

What have we been doing?

Welcome to the PCC4U project newsletter. Our focus is to actively promote the uptake of palliative care in all university courses 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.

In this newsletter, you will find an outline of project activities in the first part of 2007 and interviews with educators who are implementing the PCC4U teaching and learning resources in Semester 2 2007. We also profile some upcoming activities.

Look for our stand at the 9th Australian Palliative Care Conference (APCC) 28–31 August 2007. The project team will be showcasing the PCC4U resources and will be available to answer any questions you may have.

This phase of the project focuses on actively promoting the uptake of 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. In this first half of 2007 we have been:

Making site visits

PCC4U project staff, Patsy Yates and David Emmett, have been visiting universities in three states promoting the resources and commencing the site implementation planning. The first major visit was to Perth in May where we met representatives from Curtin University, Murdoch University, Edith Cowan University, Notre Dame University and the University of Western Australia. In July it was Melbourne's turn with visits to RMIT and the University of Melbourne. Visits have also been conducted in Queensland to the University of Southern Queensland and to the University of Queensland.

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.

Preparing for the Australian Palliative Care Conference (APCC) Conference

The APCC is a major event for the palliative care community. The team has booked a booth and will be on hand to demonstrate our resources, new website and to answer any questions. A PCC4U fact sheet will be included in all conference satchels. We look forward to seeing you there in August.

Growing the resource suite

The team has been extending the resource suite with Blackboard course files now available containing all the course material and video scenarios. As part of the new PCC4U website all the resources will also be online for you to view.



The 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.

Implementation Strategy

Based on evaluations from previous phases of the project regarding strategies for promoting uptake of the palliative care resources in undergraduate curricula, an implementation strategy has been developed. The key stages involved in this strategy are summarised below.

Stage 1 Awareness

An invitation is extended to selected universities to participate in the project, with requests to:

- indicate contacts that may be interested in the palliative care resources.
- where interest is shown, a resource package is sent with a request to provide information about course review schedules and optimal timelines for participation.
- an invitation to attend a workshop in their location, presented by Project members and the Project Coordinator is sent.

Stage 2 Informing

- Universities are invited to review the resources and complete a curriculum mapping exercise highlighting any barriers, concerns and a possible timetable for implementation.
- Universities are then invited to participate in the project and a site visit timetabled.

Stage 3 Engaging

- Universities are visited by Project team members and the Project Coordinator.
- A letter of agreement to participate in the project is negotiated and signed by participating sites and the Project Director.

Stage 4 Implementing

Sites implement the PCC4U resources through integration and customisation of resources. With the aid of the Project Coordinator, sites are assisted to:

- tailor and incorporate the palliative care curriculum resources
- conduct workshops and other communication activities
- introduce the resources
- establish a Site Implementation Team (SITE).

Stage 5 Networking and Support

- Sites involved in the project are invited to act as mentors for new implementation sites, and to develop a series of case studies regarding implementation strategies.
- A shared teaching website, including discussion forums, is incorporated into the PCC4U website.

Stage 6 Evaluation

- Data is collected from participating universities using evaluation templates.
- A report on the mapping exercise, implementation strategies, outcomes, and recommendations for future implementation, using templates developed as part of the Phase 2 of the PCC4U project, may be collected from sites.

Implementation Update

A schedule for inviting all universities which offer undergraduate health courses to participate in the PCC4U project has been developed to meet targets specified in the project plan approved by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. This plan ensures that all universities will have been invited to participate by December 2009.

Number of universities to be invited for 2007	Courses offered	Invited
18	83	83
Number of universities to be invited for 2008	Courses offered	Invited
10	51	
Number of universities to be invited for 2009	Courses offered	Invited
11	40	

Implementation Site Reports

During 2007 the PCC4U resources were implemented into several 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. Three sites have been interviewed. Their experiences with PCC4U are presented here:

Kiah Evans

Kiah is from Edith Cowan University, Faculty of Computing, Health and Science and School of Exercise, Biomedical and Health Sciences and lectures in undergraduate Occupational Therapy.

1. How did you find out about the PCC4U project and resources?

The PCC4U information pack was sent to the Occupational Therapy course coordinator. The PCC4U team, Patsy and David, then came to Perth to visit and explained how the resources could be incorporated into our course.

2. In what undergraduate course/s have you considered using the PCC4U resources?

The PCC4U resources will be used in the BSc (Occupational Therapy). This is a four-year full-time degree offered at the Joondalup campus.

3. Was palliative care in the course curriculum prior to this time, and how was it taught?

Occupational therapy is a new course at Edith Cowan and hence the curriculum has been under development. The PCC4U resources have provided the format and impetus to include Palliative Care in the curriculum.

4. What opportunities for the PCC4U resources do you see in the curriculum and what do you hope to achieve with your involvement?

PCC4U provides a consistent resource for students to examine palliative care from a holistic perspective.

5. How have the resources been implemented, and did you need to do any customisation?

The PCC4U resources have been customised by creating a paper-based workbook for students to complete in conjunction with watching videos.

6. If needed, what communication and support has been provided by the PCC4U team?

The PCC4U project team provided video resources to use on Blackboard and the logo to use on the print resources.

Dr Tony Bush

Tony is based at RMIT in the Academic Portfolio of Science, Engineering and Technology, and School of Health Science and is currently teaching in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the nursing program. He is one of the Year 1 nursing coordinators as well as being a selection officer for the undergraduate nursing course. He also coordinates an elective in Year 3 'Oncology and Palliative Care Nursing' that reflects his activities with community palliative care organisations.

1. How did you find out about the PCC4U project and resources?

I found out about the PCC4U project at the University Stakeholders Workshop in Melbourne through conversation with Patsy Yates, the Project Director.

2. In what undergraduate course/s have you considered using the PCC4U resources?

The resources will be incorporated into the Bachelor of Nursing through a third-year elective called Oncology and Palliative Care.

3. Was palliative care in the course curriculum prior to this time, and how was it taught?

No, palliative care was not taught in the curriculum prior to this new elective, and it is only alluded to within other courses (subjects) within the Bachelor of Nursing.

4. What opportunities for the PCC4U resources do you see in the curriculum and what do you hope to achieve with your involvement?

The resources will be made available to students enrolled in clinical subjects in Years 2 and 3. The availability of the resources will hopefully help to demystify palliative care and demonstrate how it can be integrated within any clinical setting. The resources will also be made available to non-nursing courses.

5. How have the resources been implemented, and did you need to do any customisation?

The resources will be used within the program as a teaching tool. They will then be distributed to interested students/staff within the faculty. Eventually the resources will be made available within our Blackboard site.

6. If needed, what communication and support has been provided by the PCC4U team?

The offer to customise the resources has been made but this can take time. Otherwise the support/assistance and communication has been outstandingly prompt, helpful and supportive.

Dr Jenny Nitz

Jenny is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland in the Faculty of Health Science in the Division of Physiotherapy.

1. How did you find out about the PCC4U project and resources?

My Head of Department was told about the PCC4U project and passed the information to me as I was the physiotherapy representative and palliative care was taught in my courses.

2. In what undergraduate course/s have you considered using the PCC4U resources?

The PCC4U resources will be used in the Bachelor of Physiotherapy, a four-year degree. The specific course will be 'Physiotherapy across the Lifespan'. This is the most suitable course as palliative care applies to all ages and enables an emphasis on community-based health care provision in a more holistic aspect incorporating interdisciplinary teams.

3. Was palliative care in the course curriculum prior to this time, and how was it taught?

Palliative care was taught only in the Lifespan course as a lecture (one hour), I did not believe this was enough. Palliative care is also touched on in neurology.

4. What opportunities for the PCC4U resources do you see in the curriculum and what do you hope to achieve with your involvement?

I have inserted the PCC4U resource in the Lifespan course and community health courses in the undergraduate program and in the community rehabilitation course in my Master of Physiotherapy program in the fields of gerontology and neurology. The content will be augmented with

discussion sessions and physiotherapy-based lectures.

5. How have the resources been implemented, and did you need to do any customisation?

I have provided the complete PCC4U resource in Blackboard for interested students to explore in my Lifespan courses but have only made more in-depth access and interaction mandatory for the community-based health care and Masters courses.

6. If needed, what communication and support has been provided by the PCC4U team?

The PCC4U team has provided multiple copies of the CD for library access via Blackboard as well. The total number of students accessing the resources per year would be about 250–300.

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.

Where to from here?

Project Activities

- Promote ongoing networks and partnerships in undergraduate palliative care education
- Develop a new PCC4U website
- Site visits for second semester 2007 to New South Wales, South Australia and North Queensland
- Update and extend the range of resources available through the project

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