



Welcome to the PCC4U project newsletter. Our aim is to actively promote the uptake of the PCC4U resources in all universities which offer medical, nursing and allied health training, extending and developing networks among participating universities, and developing strategies for the ongoing sustainability of the PCC4U project.

If you would like the project team to visit you to introduce the PCC4U resources, help you with curriculum mapping, and with the customisation of learning resources in a workshop or personal format, please contact us at mupccp@qut.edu.au.

Project in brief

The PCC4U project is an initiative of the Australian Department of Health and Ageing through the National Palliative Care Program that aims to promote inclusion of palliative care education as an integral part of all medical, nursing and allied health undergraduate training.

Project Update

Project Status

The year continues to gain momentum. The project team has been busy contacting and visiting universities to assist with integrating palliative care into the curriculum.

We have scheduled a series of workshops across the country to promote quality teaching and learning in undergraduate palliative care education for academics and clinicians. Details of these workshops and a summary of the outcomes are included in this edition of the newsletter.

The newsletter also includes an implementation update and report from Dr Katherine Clark, senior lecturer in the School of Medicine at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney.

The PCC4U project is supporting a number of course improvement initiatives in several courses to promote the integration of palliative care in undergraduate curricula. The initiatives are intended to lead to the development of graduates who are better equipped to provide palliative care. A summary of some of the initiatives is included on the following pages. If you have ideas or plans for how you wish to promote the inclusion of palliative care in your course, please contact our Project Coordinator.

Implementation Update

The PCC4U team has completed the task of inviting all universities which offer undergraduate health courses to participate in the PCC4U project. The interest in the project and the PCC4U resources has been high. In second semester 2008 the team will commence contacting academics to review progress and offer any assistance that may be required to facilitate implementation of palliative care in your courses.

Number of Australian universities	39
Number of health courses at Australian universities	191
Number of health courses invited to participate	191
Number of health courses implementing PCC4U	60



PCC4U Workshops

The PCC4U Project Team held the first of a series of workshops designed to promote quality teaching and learning in undergraduate palliative care education on 25 July in Sydney and 28 July in Melbourne. It is our intention to hold similar workshops in all capital cities and main rural centres in 2008–2009.

Promoting Quality Teaching and Learning in Undergraduate Palliative Care Education: A Workshop for Academics and Clinicians

Workshop presenters: Professor Patsy Yates and Dr Robyn Nash from the Queensland University of Technology

This workshop aims to:

- provide an overview of evidence regarding effective teaching and learning strategies in palliative care
- review case study exemplars to illustrate how to integrate palliative care in undergraduate curricula
- identify strategies to facilitate the implementation of palliative care
- explore future directions in teaching and learning in palliative care.

1.00pm – 1.30pm	Welcome and introductions Overview of purpose of the workshop
1.30pm – 2.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and learning strategies in palliative care • Review of evidence about effective teaching and learning palliative care • Group discussion of experiences with effective strategies
2.30pm – 3.00pm	Afternoon tea
3.00pm – 4.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating palliative care in undergraduate curricula • Case study exemplars of integrating palliative care in undergraduate curricula • Small group work – mapping curriculum
4.00pm – 4.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying strategies to support implementation • Review of existing resources and networks for supporting palliative care education
4.30pm – 5.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future directions in teaching and learning palliative care • Setting a vision for the future of palliative care education
5.00pm	Informal networking session



PCC4U Course Improvement Initiatives

The PCC4U project has commenced a series of course improvement initiatives with several universities to provide support to academic staff in the incorporation of palliative care principles within their undergraduate course. Two examples of these initiatives are included below:

Initiative one

RMIT

Dr Tony Bush

This initiative aims to evaluate nursing students' self-assessment of their skills preparation in providing palliative care to patients with an incurable illness, using a combination of surveys and focus groups. The data obtained will be used to:

- identify the most effective approaches to the teaching of palliative care
- identify curriculum changes required
- identify alternative methods of facilitating student learning
- identify the relevance and success of teaching resources
- identify the most effective approaches to the assessment of palliative care.

The outcomes from this project will include:

- a report of the results of the survey and focus groups
- a curriculum more attuned to the needs of the students
- a greater sense of ownership of the course by students
- an assessment approach that is more relevant to the curriculum and student needs
- identification of palliative care resources that are more relevant and appropriate for undergraduate students.

Initiative two

University of Queensland

Dr Pamela Meredith

This initiative will focus on developing a problem-based learning resource for undergraduate occupational therapy students that incorporates detailed case studies (one paediatric and one adult). This resource could then be employed in a range of teaching situations including didactic teaching and problem-based learning approaches (e.g. asking students to develop a comprehensive OT care plan in palliative care; team problem solving). There would also be the opportunity to provide an interprofessional education component where students are required to consider the roles of multiple professionals in the field, or to work in a multidisciplinary student team to determine a comprehensive care plan.

It is anticipated that materials emerging from this project will include:

- document summarising resources used by Australian occupational therapy schools to teach palliative care and indicating preferences for additional resources
- PowerPoint resources to facilitate teaching of palliative care to occupational therapy students
- two comprehensive case studies—one paediatric and one adult—provided in hard and soft copies
- photographs for inclusion in PowerPoint presentations
- sound recordings of interviews with key people in the field of palliative care.

If you have ideas for how to promote the inclusion of palliative care in your course, please contact our Project Coordinator for details about support that may be available through the PCC4U project.

Implementation Site Reports

During 2007–2008 the PCC4U resources were implemented in a number of nursing, medical and allied health courses in Australian universities. All sites that implemented the PCC4U teaching and learning resources completed a curriculum mapping exercise, tailored and incorporated selected palliative care undergraduate curriculum resources to fit their existing course structures.

Implementation report from the University of Notre Dame Medicine

The School of Medicine, Sydney (SOMS), within the University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA) has strongly committed to the integration of palliative care within the four-year curriculum. The teaching begins within year one, with both didactic teaching and problem-based learning sessions focusing on the provision and integration of palliative care into standard care. This is built on in second and third year where lectures start to develop the details of the provision of palliative care. Further teaching is planned for the final year, with the delivery of 10 didactic lectures and two full days of workshops.

These lectures will cover palliative care delivery for children, a variety of non-malignant situations (respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases and neurological diseases) and finally, palliative care for specific cases (melanoma, gynaecological cancers, lung cancer and GI cancers).

The two separate day-long sessions specifically consider the delivery of evidence-based palliative care, and provision of care to people during and after death.



The first of these days would focus on the delivery of palliative care, on symptom control issues and the role of the multidisciplinary team in palliative care. This workshop is aimed at supplementing the lectures throughout the year.

The second day-long session is aimed at considering the quality of care offered to people in their final stages of life. This includes resources to assist students to understand how to diagnose death and to ensure quality care is

delivered. This is not only the physical aspects of care, but the logistics of death and dying. Practise sessions with actors would be used to assist teaching students how to communicate appropriately with patients, families and colleagues; negotiating 'not for resuscitation orders' and other confronting scenarios such as requests for premature termination of life. This will be developed with assistance of the Pam McClean Cancer Communications Centre (Sydney University, Royal North Shore Hospital). In the final two years of

the Notre Dame degree, the students are based in their clinical schools. This means that four days a week they are in placements, and one day a week they attend lectures in their base clinical school. There are three of these: in Sydney, in Melbourne and the Rural Clinical School (RCS). The day-long palliative care sessions would be held concurrently in these three locations.

Where to from here?

Project Activities

- Promote ongoing networks and partnerships in undergraduate palliative care education
- Preparing teaching and learning workshops for 2008
- Conducting 2008 site visits
- Updating and extending the range of available resources

Four core graduate capabilities

Four graduate capabilities have been identified as being integral for health professionals to provide a palliative approach to care for persons with a life-limiting illness:

1. Effective communication in the context of an individual's responses to loss and grief, existential challenges, uncertainty and changing goals of care
2. Appreciation of and respect for the diverse human and clinical responses of each individual throughout their illness trajectory
3. Understanding of principles for assessment and management of clinical and supportive care needs
4. The capacity for reflection and self-evaluation of one's professional and personal experiences and their cumulative impact on the self and others.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT, PLEASE FEEL WELCOME TO VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT www.pcc4u.org OR CONTACT A MEMBER OF THE PROJECT TEAM BY EMAIL mupccp@qut.edu.au