

CARESEARCH PAGE PROFILE: PAGE REVIEWS (CNIN JULY 2010)

As part of the quality processes for CareSearch, we undertake a formal review of the Clinical Practice pages every two years to ensure that the content reflects the changing knowledge base. A [recent study](#) showed that the number of articles on palliative care is growing rapidly. Importantly, both the number and the proportion of articles reporting clinical trials in palliative care are also growing.

As most of the Clinical Practice pages were originally written for the launch of the website in May 2008, many of these pages are now undergoing review.

The Clinical Practice pages are based upon systematic reviews and structured literature reviews relevant to the topic. Updating the pages involves checking the page against the findings of new systematic reviews on the topic in the period since the page was released. The search, appraisal and content revision is completed internally and then the revised pages are checked by an external reviewer with relevant experience and knowledge of the clinical topic.

Revised pages

While the review process is continuing, a number of Clinical Practice pages have been through the review process and the revised pages released into the website. These pages include:

- Pain
- Breathing
- Constipation
- Social Support
- Depression

An example of the importance of this review process can be seen for one of the breathing pages, Dyspnoea. The Dyspnoea page released in early 2008 used systematic reviews published up to 2007. From 2008 a further seventeen reviews relating to Dyspnoea have been published and are collated in the CareSearch Review Collection. The recent page revision has examined this new evidence as part of the review process.

Many palliative care clinicians, researchers and academics assist the CareSearch project by volunteering their time and expertise in commenting on and reviewing the Clinical Practice pages.

The screenshot shows the CareSearch website interface. On the left is a 'Main Menu' with categories like 'What is Palliative Care?', 'For Patients and Families', 'Finding Services', 'Clinical Practice', 'Finding Evidence', 'Education', 'Research Resources', 'Professional Groups', 'About CareSearch', and 'Contact CareSearch'. The 'Clinical Practice' section is expanded to show 'Physical' and 'Applicable Problems' such as 'Breathing', 'Cough', 'Dyspnoea', 'Haemoptysis', 'Obstruction', 'Respiratory Secretions', 'Constipation', 'Delirium', 'Fatigue', 'Nausea', 'Pain', and 'Sleeping Problems'. The main content area is titled 'Dyspnoea' and includes a definition: 'Dyspnoea (shortness of breath) is described as "an uncomfortable awareness of breathing"'. It also features a 'What is known' section with evidence points: 'Evidence supports the use of either oral or parenteral opioids for relieving the symptom of dyspnoea. There is no evidence to support the use of nebulised opioids, however, [4]' and 'A recent meta-analysis has shown that oxygen does not improve symptoms of dyspnoea in cancer patients who are mildly or non-hypoxic, although there may be a sub-population who do experience benefit. [5-6] A systematic review found no strong evidence for the benefit of oxygen in patients with dyspnoea and advanced disease from any cause, although the numbers studied were very small. [7]'. There is also a 'Published Searches' box on the right.

CareSearch is an online resource funded by the Department of Health and Ageing to help clinicians and consumers find relevant evidence about palliative care. Available now at www.caresearch.com.au