

Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration

A quality initiative for palliative care

PCOC is a project funded by the Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing as part of the National Palliative Care Program.

PCOC Update

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Our intentions for a mid-year newsletter did not materialise so our second newsletter, like the first, is timed as many of us plan a break over the Christmas season.

For PCOC, 2007 has been an exceptionally busy and productive year as specialist palliative care services around the country decide to join the PCOC network. The support and commitment of services coupled with developments within PCOC have raised confidence within the sector that sustainable improvements will be achieved.

One of the big milestones this year was the production of the first PCOC reports on data submitted by 8 palliative care services between April and September 2006.

A second report on data for the next 6 month period, from 28 palliative care services followed in August .

The third report covering the period April to September 2007 was sent to thirty one services in December.

With the introduction of the second version of the PCOC data set in July, future reports

will be based on the Version 2 data set.

We had a great day in Sydney in August when over 60 clinicians, quality managers and the PCOC team gathered for the first PCOC benchmarking workshop. Professor Eagar provided information about the data analysis in the second PCOC Report and presented supplementary data analysis to assess what services might find useful in future reports. The majority of participants reported that the data would assist them to improve patient care and also agreed to the concept of controlling for variation.

The workshop was an ideal forum for clinicians and quality managers from around Australia to discuss the PCOC data set, the information that can be extracted from it and the usefulness of the data analysis and results. It was a chance for participants to provide feedback that will contribute to the ongoing development of PCOC.

We are in the midst of conducting a patient and carer survey for all interested specialist palliative care services. For all of those unaware of this, it is not too late to partici-

pate. We will be providing a report on the data in the first half of 2008.

PCOC has gathered considerable momentum during the year, has gained the support of most state jurisdictions and is poised to bring about enduring and important improvements to the sector.

We wish you a happy and relaxed time with families and friends over the Christmas break. And we look forward to another exciting year and our ongoing collaboration with you.

Prue Watters
PCOC Manager



PCOC Workshops in 2008

Workshop for Consultation Services — 11 March 2008

For staff of these services to discuss the different models of care and how to adapt these so that a single data set can be collected.

Workshop for Community Services — May 2008

To discuss whether the current PCOC data set meets the needs of community services.

We would welcome your input to the planning of these workshops and to your participation.

For more information contact Prue Watters:

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Staff Appointments and Changes

An important development this year was the appointment of the PCOC Training Manager, Maree Banfield, who is on a 12-month secondment from Calvary Health Care Sydney where she was the Palliative Care

"THE PCOC TRAINING MANAGER HAS OVER 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE PALLIATIVE CARE SECTOR WHICH IS INVALUABLE AS SHE CONDUCTS TRAINING PROGRAMS AROUND THE COUNTRY".

Service Manager. Maree has over 15 years experience in the palliative care sector which is invaluable as she conducts training programs around the country.

We are excited at the prospect of having Kathy Hendry join us in January 2008 as the Zone Coordinator for Victoria. Kathy has been granted a 12-month secondment from Mercy Western.

PCOC Central Zone Coordinator, Dave Fildes, has assumed responsibility from the PCOC Manager for most of NSW and Tasmania.

Sadly, Tania Shelby-James has resigned as the PCOC South Zone Coordinator and was replaced in mid-May by Deb Rawlings, who has many

years experience as a palliative care nurse in both Australia and the UK. From mid-July Deb has been assisted by Robyn Jezewski, also a palliative care nurse.

The PCOC North Zone Coordinator, Susan Mylne, is on maternity leave following the birth of her third son. Jane McEnery, who is well known to many palliative care staff in Queensland, has been welcomed to the team in Susan's absence.

Robyn Cottman has joined the PCOC team in Western Australia.

PCOC Training Program

Early in 2007, Maree Banfield, with assistance from Sabina Haantjens, the National Training Manager for the Little Company of Mary Health Care, developed the PCOC training modules. Academic input was provided by Professor Patsy Yates.

Modular-based, the complete program can be conducted over a day or selected modules can be delivered as required. Over 40 training programs have been conducted around the country for more than 350 staff. As

staff complete training programs, they become aware of how they can incorporate the data into everyday clinical practice and use it to develop and review clinical policies and procedures. Many also plan to use the information from the data collection for case conferencing and interdisciplinary team meetings.

Feedback from training participants has been positive:

'I feel that I will be able to educate other staff on PCOC'.

'Potentially very exciting and will have great influence on our palliative care program'.

'Found it particularly relevant to palliative care and its profile'.

For more information about PCOC's training program, please contact Maree Banfield on 0407 938 011 or Banfield@uow.edu.au

Southern Zone

With responsibility for metropolitan Victoria as well as South Australia, it has been a busy year. Recruitment is progressing steadily with 5 services now collecting version 2 data and a further 13 in various stages of recruitment. To assist services to collect the data, we have been reviewing current practice, checking paperwork, undertaking education and developing collection strategies.

In SA, three of the largest metropolitan palliative care services have supported over 60 staff to attend half day education sessions. Feedback has been positive with participants reporting that they expect the training to directly benefit them and their patients. A total of 14 education sessions have been provided in the southern zone since May.

It has not been easy to support Victorian services from afar and the appointment of a Zone Coordinator based in Victoria in 2008 will ensure a local contact. Despite this contact has been made with 16 Victorian services and education sessions provided to four of them. We have also provided information to the NW Melbourne Palliative Care consortium, as well as to many of the large individual metropolitan services. Contact has also been made with regional services such as Hume and Barwon Health. We are expecting a big year in 2008.



Western Zone

From having 2 services submitting data, we now anticipate that 11 services will be collecting Version 2 data by the end of January 2008. IT has been an issue, but this has not deterred services from commencing a paper based PCOC data collection. Services are now considering ongoing IT options, including using SNAPshot for data collection. Rural WA services have been using PalCIS over a long period of time, but there have been difficulties extracting the data for PCOC. We expect that many of these IT issues will be resolved in the coming year.

Robyn Cottman is a valuable addition to the PCOC West team. Robyn joined PCOC mid-year to work with services to prepare to collect the PCOC data. Tasks include resolving data collection methods to suit the needs of each service, problem solving IT issues and organising meetings and training. Ten services were represented at the first PCOC training day held in August 2007.

Central Zone

Visits to centres around NSW and Tasmania have resulted in a significant number of services deciding to join PCOC. A major emphasis in 2008 will be to get these services to adopt the assessment tools in the Version 2 data set, some of which are not in wide use in NSW.

PCOC collaborated with Calvary Mater Newcastle to conduct a 1-day seminar in October with guest speakers Professor Irene Higginson and Dr Karl Lorenz. Professor Janet Hardy, Dr Odette Spruyt and Dr Paul Glare contributed to the debate on defining palliative care outcomes. It was an informative day for the more than 100 people who attended.

Northern Zone

Specialist palliative care services in Queensland have embraced PCOC with enthusiasm and there are now 40 services at various stages of recruitment. Ten services contributed data to the third PCOC report and we expect up to 25 services to be submitting data for the fourth report.



Twenty-six education sessions have been conducted around Queensland and northern NSW for nursing, medical and allied health staff. There have also been training sessions in the use of SNAPshot.

It is pleasing that a majority of services have agreed to participate in the PCOC Patient Experience and Carer Satisfaction Surveys.

As with all Zone Coordinators, the focus of the position is to support services as they adapt clinical assessment practices to enable them to collect the PCOC data.

Release of Version 2 of the PCOC Data Set

PCOC is guided by an industry based Scientific and Clinical Advisory Committee (SCAC) comprising representatives from key stakeholder organisations and clinicians with specialist expertise.

A responsibility of this committee is to recommend changes to data elements in the PCOC dataset. SCAC oversaw finalisation of the Version 2 dataset. The changes to the dataset were based upon consultation with palliative care clinicians and a literature review of specific palliative care symptom assessment tools.

The Version 2 dataset now distinguishes between malignant or non-malignant diagnoses as well as broad co-morbidities.

The assessment tools adopted by PCOC include PC Phase, RUG-ADL, Symptom Assessment Scale (SAS), PC Problem Severity Score, and Karnofsky. With the exception of SAS, these tools were in the Version 1 dataset.

The inclusion of SAS will allow a greater degree of reporting on patient outcomes.

Services are now encouraged to collect the Version 2 dataset. However, PCOC will continue to accept data from services that do not or are unable to collect the full set of data

items. We will be working with those services to move towards full compliance.

The Version 2 dataset can be found at:

http://chsd.uow.edu.au/pcoc/documents/pcoc_v2_dataset.pdf

PCOC team

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Maree Banfield

PCOC National Manager:

Prue Watters

PCOC Admin Support:

Cheryl Blissett and Linda Foscett

Zone Coordinators



Upcoming Events

PCOC Report #4 due May 2008 to participating PCOC services (data period October 2007 to March 2008)

Workshop for consultation services 11 March 2008

Workshop for community services May 2008

Report on Patient and Carer snapshot survey data analysis April 2008

Zone Coordinators

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Reminder

If you want to participate in the Patient and Carer Surveys using POS 2 and FAMCARE 2 contact us now.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE!