

Update on Palliative Care Initiatives/Projects for Palliative Care Consortia and Integrated Cancer Services

Date: February 2009

| Name of Initiative/Project | Progress |
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| Australian Centre for Grief & Bereavement | <p>The Victorian bushfires have had a significant impact on those immediately affected and their families/friends/colleagues, emergency services staff and volunteers. The ACGB is working with government and other key bodies to respond to this crisis.</p> <p>The ACGB has developed a dedicated webpage which provides information on grief and bereavement organisations who can provide assistance; a number of resources for both the general public and practitioners, and details of a number of websites which provide a range of support materials (www.grief.org.au/bushfire_support).</p> <p>The ACGB also provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • telephone and face-to-face counselling support for people with complex grief and bereavement issues (ph: 1300 858 113) • consultation and advice to counsellors who are on the ground providing direct support (ph: 1300 664 786). |
| Decision Making Groups Role Statements | <p>The Consortium Managers have developed an audit tool to determine the level of achievement by consortia in incorporating the Palliative Care Decision Making Groups Role Statements. The Palliative Care Team has arranged several regional visits to discuss implementation of the role statements and priority actions required as a result of the audits. Please contact Jo Hall on 9096 2138 or Jo.Hall@dhs.vic.gov.au should you have any queries.</p> <p>All Department of Human Services funded palliative care decision making groups are required to incorporate the role statements into their work. The role statements can be downloaded from the DHS website at http://www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare/role-statements.htm</p> |

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| Palliative Care Statewide Meeting | <p>The first 2009 statewide meeting has been scheduled for 10.00am Thursday 26 March at the State Library of Victoria – Seminar Room 1, State Library Conference Centre, 328 Swanston Street (enter via Entry 3 in La Trobe Street). This meeting will be attended by Consortium Chairs, Managers, and DHS Regional Contacts and will focus on presentations from each of the consortia.</p> <p>The meeting will be followed at 2.45pm by an Information Forum for the 1 July release of the 2009 Service Coordination Tool Templates. The templates include the Palliative Care Supplementary Information tool. The DHS Primary Health Branch will be presenting on the functional requirements and implementation planning for the palliative care sector.</p> <p>An invitation is extended to interested palliative care providers to join this forum at 2.45pm. Please contact Jo Hall on 9096 2138 or Jo.Hall@dhs.vic.gov.au to register as venue capacity is limited.</p> |
| Victorian Palliative Care Satisfaction Instrument | <p>The DHS Cancer and Palliative Care Unit are currently negotiating with an external provider to manage the key deliverables, distribution and reporting of this project at a statewide level. Palliative care organisations are able to access and utilise the tools for clients and carers. See http://www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare/vpcsi.htm</p> |
| PEPA | <p>In the upcoming months 5 PEPA workshops for Aboriginal health workers and 8 PEPA workshops for allied health staff will be conducted around the state. Flyers will be distributed to services and will available on the DHS website in the next few weeks inviting people to register.</p> <p>Applications are being accepted for supervised clinical placements. Applications from general practitioners and aged care nurses, in particular, are encouraged. Further information available at: www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare/PEPA</p> |
| 'Palliative Care for People at Home' pilot projects | <p>'Improving access to palliative care for people who have had a stroke and their carers' - Melbourne Health has appointed Gillian McCarthy to the Palliative Care/Stroke Nurse Coordinator position. Gillian can be contacted via email: Gillian.McCarthy@mh.org.au.</p> <p>'Developing the role of a pharmacist in community palliative care multidisciplinary teams to improve outcomes for people at home, and their carers' – Calvary Health Care Bethlehem has been appointed Margaret Box (margaretb@bethlehem.com.au) as the project manager and Sandy Scholes (sandys@bethlehem.org.au) as the project pharmacist.</p> |
| Rural Palliative Care Medical Purchasing Fund | <p>We are pleased to announce that Alison Boughay has been appointed to evaluate the implementation of the RPCMPF. The project will commence mid-February and will be completed within two months. Alison will be contacting rural Palliative Care Consortia chairs and managers shortly to discuss the evaluation process. We strongly encourage you to actively participate in this project as it is an excellent opportunity to highlight the successes and explore the challenges associated with implementing the RPCMPF. Given the short timeframe for this project your prompt response to Alison's requests will be appreciated.</p> |

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| After hours palliative care – pilot projects | <p>The closing date for Palliative Care Consortia to submit proposals to a pilot model of after hours community palliative care in their region(s) has been extended to Monday 30 March 2009.</p> <p>Also the information session will be rescheduled shortly. This will provide an opportunity for Consortia to ask questions, and for the team engaged to develop the evaluation framework for these pilot projects, to discuss the proposed methodology.</p> |
| Service Delivery Framework and Funding Model Review (SDF & FMR) Project | <p>This project is now underway. As part of the communication with the sector about the project, a website has been set up. As the project is undertaken the website will be further updated.</p> <p>www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare/sdffmr</p> <p>Consultation dates for each region have been set as listed below in order for people to prepare their diaries. Further information will be sent out about the workshops when it is available. Workshops will be run over the whole day. Please contact Gregory Dalton if you have any queries.</p> <p>Fri 6 Feb 2009 – Southern and Eastern Metro – Monash Medical Centre</p> <p>Mon 9 Feb 2009 – Barwon South Western and Gippsland – State Library Melbourne</p> <p>Fri 13 Feb 2009 – North and Western Metro – The Centre Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe</p> <p>Tues 17 Feb 2009 – Hume – Country Comfort – Shepparton</p> <p>Wed 18 Feb 2009 – Grampians and Loddon Mallee – All Season’s Bendigo</p> |
| Community performance measure and target setting project | <p>This project has concluded with a performance measure, activity target methodology and adjustment methodology decided. Executive officers of all community palliative care services will be contacted in the coming weeks and be provided with an outline the changes for 1 July 2009 and an indication of the activity target for their service from 1 July 2009.</p> |
| Evaluation of the Strengthening Palliative Care policy. | <p>Many thanks to those who provided information as part of phase 1 of the evaluation. Nearly 200 documents were provided by consortia and services and were coded according to over 70 research questions. The information provided in phase 1 has assisted in answering over half of the research questions and has provided valuable information about the establishment and functionality of the consortia and a range of initiatives undertaken, particularly those related to service coordination, workforce mapping and education and training.</p> <p>An update about the methodology for phase 2 will be provided in the March update.</p> |

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| Paediatric palliative care policy implementation | <p>As part of the implementation of 'Strengthening care for children with a life-threatening condition' a project to map the respite services available in Victoria for children with a life-threatening condition will commence within the next month. The project will map the respite services and funding available in Victoria for children with a life threatening condition and identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the respite services and funding packages that are currently available; • a breakdown of service and funding package type (in-home, inpatient, residential, emergency and overnight) accessibility, cost, eligibility criteria, admission requirements and other relevant information; • whether the current range of options meet the demand for respite management for the target group; • the appropriateness of the skill base available in existing respite services to provide care for children with a life-threatening condition; • recommendations to improve access to respite for children and their families, including up skilling/changes that could be made to existing respite services/brokers to enable them to provide care for children with a life-threatening condition in the future; • recommendations to address identified gaps in service provision to meet future need including any new respite services (in-home, inpatient, residential and overnight) that may be required, pending the outcomes of the above service mapping; • barriers to children and families accessing respite and recommendations for addressing these barriers; • costings for changes/new services required. <p>More information about the methodology of the project will be provided in the March update.</p> |
| Hospital Based Palliative Care Consultancy Team – Minimum Data Set Project | <p>The Centre for Health Service Development lead by Professor Kathy Eagar at the University of Wollongong has been awarded the contract to undertake this project over the next 12 months.</p> <p>This project seeks to identify a minimum data set that allows HBPCCTs to monitor activities that are related to secondary consultation and advice, education and training, links between hospital and community palliative care services and discharge planning, as well as assisting with quality and patient related outcome data. The project will also consider the most appropriate way to assess client satisfaction in relation to the HBPCCTs and their activities.</p> <p>A Advisory Group has been established and those people who expressed an interest in being a member of this group have been invited to participate. The Project team will start setting up meetings with the Hospital based consultancy teams over the coming weeks. For more information contact Jackie Kearney.</p> |

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| Notification of international presentation related to palliative care | <p>Prof Ingvar Bosaeus, from the Section of Clinical Nutrition at Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Sweden. Prof Bosaeus will be speaking on the topic:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Clinical Nutrition and Body Composition in Cancer Cachexia: Implications for Clinical Oncology and Palliative Care.</i></p> <p>This talk will be presented at the Southern Health Research Week keynote presentation at Monash Medical Centre on Monday 4th May 2009 at 12:30pm-1:30pm.</p> <p>For more information go to: http://www.southernhealth.org.au/research/Default.htm</p> |
| Greg Dalton on secondment | <p>Greg Dalton will take up a six month secondment with the Victoria Cancer Agency from Monday 16 February. Greg will provide data and systems support and manage the VCA team. Greg will be overseeing the latest round of calls for expressions of interest for funding cancer research in the Agency's priority areas.</p> <p>During Greg's absence from the palliative care team, Catuscia Biuso, who will be returning to the Cancer and Palliative Care Unit, will provide some support on key projects. Staff from the Clinical Networks Unit will also be working with Jo Hall to begin the development of a Palliative Care Clinical Network. Questions regarding VINAH definitions and reporting difficulties should be directed to the HelpDesk on 9096 8141 or via email: hdss.helpdesk@dhs.vic.gov.au. This will be a temporary arrangement until we are able to engage a temporary data person to provide support for the palliative care data reporting.</p> <p>Greg will return to the palliative care team on 17 August 2009.</p> |
| Monthly updates on the palliative care website | <p>Back issues of the monthly update will be posted on the palliative care website. We will put the previous month's update on the web at the time the current update is released to consortia.</p> <p>The web address for the palliative care home page is: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare</p> |

Contact details for palliative care team members

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| Jackie Kearney (Mon, Wed – Fri) | 9096 2143 | Jackie.Kearney@dhs.vic.gov.au |
| Amanda Bolleter (Mon – Fri) | 9096 2115 | Amanda.Bolleter@dhs.vic.gov.au |
| Ellen Sheridan (Mon – Fri) | 9096 5296 | Ellen.Sheridan@dhs.vic.gov.au |
| Jo Hall (Mon – Fri) | 9096 2138 | Jo.Hall@dhs.vic.gov.au |
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