post graduate studies in stroke care. The purpose of these scholarships is to increase access to postgraduate study for nurses and allied health professionals working in the area of stroke care (acute/subacute/community). Further information regarding the scholarships can be found at <www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks/stroke/scholarships>

For further information regarding the VSCN, contact Kathryn Whitfield ph: 9096 1297 or by email at kathryn.whitfield@dhs.vic.gov.au

Emergency Care update

The Emergency Care Improvement and Innovation Clinical Network has been established to improve patient care by promoting innovation and improvement in the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the emergency department care. A key component of the network is to engage with clinicians working in emergency departments and to work across organisation boundaries to increase the use of evidence-based care and enhance a patient-centred approach to service improvement.

The Emergency care clinical network is guided by a multidisciplinary steering committee, chaired by Professor George Braitberg, Director of Emergency Medicine, Southern Health. The network Program Manager is Jan Pannifex and she is supported by a senior medical advisor, Professor Anne-Maree Kelly from Western Health and senior nursing advisor Merrin Bamert from Southern Health.

Recent events have taken place:

- The inaugural Emergency Care Improvement and Innovation Clinical Network forum
- Managing difficult behaviour in emergency departments, a challenge for all.

The inaugural Emergency Care Improvement and Innovation Clinical Network forum

The forum in June 2008 attracted over 100 participants from 79 percent of the targeted emergency departments in Victoria. It provided an opportunity for emergency department clinicians to participate in shaping the direction of the network and confirmed the key themes for the network: encouraging staff involvement in the network; strengthening consumer engagement; enhancing the use of evidence-based care and best practice; and improving patient safety.

Managing difficult behaviour in emergency departments, a challenge for all

The challenge for staff is building capacity for effective patient management balanced with ensuring the safety of staff and others. The forum was held in Ballarat on Tuesday 18 November 2008. The forum on managing difficult behaviour focussed on:

- The legislative environment including duty of care and occupational health and safety.
- Best practice stories of effective management practices.
- The 'pros and cons' of the use of chemical restraint.

The forum evaluation is being completed and will be available on our website <www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks/emergency>.

For further information contact Jan Pannifex on ph: 9096 0578 or by email at EmergencyCare.ClinicalNetwork@dhs.vic.gov.au

Renal Health update

The Renal Health Clinical Network (RHCN) was recently established to provide a new focus across all clinical disciplines towards prevention of illness and injury and maintenance of health, and to bring about an improvement in the delivery of sustainable health services.

Associate Professor Robyn Langham has been appointed as the Clinical Lead for the RHCN and Chair of the RHCN Leadership Group. Associate Professor Langham holds the position of Director of Nephrology at St Vincent's Health and was nominated by her peers to this position.

The RHCN Leadership Group has recommended the establishment of an executive committee and three sub-committees in the following priority areas:

- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Dialysis
- Transplantation.

Renal Health Strategic Plan for Victoria

The RHCN Leadership Group has identified that the development of a Renal Health Strategic Plan for Victoria will be a key priority and the first major piece of work to be undertaken by the clinical network.

It is anticipated that the subcommittees will progress this work and assist with the development of a renal health strategic plan. This work may include but is not limited to:

- Identifying and prioritising areas for improvement and developing strategies to achieve this improvement
- Developing clinical indicators to measure improvement against the agreed priority areas
- Developing a work plan for the subcommittee (Chronic Kidney Disease, Dialysis and Transplantation)
- Reporting progress on activities to the RHCN Leadership Group through the RHCN Executive Committee.

For further information contact Alice Gleeson ph: 9096 0510 or by email at alice.gleeson@dhs.vic.gov.au

Clinical service development

In addition to establishing the networks, clinical service development has continued to progress in the areas of Paediatrics and Cardiac Services.

Paediatric update

Work has continued throughout 2008 on the preparation for a state-wide Paediatric Clinical Network, which is intended to link all paediatric health services into an integrated and collaborative network.

Part of the preliminary work was the development of the 'Strategic Framework for Paediatric Health Services in Victoria' discussion paper. This work was undertaken by KPMG in cooperation with the department and involved consultation forums with key stakeholder groups. Feedback and comments have been incorporated into the document with detailed efforts to produce a concise and clear framework, which is now complete. It is soon to be loaded onto our website and copies distributed to stakeholders for review. Further consultation forums will be held early in the New Year to capture comments and feedback.

The framework is intended to provide a vision and guide for the development of a Paediatric Clinical Network. An integral part of the network involves development of collaborative links between the two tertiary hospitals - the Royal Children's Hospital and the Monash Medical Centre - particularly in the areas of the super specialties of Cardiac, Renal and Neuroscience. This work has commenced and will continue into 2009, together with involvement and integration of the secondary hospital services both in metropolitan Melbourne and the regional and rural areas.

For further information contact Sue Morgan ph: 9096 5227 or by email at sue.c.morgan@dhs.vic.gov.au

Vulnerable Children in Acute Health project



Balancing our roles & sharing responsibility

The Vulnerable Children in Acute Health project aims to promote the vital role acute health services play in protecting children and in promoting health outcomes that are focussed on the safety, wellbeing and development of the child. The project focuses on assisting health services to develop a holistic service which responds to the needs of vulnerable children and improves collaboration and cooperation with service partners in child protection and family services. The project also provides contract management and support for the Victorian Forensic Paediatric Medical Services (VFPMS) which provides specialised paediatric medical services to children at risk of abuse or neglect. VFPMS is a partnership between Royal Children's Hospital, Southern Health and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine.

A number of activities are taking place during 2009 which include:

- Annual feedback report on the progress of acute health towards implementing the Best Practice Framework;
- Developing an online educational resource for acute health staff on their roles and responsibilities in protecting children; (available early 2009)
- The Victorian Forensic Paediatric Medical Service (VFPMS) developing a statewide operating model of service delivery.

To download a copy of the Vulnerable Children Best Practice Framework go to:
www.health.vic.gov.au/childrenatrisk/

For more information about the Vulnerable Children in Acute Health Project please contact Vicki Horrigan on 9096 1333 or by email at vicki.horrigan@dhs.vic.gov.au

Cardiac update

The department has reviewed the current state of acute and sub-acute cardiac services in Victoria to inform the development of service planning framework for the future development of cardiac services in Victoria.

The aim of the review was to enhance the quality and accessibility of adult cardiac services in Victorian public health. The objectives were to:

- Review current and projected activity and demand for adult cardiac services.
- Develop a service planning framework for the delivery of acute and sub-acute cardiac care.
- Develop a plan to implement an integrated state-wide approach to the care of adults with cardiac disease.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) undertook the review on behalf of the department, this was overseen by the Cardiac Services Advisory Committee (CSAC). The CSAC comprises of a range of clinical staff with expertise in various aspects of cardiac care from metropolitan, regional and rural service providers, the National Heart Foundation of Australia, consumer advocates and departmental representatives.

The *Cardiac Services Framework for Victoria* final report was completed by PwC in April 2008. The final report included 48

recommendations for the development and enhancement of cardiac services in Victoria.

Since the publication of the Cardiac Services Framework there has been one meeting with the CSAC. The final meeting will be held on the 3 February 2009 and is aimed at reviewing and prioritising the recommendations of the cardiac review.

One of the recommendations was the development of a Cardiac Clinical Network which was endorsed by the department and will be established early in 2009. The first step in this process has been to ask for expressions of interest for a Cardiac Clinical Lead (Medical). It is expected that the appointment of a Cardiac Clinical Lead will be finalised by Christmas 2008.

Cardiac paediatrics has not been included in the initial scope of the cardiac services review, but will be included in the Cardiac Clinical Network, working alongside the Paediatric Clinical Network.

It is anticipated that the establishment of the Cardiac Clinical Network will be in early 2009.

For further information contact Hella Parker ph: 9096 2009 or by email at hella.parker@dhs.vic.gov.au

Future updates

This is the first in a series of information updates which we intend to produce on a quarterly basis.

The department is currently establishing an e-mailing list of clinicians and other stakeholders interested in receiving information on Clinical Networks activities. If you wish to be included on this e-mailing list please forward your details to clinicalnetworks@dhs.vic.gov.au or advise your clinical network program manager.



Accessibility

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