

## VQC Sustainability Symposium

The VQC will hold a Sustainability Symposium at Telstra Dome on Wednesday 24 October for public and private hospitals across Victoria. The VQC determined that there was a need to develop an explicit communication strategy to advise the health sector of VQC's approach to the application of sustainability principles.

The objectives of the Symposium are to provide effective education on change management and to assist with the development of practical skills related to sustainability principles that can be used in a variety of health settings.

A sustainability paper providing a definition of sustainability, evidence of the application of sustainability in health related projects, and information to assist in the development of sustainability guidelines has been completed and will be provided to health services at the Symposium.

The Symposium will be facilitated by Dr Norman Swan and speakers include: Richard Denniss, strategic policy advisor to Senator Bob Brown, James Ford, RMIT senior lecturer in management and Dr Heather Wellington partner DLA Phillips Fox and Chair Peter MacCallum.

Topics include case studies on programs that have successfully maintained or unsuccessful, influencing change in organisations, strategies for sustainability and the role of governance and the board in determining how to plan for sustainable programs.

The Symposium will run from 9:20 am to 1:15pm and information will be sent to health services in mid September.

For further information about the Symposium contact Diana Quin, Senior Project Officer VQC on 9096 1385 or email:

[diana.quin@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:diana.quin@dhs.vic.gov.au)

## Clinical Handover Pilot Project

In June 2007, the VQC commenced a Clinical Handover Project at one Victorian regional and three metropolitan health services: Bayside Health, Melbourne Health, Northern Health and West Gippsland.

The aim of the project is to evaluate the effectiveness, the appropriateness and acceptability of the VQC Clinical Handover Tools.

Clinical handover is a recognised issue in maintaining patient safety. Enhancing continuity of care through clinical staff handover is one of the key objectives of the VQC strategic plan.

A set of standardised clinical handover tools were developed with input from Victorian Public Health services via a survey and a workshop conducted by the VQC.

*Continued on page 2.*

## Message from the Chair



The VQC evaluation is well underway with the Nous Group consultants having undertaken a survey submitted to health services across Victoria, as well as a range of interviews with stakeholders conducted during the past six weeks.

On behalf of the Council I would like to thank those who have contributed to the evaluation discussions. A final report will be submitted to the Minister for Health in December 2007.

A number of health service staff and VQC members attended and participated in the Safety & Quality Conference held in Brisbane in August. The VQC held a successful Information Session at the Conference, which was attended by more than 60 sponsored health services' staff, and provided an opportunity for those staff to meet the Council members and hear about our achievements over the life of the second Council. These achievements could only have been made possible by the collaboration and participation of a large number of health services across Victoria and the VQC thanks the many staff members for their ongoing support.

This newsletter provides an update on some of our key projects and I encourage you to view the VQC website for further details on our projects' progress.

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

## Professor Anne-Maree Kelly

Academic Head of Emergency Medicine, Western Health

Professor Kelly MD MClInEd FACEM is an emergency physician at Western Hospital. She is also Academic Head of Emergency Medicine at Western Health, Director of the Joseph Epstein Centre for Emergency Medicine Research and Director, Office for Research, Western Health.

Her clinical and research interests include pain assessment and management, the evaluation of prehospital care, process change, clinical therapeutics and medical education.

In addition to VQC, she sits on the Better Safer Transfusion Advisory Committee and has in the past served on the National Asthma Reference Group for DoHA.



## Dr Simon Fraser

Director of Medical Services, West Gippsland Healthcare Group



Dr Simon Fraser has a strong clinical background having worked as a neonatal paediatrician at the Mercy Hospital for Women (MHW) and with the Newborn Emergency Transport Service from 1993-2005.

Dr Fraser began working in medical administration at the Mercy from 2001 where he chaired and developed the Hospital's Clinical Risk Management Committee. He was appointed as Quality Coordinator (Medical) at the MHW in 2003 and in 2004 was appointed to the Mercy Health & Aged Care Board Quality Committee and joined the Victorian Quality Council later that year. Dr Fraser began surveying with the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards in 2006.

In 2005 Dr Fraser was appointed as part time Director of Medical Services to the West Gippsland Healthcare Group (Warragul) and after a brief period as Executive Director of Medical Services to the Ballarat Health Services returned to Gippsland in 2007 where he

is currently employed full time as Director of Medical Services to the West Gippsland Healthcare Group, Bass Coast Regional Health (Wonthaggi) and Warley Private Hospital (Phillip Island).

Simon's interests are in furthering safety and quality in health care particularly amongst the medical profession as well as being a strong team player and supporting an interdisciplinary approach to patient care.

### Clinical handover *Continued from page 1.*

The clinical handover tools include: organisational readiness checklist, suggested policy, protocol/guidelines, key performance indicators, and a clinical handover template with minimum data set. The tools will be evaluated in two areas of each selected site by staff involved in the medical handover. Results from the pilot project will be used to further refine the clinical handover tools and determine further use.

## Focusing on Acute Pain

The VQC Acute Pain Management Measurement Toolkit (APMMT) implementation project has now commenced in twenty public and five private health services.

The three-month project will support health services to plan and commence a local change management process aimed at improving the management and measurement of acute pain at the patient and organisation level.

The APMMT provides a range of resources to support sites in standardising pain assessment and management.

VQC will support participating sites to undertake three key activities:

1. Review and revise local documentation including observation charts, local policy and orientation & training manuals
2. Provide clinical staff with education on pain management including the use of validated pain rating tools, reportable observations and documentation requirements.

3. Establish monitoring and reporting structures to support the long-term sustainability of the change in practice.

All sites will conduct a pre and post implementation data collection focused on staff knowledge and practice, pain related documentation, and the monitoring and reporting of pain management data within the organisation.

The acute pain management section of the VQC website has been revised and now includes examples of health service acute pain documentation and a list of frequently asked questions.

These tools have been made available to support participating sites, however the information will also be relevant to all health services interested in independently implementing the toolkit.

For further queries contact Oliver Furness via email at:

**[oliver.furness@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:oliver.furness@dhs.vic.gov.au)**

## 5<sup>th</sup> Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care

Brisbane hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care this year, held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 6-8 August 2007.

As with previous years, the VQC was pleased to be able to offer sponsorship to a number of Victorian health service staff (including community health and mental health services). More than 70 Victorian health service staff attended, including VQC members and Management Group staff.

The VQC also held an information session on Tuesday, 7 August for all sponsored conference delegates, which received very positive feedback.

The conference provided an exciting opportunity to participate and contribute to important safety and quality issues.

## Data Learning Package

Health services undertake many Quality Improvement activities in order to improve patient care. The VQC hopes to further facilitate and promote these activities by developing a basic guide to data management.

The VQC Strategic Goal 4 is to *'Promote access to and use of meaningful, targeted information, relevant to clinicians and patients, to improve practice'* by way of assisting health services to measure and monitor safety and quality.

Working Group 4 met in August 2007 to discuss the development of a basic data learning education package primarily aimed at assisting health services to undertake Quality Improvement activities. It is envisaged that the Guide will be a basic tool that can be used by clinicians and managers to assist the process of undertaking a Quality Improvement activity from the commencement of a project's development, to the project's completion, including evaluation. The end product will be a hard copy Guide which will also be accessible on the VQC website.

An expert group has been convened to assist with the development of the Guide and comprises a group of health professionals with broad and specialist expertise in the area of data collection, analysis and evaluation for quality improvement. This group will meet in October to 'brainstorm' and identify the key essential elements of the Guide. Consultation with publishing design and education experts will occur in the next stage of development to ensure that the product presentation is accessible and appropriate to the needs of the health services. It is anticipated that the Guide will be published and made available in February 2008.

## Upcoming Projects

### Consumer Leadership - Development Program

Following on from the literature review and consultations undertaken in 2006, the VQC has commissioned the development of a leadership-development program for emerging consumer leaders.

The program includes five days of education, mentoring sessions and the development of a peer support network. This program will be piloted from February to October 2008. Applications will be sought from interested health consumers in October 2007.

### Economic Assessment Toolkit

The VQC is developing a toolkit to assist health services to identify the costs and consequences of proposed quality and safety initiatives in order to prioritise an issue for action and to allocate adequate resources to achieve a measurable and sustainable outcome.

The toolkit will include information on the possible approaches to economic assessment, data sources and tools that are relevant to the Victorian context.

## Completed Projects

### Hand Hygiene

The VQC statewide hand hygiene project that involved 76 health services across Victoria was completed in June 2007.

Final results from both the pilot project and stages one and two of the statewide project have shown that the introduction of alcohol based hand gel and culture change program is a successful at improving hand hygiene and reducing MRSA rates.

The successful project will be continued by the Department of Human Services as part of a four-year infection control strategy using the methodology introduced during the VQC statewide hand hygiene project.

Reports on the results of the hand hygiene project will be available on the VQC hand hygiene webpage from November 2007. Resources and educational tools can be accessed at:

[http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/handhyg\\_res.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/handhyg_res.htm)

### Communicating with Consumers

This long running project extended the concepts of evidence-based decision making to quality improvement. Three pilot sites were selected to try an evidence-informed approach to the selection of strategies to improve communication with consumers.

The processes undertaken during the pilot and the knowledge gained have formulated into a guide to support the undertaking an evidence-informed approach to improving communication and participation in health care.

The report of the pilot and the guide are available at:

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/consumers.htm>

## VQC Management Group - Secondments

Patricia McGarrity has been seconded to the Cancer and Palliative Care/Program Branch within the DHS, for a period of 6 months and the VQC is pleased to introduce two new secondees Senior Project Officers to the Management Group:

Olive Lee has been seconded from The Royal Children's Hospital for 6 months. Olive is providing project management for the Clinical Handover and Rural Clinical Handover Projects. She has a background in policy development and project management.

Jo Heard has been seconded from the Royal Women's Hospital for 6 months. Jo is project manager for the Data Learning Package and the VTE Project. She has a background in delivering education to midwives and nurses in a range of settings.

## 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)