



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

*If you would like the project team to visit you to introduce 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](mailto: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. It aims to promote the inclusion of palliative care education as an integral part of all medical, nursing and allied health undergraduate training.

## Project update

### Project status

The project team welcomes Alison Farrington to our team in Queensland in the role of national project coordinator. Alison has a Bachelor of Education and a Diploma of Assessment and Training and is a registered nurse with experience in palliative care and aged care. For most of the past decade Alison has worked in health professional training and workforce development. We also acknowledge the contribution of Jane McEnery during her time as interim Project Coordinator. Jane has accepted a new position as Nurse Manager at Mt Olivet Hospital.

The project team has recently conducted an online survey of universities implementing PCC4U resources, to identify how the resources are being incorporated in curricula and the impact the resources are having on education in the health professions. Preliminary survey results will be available in the next newsletter.

### Where to from here?

Planning for 2009-10 has identified a series of priorities for the final 18 months of the project.

#### Project activities

- Promote ongoing networks and partnerships in undergraduate palliative care education
- Deliver teaching and learning workshops in each state in 2009
- Encourage use of project resources for course improvement activities
- Conduct 2009 site visits
- Plan for the PCC4U Conference in 2010

#### Project resources

- Update current curriculum resources
- Extend the range of support materials available, particularly evaluation, mapping and assessment tools

### PCC4U course improvement initiatives

The PCC4U project is supporting a number of improvement initiatives in several courses to promote the integration of palliative care in undergraduate curricula. These include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, nursing and medicine courses. The initiatives aim to support the development of graduates to be better equipped to provide palliative care. Financial support and curriculum support continues to be available in 2009 for these initiatives on an individual course basis. If you have ideas or plans for how you wish to promote the inclusion of palliative care in your course and would like to access this support, please contact the project coordinators.



## Implementation update

To date the PCC4U team has invited all 39 universities and 186 health and allied health courses to be part of the project. All courses have now received at a minimum an email invitation to review the PCC4U resources, with 115 sites (67 per cent) accepting the offer to review the resources. The number of courses implementing PCC4U resources has grown to 58 (31 per cent).

A summary of the number of sites participating in the PCC4U program, as at 30 November 2008 is presented in Table 1.

Universities	Courses contacted	Resource requests	Site contacts	Implementing	Following up	Will not use
39	186	115	70	58	89	19
	100 per cent	67 per cent	38 per cent	31 per cent	47 per cent	10 per cent

Note: These figures also include the sites which, as part of the pilot, are continuing to use the resources.

The following table provides a summary of implementation rates by discipline, as at 30 November 2008.

Course	Are using PCC4U	In the future	Will not use	Unsure	Total
Nursing	20	2	1	11	34
MBBS	13	1	1	5	20
Occupational Therapy	7	2		4	13
Physiotherapy	7	4		2	13
Pharmacy	3	1	1	8	13
Speech Pathology	3			5	8
Psychology	3		7	21	31
Chinese Medicine			2		2
Chiropractic		1	1		2
Nutrition and Dietetics		2	1	7	10
Social Work	2	3	1	18	24
Paramedic	1		2	3	6
Counselling				3	3
Health Sciences		1			1
Disability Studies		1		1	2
Natural Medicine			1		1
Gerontology				1	1
Community Education				1	1
	<b>58</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>186</b>



## PCC4U workshops

Workshops to promote quality teaching and learning in undergraduate palliative care education for academics and clinicians commenced in 2008. The project plans to deliver a workshop in each state in 2009.

### University of Newcastle 5 February 2009

The PCC4U is indebted to Pamela Van Der Reit and Victoria Pitt for organising a workshop for academic staff and local clinicians at the University of Newcastle. The workshop was facilitated by Professor Patsy Yates and Alison Farrington. Attendees came from a broad range of clinical and academic fields and key stakeholder groups including John Hunter Hospital paediatric oncology, Cancer Council NSW, Port Stephens Palliative Care Service, Hunter Integrated Pain Service and the Mater Hospice. Academic staff attending came from the disciplines of Nursing, Physiotherapy, Nutrition and Dietetics, Education and Occupational Therapy. Workshop feedback highlighted the benefits of bringing clinicians and academics together to review current palliative care curriculum initiatives and examine options for the future.

The workshop commenced with Professor Yates providing an overview of the PCC4U project and key learnings and achievements. This was followed by a discussion led by Victoria Pitt, a lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at University of Newcastle, of the process of investigating the integration of palliative care into the undergraduate nursing curriculum, a course improvement initiative supported financially by PCC4U in 2008. Key steps in the course mapping process were:

- understanding the PCC4U core values and principles
- reviewing the graduate capabilities related to palliative care
- reviewing the graduate profile of the School of Nursing and Midwifery
- reviewing PCC4U learning outcomes
- identifying existing curriculum learning objectives.

Victoria Pitt highlighted the role of involving both clinicians and academics in

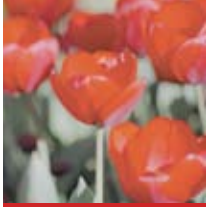
subsequently identifying plans and possibilities for integration into the curriculum in 2009.

Professor Susan Ryan gave a presentation on the implementation of a palliative care component in the unit Specialty Practice, in the second semester of year 4 for Occupational Therapy students. Palliative care comprised 50 per cent of the unit, which used group work and inquiry-based learning processes. Assessment was narrative and group work based, with an emphasis in the course on students taking a hermeneutic approach.

Small and large discussion followed exploring issues in implementing a palliative care curricula and identifying what support is needed to ensure quality learning and teaching. Discussion identified a range of strategies to enhance the inclusion of palliative care in the undergraduate curricula. The project team reviewed these strategies and identified three key themes emerging as significant in embedding the curricula and increasing sustainability of palliative care curriculum initiatives. These are summarised below.

### Promoting inclusion of palliative care in undergraduate education. Themes emerging from the Newcastle workshop:

Promoting linkages and partnerships between clinicians and academics	Promoting student-centred learning	Embedding curriculum/interprofessional learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clinical staff participating at uni sessions prior to the placement</li> <li>• establish good pre-contact with placement site</li> <li>• enhance links with conjoints – use and promote mentorship and buddying arrangements</li> <li>• facilitate and encourage clinician input into the curriculum</li> <li>• encourage information sessions and updates about curriculum and placements</li> <li>• good liaison contacts at the uni</li> <li>• need for placement partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• orientation session/activity before the placement</li> <li>• clinicians to acquaint themselves with the curriculum</li> <li>• clinicians – increase knowledge of course and placement objectives and outcomes</li> <li>• address additional learning needs of students with English as a second language</li> <li>• language and cultural differences require support and cultural sensitivity with the aim of providing culturally appropriate palliative care</li> <li>• communication and preparation of students for specialist placements</li> <li>• explore options for conjoint presentation prior to placement – this could be face-face or via web</li> <li>• need to link students with clinical activities</li> <li>• video resources are useful</li> <li>• benefits identified in using role plays and hypothetical scenarios to challenge students</li> <li>• value of a reflective journal for student placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tools and methods of evaluating placements and graduate capabilities to be developed</li> <li>• contact between the PCC4U project and conjoints</li> <li>• awareness that palliative care goes across all areas and is part of lots of specialities and contexts</li> <li>• palliative care subject sits within many areas of the curriculum</li> <li>• placements in palliative care/oncology/aged care placements may be less desirable from student perspective</li> <li>• challenges exist with the increasing diversity of students, increasing workforce pressure and decreased placement opportunities</li> <li>• differing notions of what constitutes 'authentic' learning experiences</li> <li>• importance of ensuring palliative care is made explicit within the curriculum</li> </ul>



## Where to from here?

### Project Activities

- Promote ongoing networks and partnerships in undergraduate palliative care education
- Prepare teaching and learning workshops for 2009
- Conduct 2009 site visits
- Update and extend the range of available resources

### Evaluation update

The Annual Online PCC4U Survey is currently being conducted. The core question underpinning the annual evaluation is: What impact has implementation of the PCC4U learning resources had on improving students' capacity to provide a palliative approach to the care of their clients at the end of life?

If you have already completed the PCC4U Survey, we thank you for your participation.

If you have not done so, please consider completing the survey. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your responses remain anonymous and will be reported in grouped format only. No information which could identify individual

respondents or courses will be reported.

If you agree to participate in the survey, please go to the following weblink:

**[www.hostedsurvey.com/takesurvey.asp?c=PCC4UA929333](http://www.hostedsurvey.com/takesurvey.asp?c=PCC4UA929333)**

We understand that this is a busy time of year for academic staff, and sincerely appreciate your assistance with the collection of this information. If you believe that this survey should be forwarded to another contact for your course, we would appreciate if you would forward these details to them for completion of the survey.

## Four core graduate capabilities

Four graduate capabilities have been identified as being essential 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

### Further information

If you are interested in obtaining further information about the project, please visit our website at [www.pcc4u.org](http://www.pcc4u.org) or contact a member of the Project Team by email [mupccp@qut.edu.au](mailto:mupccp@qut.edu.au)