

Knowledge Network in Palliative Care

INCORPORATING CARESEARCH DAW HOUSE 700 GOODWOOD ROAD DAW PARK SA 5041

KN PROJECT UPDATE – APRIL 2007



Design Workshop

In early March, the Projects Team staff spent two days developing a first draft of what the Network is meant to do. To develop this first draft we used the following process:

- Reviewing the “mission” of the Network as articulated in the Business Plan and the agreement
- Identifying intended audiences
- Highlighting why people would come and what they are looking for
- Exploring what is currently available nationally and internationally
- Thinking about what people would do at the site and how they do it
- Identifying network content and functions
- Exploring layout options and navigation pathways within the Network to meet the needs of users
- Looking at the relationship of the content and functions to other projects, groups and resources
- Developing a preliminary work schedule

The two days were very intense and very productive. A draft plan and work schedule was developed and has been presented to the Knowledge Network Management Group. Further work on the concepts and processes has been undertaken and the revised plan will be presented to the National Advisory Group at its inaugural meeting.

Expanding CareSearch content: Implications for Knowledge Network

On March 26th 2007 Professor Margaret O'Connor, President, of Palliative Care Australia, launched the new sets of pages for GPs and for patients and carers in the CareSearch website. Apart from providing additional content and resources for the palliative care community, these pages provided the Project Team with the opportunity to explore a number of development and evaluation processes. These included:



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- Ways of disseminating information and materials to new target groups
- Effect of usability testing on content development and page presentation
- Examination of content development and review processes
- Trial of navigation and search functions through modified page and module menus

Developing material for presentation in websites is a complex process. Information and resources must not only be relevant and evidence based, they must be written and presented in a way that enables the user to understand it. The information must also be able to be found in the web environment either by direct linking or through online searches that utilise search terms and meta tags. Page layout is obviously extremely important so that visitors to the site can orient themselves within the page and also with respect to other pages in the website. Differences in experience and familiarity with the internet can affect the information that users retrieve. These new sets of pages also provided challenges with regard to modifying the existing CareSearch site map to improve logical movement within the website.

The development of these pages provided a rich learning activity to inform processes and architecture issues for the Knowledge Network.

Evaluation Program

The Centre for Health Services Development at the University of Wollongong will be an external evaluation partner for the Knowledge Network. The external evaluation partner provides an independent view and advice on evaluation of the overall program.

We have also received ethics approval for an evaluation project relating to the new GP pages in CareSearch. This project will assess the uptake of the web pages by general practitioners, and the degree to which specific sections of the GP module are being used by general practitioners. We will also be looking at which GP information needs can be met by an electronic resource, what other resources may be required, and whether or not these could be appropriately facilitated through the Knowledge Network in Palliative Care.

We are also planning for a baseline survey on the use and usefulness of the CareSearch website.

Promotional activities

Most of our current marketing and promotional work in this period has focused on the new pages in CareSearch. Numerous releases were sent to organisations to build awareness of these resources.

New collateral design materials have been prepared for both the CareSearch website and the Knowledge Network project. This collateral design draws on the major color themes of the CareSearch website but has two presentations – green banner with a blue strip for the Knowledge Network project and a blue banner with a green strip for the CareSearch website. This enables us to co-jointly promote the website and the project.

The design brief has also been prepared for the graphic design of the Network. The design needs to be clean and fresh and represent palliative care in an appropriate manner. It should clearly define what the Knowledge Network is about and what it stands for. Most importantly we are looking for a design that will work just as effectively in a website context as it will for printed materials.



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We have opened the Knowledge Network forum to create an opportunity for the palliative care community to comment on various components of the Network development and to provide us with ideas and resources. To access the forum go to <http://www.caresearch.com.au/home/Forums/Currentforums/tabid/415/Default.aspx> and click on Knowledge Network Project.

Role of knowledge translation

Knowledge translation is a major area of interest in the Knowledge Network project. This is a broad concept that looks at the various steps between the creation of new knowledge and its use within the health environment to yield beneficial outcomes for society. It covers areas such as knowledge dissemination, communication, technology transfer, knowledge management, knowledge utilization, two-way exchange between researchers and those who apply knowledge, implementation research, technology assessment, synthesis of results within a global context, development of consensus guidelines and more.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research has defined knowledge translation as:

the exchange, synthesis and ethically-sound application of knowledge – within a complex system of interactions among researchers and users – to accelerate the capture of the benefits of research for Canadians through improved health, more effective services and products, and a strengthened health care system

Accessed on line at <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29418.html>

Ruth Sladek has joined the Project Team as the Researcher (Knowledge Translation). Ruth Sladek brings experience in teaching different evidence based practice skills to health professionals. With a background in medical librarianship and public health, she is finalising a PhD exploring the role of cognitive factors and implementation strategies targeting behavioural change in among doctors. In her role as researcher, she is investigating ways to incorporate research evidence into the design and evaluation of the Network

From the Literature

One useful article that develops some of the issues around one aspect of Knowledge Translation is Lomas' (2007) article. The *in-between world of knowledge brokering*. This paper can be found at <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/reprint/334/7585/129>.

News from the Palliative care community

Palliative Care Research Development Grants

The purpose of the Palliative Care Research Development Grants is to provide opportunities for emerging investigators and research teams to build capacity and foster the potential to develop significant careers in palliative care research. The deadline for applications is 17.00 AEST on 12 June 2007. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Further details can be found at : http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/types/granttype/strategic/palliative_rnd3/index.htm#b



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NICS Fellowships

The NICS fellowship program was established in 2003 and provides an opportunity for future leaders in Australian health care to develop their knowledge and expertise in closing the gaps between evidence and practice. NICS is working with potential and existing sponsors to offer further Fellowships in 2008. Applications for these Fellowships will open at the end of April 2007. Further details can be found at :

http://www.nicsl.com.au/asp/index.asp?page=programs/programs_article&cid=5263&gid=237

We'd welcome feedback, comments. Please contact us at caresearch@rgh.sa.gov.au or phone us on (08) 8275 2817.



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