

# Knowledge Network Project News:

## October 2005 Update

### **Status of the project**

Work has continued on many aspects associated with the Knowledge Network specifically with regard to investigations and reviews around management and content and also pilot activities within the CareSearch website. Updates on these tasks are summarised below.

### **Knowledge Network Management Group**

The Management Group held a face to face meeting in October and a further face to face is planned for December.

The Consumer Health Forum has nominated a Consumer Representative to join the Management Group.

Funding decisions regarding the Network will not be known until 2006.

### **Project Investigations:**

#### **Governance and location**

The Management Group is looking at the most efficient way to introduce or make a transition to the Knowledge Network given current groups involved in providing palliative and on-line resources. They have investigated various corporate and contract structures to understand the benefits and issues associated with these structures and arrangements.

There has also been discussion about the role of stakeholders, representatives and experts in advising and governing functions.

#### **Functional lexicon**

A small working group has started looking at issues around a functional

lexicon. The group is examining indexing systems to define the content boundaries. Examples of the indexing systems being reviewed include:

- NeLH collecting policy and tree structure  
<http://libraries.nelh.nhs.uk/palliative/>
- Therapeutic Guidelines Palliative Care Version 2

There is an agreement within the Management Group that the emphasis relates to progressive life limiting illness with a focus on when functional status changes.

Preliminary discussions of the working group have already identified issues around style and editorial considerations. These include

- Language level
- Communication effectiveness
- Web style considerations

These are important considerations with regard to the effectiveness of the knowledge transfer that is being envisaged.

#### **Integrated evidence schema**

There are several sets of materials that could be housed on the Network

- Created materials: Webpages, resources or documents are written by the Project staff and represent new materials e.g. PubMed search strategies or CareSearch literature databases (*Search, evaluation, review issues*)

- Synthesized materials: Webpages, resources or documents that summarise topics or content (*Search, evaluation, synthesis, review issues*)
- Referral materials: Documents, websites or other items that are included in or linked to from the Network (*evaluation issues*)
- target audience (e.g. patient, specialist), unbiased
- Evaluation standards (qualitative, quantitative, website) to ensure validity and quality
- Knowledge translation mechanisms
- Review processes to enable online “publication”
- Currency evaluation/ Review and update procedures

In practical terms this means that to maintain integrity, the network requires transparent mechanisms to ensure that materials created for or included on the Network reflect the best available evidence.

Some of the issues that surround such a simple concept include

- Processes must be simple enough to be practical, i.e., we can not undertake a Cochrane level systematic review for each statement we put on the network
- Evaluation process(es) and evidence schema(s) must enable the evaluation of materials from multiple disciplines that contribute to the understanding and practice of palliative care
- Evaluation processes and evidence schemas must be able to evaluate materials in many different forms including but not limited to articles and documents, abstracts, websites and databases, videos and film clips, images

To meet the evidence requirements a series of procedures, standards and tools will need to be developed. They include

- Structured search methodology(ies) for published and indexed literature, grey literature, internet
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria looking at content boundaries, relevance, language, recent, for

To date a small working group has been established to look at the question of an evidence/evaluation structure for the Network.

### ***Trial projects:***

#### **Specialist care pages**

The CareSearch website has introduced a series of content webpages to the website. These include:

- Palliative medications
- Aged care facilities
- Indigenous care
- Caregiver supports

There are new sections related to the grants and granting agencies, education and training options and expanded resources such as posters presented at various palliative conferences. These resources and information can be accessed at [www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au)

#### **Bulletin boards and SIGs**

The first forum has been introduced into the CareSearch website and is operating successfully. This forum is being used to support training workshops related to guidelines for a palliative approach in the aged care sector. You can visit this forum at <http://www.caresearch.com.au/home/Resources/Forums/tabid/173/view/topics/forumid/3/Default.aspx>

Further forums for specialist groups will be introduced over the coming months.

## **Research Directory**

This activity is still being planned and designed. We are currently looking at various systems such as:

Health services research projects in progress at

<http://www.academyhealth.org/hsrproj/>  
Roadmap of Australian research at  
<http://www.phcris.org.au/products/roar.php>

Multicultural Mental health projects database at

[http://www.mmha.org.au/Research\\_Projects/](http://www.mmha.org.au/Research_Projects/)

Rural Health Research register at

<http://www.med.monash.edu.au/mrh/resources/rhrr/>

## ***Staying in touch with the Knowledge Network project***

While the early months of the project have been directed to developing and modifying functions within the CareSearch website, the next few months will see a much more active engagement in the project investigations. We are keen to encourage participation and would welcome contributions from the palliative care community. Your ideas, criticisms, and knowledge will help strengthen the outcomes of this project.

The Project News will be sent out bimonthly to all those who have requested a copy. The project page in CareSearch has been reactivated. Materials will be added as they are produced. Materials from the original Business Plan investigation have been retained on the page.

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