



Message from the Chair

A number of VQC Projects have come to fruition since the beginning of 2004.

'Better Quality, Better Healthcare – A Safety and Quality Improvement Framework for Victorian Health Services' has been distributed to all health services throughout Victoria and workshops are currently being held around the state to discuss the framework and its implications. The framework appears to have been well received with a number of Boards using it as part of their strategic and quality planning processes. Supplementary papers on clinical governance roles in the health system are being prepared, with the board and consumer role papers due for completion in June 2004.

The Statewide PUPPS (Pressure Ulcer Point Prevalence Survey) Report was launched on the 30th April 2004, with individual reports also prepared for each participating health service. The report contains a number of recommendations which have been presented to the Minister for Health for discussion. VQC has

committed to repeating PUPPS in 2004-2005 and is currently planning follow up education sessions around the state due to strong interest expressed by participant and non-participant hospitals alike.

The VQC Consumer Working Group has produced 'Finding Consumers and Carers – A Guide to Sourcing Consumers, Carers and Community Members for Collaborative Health Service Improvement'. This is currently being distributed to all health services and stakeholders, and we hope it will assist health services to more easily source and involve consumers in health service improvement.

Considerable progress has also been made with a number of other VQC Projects – see the 'plans, initiatives and project progress' section of this newsletter for further details.

VQC held its annual planning workshop on the 6th & 7th May to consider progress and plans for 2004-2005 and beyond. A summary report on this workshop will be posted on the website within the next month.

This is my last newsletter as Chair of VQC and I would like to take this opportunity to



thank all of you for the collaborative and cooperative way in which you have worked with VQC members and the Management Group to progress our strategic areas. Associate Professor Christine Kilpatrick will Chair the Council until the reappointment process for the next 3 years occurs in October 2004. I am proud of Council's achievements and will watch ongoing progress with great interest from the UK.

Michael Walsh
Chair, VQC

Education News

The VQC Education Working Group has undertaken significant work over the summer months to research and define key curriculum areas for the development of a basic safety and quality course. A needs analysis, to ensure that the course will be appropriate for clinicians of all levels, is currently being conducted with the Medical Colleges and professional Associations to supplement the analysis that was done with the health service Quality Managers in 2003. The course is expected to be piloted at the beginning of 2005.

The VQC will run a discussion forum in conjunction with the Victorian Quality and Risk Managers Group, the Medical Defence Association of Victoria and the Department of Human Services. Titled 'Accountability

vs. A Just Culture – Life long partners or mortal enemies?' it will be held on the 17th June 2004, from 4pm to 7pm and will be facilitated by Terry Laidler. A flyer containing the details will be shortly sent to all health services and we welcome your participation.

A number of workshops are currently being run around the state to discuss the implementation implications of the VQC Safety and Quality Improvement Framework. Flyers are being distributed through the regional offices for the rural and regional workshops and metropolitan health services will be notified of the metropolitan workshop, to be held in July-August 2004.

VQC is once again sponsoring a number of clinicians including medical, nursing and

allied health practitioners, to attend the second Australasian Safety and Quality Conference in Canberra in August 2004. Information and application forms have been emailed to all health services and sponsorship recipients are expected to be announced at the beginning of June 2004.

Health services will shortly receive two VQC videos: a video of the rural and regional clinical governance workshops run by Michael Walsh and Cathy Balding in the second half of 2004, and a video of the PUPPS education and testing sessions. We hope that these will be useful additions to health service safety and quality education programs.

VQC contact for Education Issues:
Cathy Balding

A snapshot of plans, initiatives and project progress 2004-2005

VQC activities are driven by the five key strategic areas as described in the strategic plan:

1. Establish a safety and quality framework
2. Provide improved access to better data
3. Involve consumers in improving safety and quality
4. Educate on safety and quality
5. Respond to known problems and risks.

Projects are developed by Council **Working Groups** in each area, comprising Council members and co-opted associate members who contribute project content expertise.

1. Establish a **safety and quality improvement framework**. The framework has been finalised and distributed to all Health Services and workshop are currently being run around the state to discuss its implementation. A series of supplementary discussion papers on clinical governance roles and responsibilities at various levels of the health system is being developed and will be rolled out across the second half of 2004.
2. The **Data Working Group** is in the final stages of compiling a directory of useful safety and quality data repositories, including state and national databases and registries which may assist health services to monitor and compare their care and services. The directory will be distributed to health services in database form in mid 2004.
3. The Consumer **Participation Working Group** has completed its consumer sourcing guide and this is being distributed to all health services and stakeholders. A project to review current barriers to consumer participation has also been

completed and a project to pilot Cochrane evidence on communication with consumers is in development.

4. The **Education Working Group** is developing safety and quality education modules for Victorian health services (see *Education News* elsewhere in this newsletter).
5. **Responding to known areas of risk in hospitals:**

Infection control

VQC consulted with infection control stakeholder groups to determine appropriate projects to be pursued. A number of projects are underway in the area of infection control with the major one being sustained improvement of hand hygiene practices in Victorian hospitals, including surveillance of MRSA.

Falls Prevention

The falls prevention toolkit has been piloted in a number of health services and is due for completion in June 2004, with pre and post data collection currently being planned.

Pressure Injuries

The PUPPS report is currently being distributed with another PUPPS survey to be conducted in 2004-2005. Follow up PUPPS Education is currently in development and will be conducted statewide in June 2004.

Medication Errors

The Medication Working Group has developed a project in conjunction with the Monash University Victorian College of Pharmacy to conduct a medication safety audit with pharmacists around the state. This should be completed and the results distributed in July 2004.

Appropriateness of Care

The Appropriateness Working Group is nearing completion of a number of case studies on adverse events in the area of failure to communicate abnormal test results. These case studies will be published in mid 2004. An in-depth study of communication of abnormal test results between the emergency and radiology departments is being conducted in one health service and this is due for completion around the middle of the year.

Acute Pain Management

This newly developed Working Group was formed as a result of a forum for stakeholders in acute pain management conducted in February 2003. They are working on the development of an acute pain management measurement toolkit.

Safe and appropriate use of blood and blood products

The Blood Matters Breakthrough Collaborative, undertaken by the DHS Clinical Innovations Unit, is now complete, and VQC will review the results of the collaborative in conjunction with DHS to determine the next steps.

We welcome your comments and queries. Further information on any of the above projects is available by contacting the Victorian Quality Council.