

## Message from the Chair

The Victorian Quality Council was well supported by the health sector and other stakeholders in the planning, delivery and implementation of a range of projects during 2007. The key achievements include:



Associate Professor  
Christine Kilpatrick

- Completion of the Statewide Hand Hygiene project
- Commencement of the Creating Safety: Addressing Seclusion Practices project in partnership with the Chief Psychiatrist's Quality Assurance Committee
- Completion of the Clinical Handover – shift to shift project
- Publication of the VQC Acute Pain Management Measurement Toolkit and completion of a twenty five site implementation project
- Completion of the Safety and Quality Education Program pilot
- Publication of the Consumer Leadership literature review and consultation, and the development of a Consumer Leadership education programme
- Development of the Introduction to Safety and Quality Principles education package and the Process Mapping Guide
- Publication of the Communicating with Consumers – pilot report and guide to improving communication
- Completion of the VQC supported National Institute of Clinical Studies Venous Thromboembolism Prevention program

A number of other activities were undertaken, including ongoing support for the Victorian Travelling Fellowship program and the provision of an extended sponsorship program for health service staff to attend the Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality held in Brisbane.

Looking ahead to 2008 the VQC's current membership finishes on 30 June and a number of projects will be finalised. These include the Pressure Ulcer Basics Residential Aged Care program, the Falls Online Education package and the Consumer Leadership Development programme, work on interhospital patient transfer and support for health services with sustaining practice change.

Further information on each of these projects is provided on the VQC website ([www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil))

In addition to these projects, 2007 saw the VQC undergo an extensive evaluation of its contribution to safety and quality in Victoria since its commencement in 2001. It was also an opportunity to consider the future options for the VQC moving forward. At the VQC Full Council meeting held on 3 December 2007, the VQC members were presented with the Nous Group's final evaluation report. Subsequently the Minister for Health has approved the continuation of the VQC, a new Terms of Reference, a longer Council term of four years and a smaller Council with a stronger focus on high level strategic issues that have a sustainable system wide impact. The appointments process for the new Council will commence shortly to ensure that the Council is in place in July 2008. Health services will be sent a copy of the final report in March.

Maureen Willson, VQC Manager, has resigned from her position, effective 7 March 2008. Maureen commenced in her role in October 2004 and has made an outstanding contribution to the effective management of the Council whilst providing the Council members with guidance and support through the evaluation process. Maureen will be undertaking the role of Manager, Clinical Risk Management Strategy at VMIA and we wish her every success with her new career direction.

On behalf of the VQC members I would like to take this opportunity to thank health sector staff who have supported the projects and activities conducted by the VQC in 2007. All of our projects rely on the dedication of health service staff from across the state and the success of these projects has been underpinned by their commitment to improving safety and quality. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to the many health sector staff who contributed to the VQC evaluation feedback on the VQC, through survey responses, interviews and focus groups. A large number of staff from a range of organisations supported the evaluation process and in doing so, strengthened the evidence from the sector on what the future options for consideration should be for VQC. The evaluation report and the Minister's decision regarding the VQC will be provided to the sector upon its receipt.

**Associate Professor Christine Kilpatrick**  
Chair  
Victorian Quality Council

## Upcoming Events

### VTE Workshop

#### February

18 February 2008

9am to 1pm

Location: 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

22 February 2008

Location: Level 3, State Government Offices, Corner Little Malop and Fenwick Streets, Geelong

#### March

3, 6, 14 & 18 March

Locations: Various

For more information contact Jo Heard on (03) 9096 0472

### Interhospital Patient Transfer Workshop

12 March 2008

Location: Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG)

For more information contact Olive Lee on (03) 9096 1384

### Acute Pain Management Measurement Toolkit Implementation – Final Workshop

28 February 2008

## Clinical Handover Pilot Project

The Victorian Quality Council (VQC) has developed a suite of clinical handover tools that includes: Clinical Handover Organisational Readiness Checklist, Suggested Clinical Handover Policy, Suggested Clinical Handover Protocol/Guidelines, Clinical Handover Key Performance Indicators and Clinical Handover Template. A pilot project was conducted in four health services (Bayside Health, Melbourne Health, Northern Health and West Gippsland Healthcare Group) to evaluate the effectiveness and acceptability of these standardised tools. This trial was completed in December 2007. Analysis of the project is underway with a final report due at the end of February 2008.

## Interhospital Patient Transfer Project

A second clinical handover project is currently underway to address issues relating to interhospital patient transfer. The aim of the project is to develop a standardised approach to handover documentation and process to ensure safe patient transfer between Victorian health services.

Information relating to current interhospital patient transfer practice was sought from public health services. More than 50 health services have responded to the request. The VQC would like to thank these health services. The information received includes a variety of forms, checklists, policies/procedures/protocols/processes and improvement activities that relate to interhospital transfers as well as issues arising from interhospital patient transfer processes.

The VQC is holding an Interhospital Patient Transfer Workshop on 12 March 2008 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground with health sector representatives. The aim of the workshop is to assess issues related to interhospital transfer based workshop participants' inputs and also on the information collected from the health sector. Agreement will be sought from the participants on a minimum data set necessary for interhospital transfer.

The target organisations for the workshop include metropolitan, rural and regional hospitals, ambulance services, visiting medical officers (General Practitioners), consultative council representatives and consumer representatives. A letter of invitation has been sent to organisations. The VQC is looking forward to working with the participants at the workshop.

Following the workshop, an expert panel will be convened to develop standardised tools to support safe interhospital patient transfer. The membership will include representatives from health services, ambulance services, Visiting Medical Officers, The Victorian Surgical Consultative Council and consumers.

## VQC Members under the spotlight

### Dr Tracey Batten Chief Executive, Eastern Health



Dr Tracey Batten was appointed Chief Executive of Eastern Health in January 2004. Eastern Health is the main public provider of health services to patients who reside in the eastern suburbs and Yarra Ranges' regions of greater metropolitan Melbourne.

Dr Batten has over 15 years' experience in the healthcare industry, having trained initially as a medical practitioner and has more recently held a number of senior executive roles, including Chief Executive of Dental Health Services Victoria.

Dr Batten holds a Masters of Health Administration, a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators, a Master of Business Administration from Harvard University and a Fellowship of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

### Dr Caroline Brand Director, Clinical Epidemiology & Health Services Evaluation Unit, Melbourne Health



Director of the Clinical Epidemiology & Health Services Evaluation Unit, Melbourne Health

After completing her medical degree at Monash University, Caroline worked as an intern and medical resident at Prince Henry's Hospital. Whilst at Prince Henry's she commenced Specialist Physician training in Rheumatology and completed that training at Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH). Caroline spent 15 years working in private practice and in VMO Rheumatology positions at RMH and the Alfred Hospitals and, after ceasing private practice in 2000, continued to provide ambulatory care clinical rheumatology services at Royal Melbourne Hospital until the end of 2007.

After ceasing private practice Caroline commenced a Master of Public Health and chose a broad education program that included: quality and safety, leadership and management training, health promotion, program evaluation and policy, as well as clinical epidemiology skill training. These skills have been applied in her roles, initially as a program manager, then Director of the Clinical Epidemiology & Health Services Evaluation Unit (CEHSEU) at Melbourne Health and more recently in her research role within the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Patient Safety at Monash University.

Caroline's personal research interests reside in clinical and health services research that focuses on clinician engagement in a systems approach to patient safety, models of care for management of chronic rheumatic disease, implementation of evidence into practice and use of data linkage to inform assessment and monitoring of quality and safety in healthcare.

**Dr Christine Walker**  
Executive Officer, Chronic Illness Alliance inc.



Christine is Executive Officer of the Chronic Illness Alliance Inc., a peak body representing some forty consumer and advocacy organisations for people with chronic illness. The aim of the Alliance is to build a better focus in health policy and health services for all people with chronic illness. The Alliance achieves this through research and educational activities, often in cooperation with universities.

Current and recent research activities include a NHMRC-funded randomised controlled trial of diabetes self-management and qualitative research on the impact of epilepsy; a survey of people with epilepsy. The most recent publication discusses the impact of Federal health policy on people with chronic illness and appears in the Australian Health Review of May 2007. Christine was an editor of the book 'Chronic Illness: new perspectives and new directions' published by Tertiary Press in 2003. She has written and researched extensively on self-management in chronic diseases as well as consumer participation in health services.

Christine completed a Ph D thesis in 1995 which explored the growth of government intervention in the hospital system in Victoria. She is a member of the Board of Management of the Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria, the Community Quality Use of Medicines Working Group of the National Prescribing Service and an Associate of the Centre for Clinical Research Excellence in Diabetes at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne.

**Ian Patrick**  
Organisational Transition Executive, Rural Ambulance Victoria



Ian held various operational positions with the Victorian Ambulance Services between 1976 and 1991 including Ambulance Paramedic, MICA Paramedic, Station Officer and Regional Training Officer (RAV).

He moved into MAS senior management in 1995, when he was appointed Group Manager, Emergency Operations and in 2001 was promoted to General Manager Clinical and Non Emergency Operations, and was awarded the Ambulance Service Medal in 2002.

In 2004 Ian took on the role of General Manager Operations and in August 2006 was made the Director, MAS-Monash Translational Research Unit to establish a new direction for MAS in the area of pre-hospital care research. He is an Honorary Senior Research fellow at Monash University. Currently he is the Organisation Transition Executive at Rural Ambulance Victoria.

Ian's qualifications include a Bachelor Degree in Paramedic Studies from Monash University, MICA cert and an Associate Diploma in Administration. Ian has also been involved in several published research projects.

He is a member of the, Victorian State Trauma Committee (STC), and Chair of STC Education Sub Committee, and member of Hatzolah Community Responder Medical Standards Committee and the Victorian Quality Council. He is also the National President, and Fellow, of the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals.

## Completed Projects

### Implementing Acute Pain Management

In September 2007 twenty public and five private health services commenced the VQC Acute Pain Management Measurement Toolkit (APMMT) implementation project. The aim of the project was to support health services to introduce the key tools of the APMMT to establish local systems to sustain improvements to acute pain management and to evaluate the effectiveness of the APMMT. The three month project finished in December 2007.

Each participating site completed a review of pain related documentation and, based on the recommendations of the APMMT, revised local charts, ward level protocols and organisation wide policy. Clinical staff education was undertaken in both pain assessment and acute pain management, and monitoring and reporting structures were established. Sites collected pre and post implementation data and the results of this collection will be available in a final project report due to be published on the VQC website in March 2008.

The VQC would like to thank all participating sites, particularly the local project officers, clinical champions and executive sponsors. The short time frame of the project required substantial commitment from local staff, and the achievements of the project have been considerable. The majority of sites have successfully developed, or revised existing, policies and protocols relating to acute pain management, and a preliminary review of the post implementation data indicates an increase in staff knowledge and awareness, and improvements in the number of patients receiving formal assessments with validated pain scoring tools.

A final wrap-up workshop will be held on 28 February 2008 to present the outcomes of the project and to provide an opportunity for sites to share local achievements and to discuss long term strategies for sustaining improvements in acute pain management.

Examples of the revised documentation developed by participating sites are now available on the VQC website (<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/acute.htm>). These include revised general observation charts, ward level protocols, organisation wide policy, educational presentations and promotional tools. Examples from both public and private organisations across metropolitan, regional and rural sites are available.

For further queries contact Oliver Furness via email at: [oliver.furness@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:oliver.furness@dhs.vic.gov.au)

## VQC Sustainability Symposium

One hundred and seventy participants from public, private and community health services attended the VQC Sustainability Symposium which was held on Wednesday 24 October 2007. The participants were informed by senior clinical leaders from Victoria, NSW and QLD about projects that had been implemented in health services and successfully sustained and those that had not and why this had occurred.

The Symposium also heard from a change management expert and received a consumer's viewpoint on what sustaining projects might involve including understanding the cultural atmosphere that is needed to achieve sustained changes in health services.

The feedback from the Symposium indicated that while it is important to understand those broad elements of sustainability, participants require practical hands on advice and guidance to assist with knowing how to prioritise, develop and implement a project that has the best possible chance of being sustained.

## VQC Sustainability Workshops

The VQC has recognised the need for further work with health services on sustainability and has committed to delivering a series of workshops that will support health services across Victoria to undertake work on a specific project that requires sustaining in the long term. Contract negotiations are currently underway with a change management and sustainability expert to work with health service representatives on the enablers and barriers of a specific project. Details of the workshops will be made available shortly. It is anticipated that the sustainability workshops will commence in May 2008.

## Venous Thromboembolism Prevention Workshops 2008

A strategic goal for the VQC's second term is to promote safe and appropriate care by supporting and enabling clinicians to apply best available evidence to clinical practice. To this end, the VQC supported the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) national VTE prevention project, directly funding ten Victorian Health Services which facilitated participation.

The NICS project was completed in November 2007 and the VQC now plans to support the uptake of VTE prevention programs with the delivery of a number of workshops across Victoria.

The workshops will be of interest to Quality Managers, Pharmacists, Medical Officers and Nurses.

Objectives of the workshops are to:

- Provide an overview of VTE prevention guidelines
- Discuss the strategies and tools developed by Victorian sites involved in the NICS VTE prevention project across the state; and,
- Identify issues for consideration regarding the implementation of a VTE prevention program

For further information on the VTE Prevention workshops please contact:

Jo Heard, Senior Project Officer  
Telephone 9096 0472  
Email [jo.heard@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:jo.heard@dhs.vic.gov.au)

## VQC Management Group – Staff Update

The New Year brings changes to the staff that support the Council work. These changes include the departure of Anna Spain, Executive Office Coordinator to a Quality Coordinator role at Southern Health's cancer network. Kathy Simons, who was on secondment from the Mercy Hospital for Women has taken up a position as Quality Manager with the Northern Cancer Network. We wish both Anna and Kathy all the best with their new roles and thank them for their significant contribution to the Council's work.

Three new staff commenced working with the VQC Management Group in January. Anna Laird has taken up the role of senior project officer working on the Safety and Quality Education Program and the Economic Assessment project. Heather Gillespie, Quality Manager at West Gippsland Health Care Group, has commenced a six month secondment with the VQC Management Group and will be responsible for the Sustainability Workshops project. Ann-Maree Baker will be providing the Council with event management support and will manage the Council appointments. In addition to these three new members, Eden Alagona has recently commenced as a trainee and is expected to be with the VQC for the next 12 months.

**The Victorian Quality Council**

Safer, better care throughout Victorian health care services

[www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil)