

VQC Newsletter

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Message from the Chair



At the Victorian Quality Council's (VQC) most recent meeting on 20 November, two more projects were approved by members. They include an evaluation

of the Clinical Handover tool and further funding to progress work on falls minimisation. Details regarding these projects are included in this newsletter.

Recently I wrote to health services seeking an opportunity to second appropriately experienced staff to join the VQC Management Group to undertake project work over a period of four to six months. Through this initiative, the VQC has seconded

Kathy Simons from Mercy Hospital for Women (see newsletter) and had a number of enquiries. Secondment opportunities still exist and I would encourage Chief Executives and Quality or Project staff at health services that can undertake a secondment, to consider work with the VQC Management Group over the next few months. Please contact the VQC Manager, Ms Maureen Willson via email at maureen.willson@dhs.vic.gov.au for further details about the secondment opportunities.

In 2007, the VQC will be evaluated by an external organisation to determine the extent to which the VQC has achieved its objectives, and examine a range of potential models to promote state-wide quality and safety activities into the future. Whilst a document analysis will

be undertaken, a survey will be distributed to a wide range of VQC stakeholders to assess the awareness, knowledge and satisfaction with VQC activities. Interviews will also be conducted with key stakeholder representatives. It is proposed that the evaluation will be undertaken in the first half of 2007 culminating in a report to the Minister for Health prior to the new Council member appointments in late 2007. The Council members are keen to understand what impact the work of VQC has had in the sector and areas where improvement may occur. Further updates will be provided in subsequent newsletters.

Associate Professor
Christine Kilpatrick
Chair, VQC

Hand Hygiene

In May 2004 the Victorian Quality Council (VQC) established the Victorian Hand Hygiene Project as a key goal in reducing harm. The VQC subsequently established a Hand Hygiene (HH) pilot project over a 24-month period. It finished in September 2006.

The HH pilot project commenced in June 2004. Austin Health provided a coordinating centre and worked with the six pilot sites (health services from metropolitan and regional Victoria) to develop and implement a practical model for sustained improvement in hand hygiene practices in Victorian hospitals. The approach incorporated the introduction of an alcohol-chlorhexidine hand hygiene product, education of healthcare workers regarding hand hygiene practices, promotion of hand hygiene practices via a range of communication and promotional tools and the collection and feedback of the following three outcome indicators:

- Hand Hygiene product usage in litres/1000 bed days/month
- Rates of nosocomial infection and
- Rates of hand hygiene compliance.

The HH pilot project was formally closed by VQC on 17 November 2006. A meeting was held with representatives of the pilot hospitals to present the final results of the outcome indicators, along with determining the successes and learning's from the project and develop practical ideas for sustaining hand hygiene practices in health services. *(Continued on page 2)*

Consumer Leadership Breakfast

VQC will be launching the final report of the Consumer Leadership project during a breakfast on Friday 23 February at 7.30 am, the second day of the Participate in Health Conference (February 22–23) at the RACV Club.

The theme for the breakfast is Consumer, Carer and Community Leadership – Improving the Safety & Quality of Health Care. A panel of consumer and health leaders will discuss the findings of the report and future directions.

Conference registration forms can be downloaded from www.health.vic.gov.au/consumer/conf_reg.htm

Know your Council Members



Kathy Byrne is Chief Executive of Bendigo Health – a major Victorian regional public health service with a turnover exceeding \$200 million, and with a catchment area of about one quarter of Victoria. Bendigo Health employs 2900 people in 12 towns in central and northern Victoria and provides a comprehensive range of health care services including acute, aged care, mental health and community-based services. It operates a number of academic research centres, which train medical, nursing and allied health staff in conjunction with several universities, and its aim is to be recognised as the premier regional health service in Australia.

Kathy's qualifications are in Health Information Management and she has an MBA from the Melbourne Business School.

Kathy has been Chief Executive of Bendigo Health 8 years. She has previously managed a private hospital in Darwin and a veterans' hospital in Adelaide. She is a member of several boards and committees in the health industry, as well as in the telecommunications and tertiary education sectors. Kathy was appointed to the VQC in 2004.



Rinaldo Bellomo is Professor of Medicine with the University of Melbourne, Honorary Professor of Medicine with Monash University, Honorary Principal Research Fellow, Howard Florey Institute, University of Melbourne, Director of Intensive Care Research and Staff Specialist in Intensive Care at the Austin Hospital, Melbourne. He is the Founding Chairman of the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society Clinical Trials Group. He graduated from Monash University (Melbourne) in 1982 with first class honours and undertook advanced training in Nephrology and Pulmonary Medicine before specializing in Critical Care Medicine with training in Australia and the USA. His research interests include all aspects of critical care nephrology, sepsis, blood purification, acid-base physiology, resuscitation and critical illness prevention. He has written more than 70 book chapters, edited 7 books and is Renal Section editor for all major Textbooks of Critical Care Medicine. He is a member of 7 journal editorial boards, reviews manuscripts for 20 different journals and submissions for 5 national and international granting agencies. Rinaldo was appointed to the VQC in 2004.

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Outcomes from the HH pilot project demonstrated that all six pilot hospitals showed an increase in hand hygiene compliance as a result of the pilot project with the average hand hygiene compliance increasing from 21.2% to 46.8% at 24 months.

There were also 719 fewer methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) clinical isolates identified than would have been expected prior to the intervention and the pilot appears to have prevented 60 patients from developing MRSA bacteraemia.

These results represent a significant reduction in patient harm and financial savings for health services.

In August 2005, the Minister for Health, the Hon Bronwyn Pike announced that VQC would roll out the HH project across Victoria. The VQC subsequently developed a statewide HH project for all Victorian health services, which will continue until June 2007.

A forum to discuss the issues of sustainability of hand hygiene practices for all participating health services will be held in February 2007. Further information will be provided in due course.

For further information regarding the Hand Hygiene project, please go to www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/handhyg.htm or contact Diana Quin at VQC on 03 9096 1385 or email diana.quin@dhs.vic.gov.au

Clinical Handover Workshop and project development

"Clinical handover refers to the transfer of information from one health care provider to another when:

- a patient has a change of location of care, and / or
- when the care of a patient shifts from one provider to another".

(Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care – May 2005)

An objective of the VQC has been to enhance continuity of care through clinical staff handover. The impact of clinical handover on patient safety is widely acknowledged, however there is much work to be done to develop and implement best practice standards. The VQC has taken a staged approach in its work related to clinical handover with an emphasis on widespread consultation and feedback to health services.

1. A Clinical Handover Information Sheet, summarising the current understanding of patient safety issues related to clinical handover and potential system improvements suggested in the literature, has been developed and is available at www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/activities/handover.htm
2. A Clinical Handover Survey was circulated to all Victorian health services. Results demonstrated that the areas of greatest concern are:
 - Shift to shift handovers (medical and nursing)
 - Acute to community transfer
 - Interhospital transfer

3. A Clinical Handover Workshop was held on 29 November at Telstra Dome. There were 130 participants at the Workshop, which was facilitated by Terry Laidler. The purpose of the workshop was to:

- provide a forum for discussion about clinical handover
- develop draft standardised procedures
- develop a draft minimum data set.

We were fortunate to have the following speakers present work they had undertaken in relation to clinical handover and would like to thank them for sharing their time, expertise and enthusiasm:

- Dr Adam O'Brien, Coronial Services Centre
- Mr Kevin Vaughan, North East Health
- Dr Garry Lane, Western Health
- Professor David Watters, Barwon Health
- Professor Beverly O'Connell, Southern Health
- Dr Alison Dwyer, Melbourne Health
- Dr Annie Moulden, Royal Children's Hospital

As part of the workshop groups were asked to review and comment on questions regarding the role of health services in supporting clinical handover; what procedures/rules/support mechanisms should apply to clinical handover; what should be included in a minimum data set for clinical handover. A large amount of information was gathered and this will be circulated to all workshop participants and placed on the VQC website. The information will be used to develop clinical handover tools;

draft standardised procedures and a minimum data set.

4. Approval has been gained to run a project to evaluate these tools and further information will be available early in 2007.



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Creating safety: addressing seclusion and restraint practice

The partnership project between the Victorian Quality Council and the Chief Psychiatrist's Quality Assurance Committee has commenced with the appointment of a project officer. Helen Walters commenced her secondment from Eastern Health in November 2006 and will work on the project until January 2008. Helen has extensive experience in mental health service settings including community mental health service management and nurse education roles. Helen comes to the project from her role as Senior Psychiatric Nurse at Eastern Health with responsibility for education and training programs.

As part of the overall activity in this area, the DHS Mental Health Branch will be hosting a two-day seminar in late February 2007 entitled "Creating Violence Free and Coercion Free Mental Health Treatment Environments for the Reduction of Seclusion and Restraint". Each Area Mental Health service will be sent additional information regarding the seminar early in the new year.

Enquiries regarding the Creating Safety project or upcoming seminar should be directed to Helen Walters, Senior Project Officer, Creating Safety: Addressing Seclusion and Restraint Practices Project on 9096 8816 or email helen.walters@dhs.vic.gov.au

Victorian Quality Council's Management Group new staff members:

Diana Quin, Senior Project Officer

Diana commenced working at the Victorian Quality Council (VQC) in September this year and is a Senior Project Officer in the VQC Management Group. She has been involved in health care since 1985 working as a Division One Registered Nurse and in a number of administrative roles across the public health sector. Prior to commencing at the VQC, Diana worked in the Quality and Safety Unit at Bayside Health undertaking a range of projects related to quality and safety initiatives. Diana has a BA Honours in Politics and is completing her final year of a Masters of Public Health.

Diana's project work is focused on implementation of sustainable systems to reduce harm in areas of known risk. Diana is the project

manager for the Victorian Hand Hygiene Project. To contact Diana please email her at diana.quin@dhs.vic.gov.au or phone 03 9096 1385.

Kathy Simons, Senior Project Officer

Kathy is on secondment to the VQC Management Group to undertake work on the Consumer Leadership and Communicating with Consumers projects. She is currently enrolled in a Doctorate of Public Health and her thesis focuses on consumer experience of hospital relocation.

Kathy's background is in Midwifery both clinical and managerial in both public and private sector. She has worked as Organisational Development Manager responsible for Quality & Safety at Mercy Hospital for Women for the last four years.

To contact Kathy please e-mail katherine.simons@dhs.vic.gov.au or phone 03 9096 8237.

Falls

Falls in acute, subacute and residential care settings are recognised as a high risk to patient safety. In August 2004, the VQC launched the "Minimising Risk of Falls and Fall-related Injuries: Guidelines for Acute, Sub-acute and Residential Care Settings" (the guidelines) in Victorian health services. The guidelines were provided to all Victorian health services to assist with the implementation of falls minimisation programs and are available at www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil/pub/improve/falls.htm

VQC will undertake further work to assist health services in their strategies to reduce the number of falls and fall related injuries. A survey of staff with the responsibility for falls minimisation strategies within their health service will be undertaken early in 2007. The aim of the survey will be to identify gaps in falls minimisation education currently available and to determine if there are priority areas to be addressed. This information will be used to identify future directions for work related to falls minimisation.

The Victorian Quality Council

Safer, better care throughout Victorian health care services

www.health.vic.gov.au/qualitycouncil