

Same song, different tune...

What we can learn from comparing two palliative care websites

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On behalf of the CareSearch Project

CareSearch *palliative care knowledge network*

*Dr Christine Sanderson
has no conflicts of interest to declare*

For CareSearch, Australia

- Jennifer Tieman
- Christine Sanderson

For the Canadian Virtual Hospice

- Harvey Chochinov
- Shelly Cory
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Welcome to the 21st century Palliative care goes online...

What a website could potentially do (a wish list!)

- * **Awareness raising** about palliative care issues – death and dying, advance care planning, what to expect at the end of life, normalising these experiences
- * **Providing information** to people *wherever* and *whenever* they need it
- * **Always accessible** – always up to date???
- * **Communication and interaction** - between patients and clinicians, amongst clinicians, patient to patient
- * **Web-based functionality**
- * **A giant library** of information and tools
- * **Education and training** – a flexible and efficient way to do it

From wish list to reality

.. And some of the steps in between

So you want to have a website!

What do you need to consider?

- * **Your purpose** – *what makes you tick, your main focus*
- * **Your audience** – *who you are speaking to*
- * **Your voice** – *the style and feel of the site*
- * **Your content** – *what goes in, what doesn't*
- * **Architecture** – *how the information in the site is structured*
- * **Navigation** – *how users find their way around the site*
- * **Accessibility** – *how your audience find their way to the website and use it*
- * **Quality assurance** – *how you will make sure content is of good quality*
- * **Maintaining currency** – *how you will make sure content is up to date*
- * **Functionality** – *any web-based functions you want to use*

Two different websites – two different solutions...

CareSearch

&

Canadian Virtual Hospice

In these two talks you will be able to explore the implications of some of these choices for the development of each website, and identify the strengths and the challenges inherent in each approach

Introducing CareSearch

Funded by the Australian Government to...

Provide a one-stop shop of information and practical resources that serves the needs of all providing palliative care or affected by palliative care through allowing and supporting dynamic interactions between networks of people so that they can develop, share and apply their knowledge to improve palliative care in Australia ... supporting the development of evidence, disseminating information that will support the translation of this evidence into practice and prevent duplication of effort around Australia.



CareSearch, *palliative care knowledge network*

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Welcome to CareSearch. CareSearch is an online resource of palliative care information and evidence. All materials included in this website are reviewed for quality and relevance.

What's New...

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Quick Links

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What is
Palliative Care



For Patients
and Families



Finding
Services



Clinical
Practice



Finding
Evidence



Education



Research
Resources



Professional
Groups



About
CareSearch

Proudly linked to:



This site complies
with the [HONcode](#)
standard for
trustworthy health
information:
[verify here.](#)

CareSearch is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the National Palliative Care Program.

This page was created on 26 May 2008. This website was last updated on 16 August 2010

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About CareSearch

CareSearch is an online resource consolidating evidence based and quality information for various groups within the palliative care community. The website has been funded by the Australian Government as part of the National Palliative Care Program.

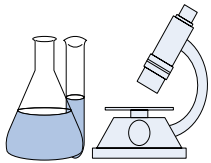
A series of principles have guided the development of the CareSearch project.

- > Evidence from development to application; the knowledge translation cycle
- > Multidisciplinary
- > Broad concept of palliative care community (those providing and those affected)
- > Granularity - many needs, many points of entry, many ways of communicating
- > Quality processes - evidence for activity not merely content
- > Currency - Updatable processes
- > Relationship between the print and web page so they can function independently as sources of information.

This project is a work in progress that reflects the changing nature of palliative care needs and practice and the underlying evidence and literature base that supports clinical care and service delivery.

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More than just a website



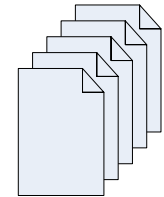
Research Data
Management System



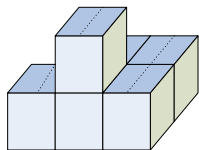
Finding evidence:
Brokered resources
& How to guides



Evaluated resources and links



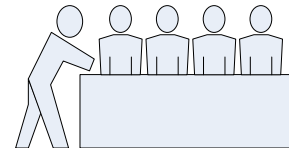
Content pages:
Topics for specific users



Databases and
information repositories



News and updates



Virtual team resources



Education Options:
Links and online

CareSearch: what makes us tick

Our framing philosophy is

***Promoting evidence-based palliative
care***

Everything else flows from this.

CareSearch: what makes us tick

SO....

- We select our content according to the “best available evidence” criterion
- We collect the “missing palliative care evidence”
- We help people find and access palliative care evidence
- We help people understand and use palliative care evidence
- We use evidence to improve usability and design of the site
- We use what is freely available online – and don’t duplicate – but also specifically write content if it is needed



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Finding Evidence

These pages are designed specifically for health professionals. They look at the role, nature and sources of evidence and the application of evidence in practice.

While patients and families may find helpful information here, more tailored links are available, such as [Topic Information](#) and [Finding Out More](#) in the Patients and Families pages.

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CareSearch – our *audience*

- Researchers in palliative care
 - Palliative care clinicians (*all the members of the multidisciplinary team employed specifically in palliative care*)
 - Non-specialist clinicians (*all the health care professionals who need to be able to care for palliative care patients*)
 - Palliative care patients
 - Caregivers – families – friends of patients
 - Policy makers, managers of services
 - General community

Overall – those ***providing*** care and those ***receiving*** care



CareSearch – our *voice*

- We use best available evidence about how to present online information
- Different voices for different audiences
- Different authors – but a team approach for consistency
- Style guides for each section of the site
- Predefined reading levels – different for the *Clinical Practice* pages and the *Patient and Family* pages

Main Menu - What is Palliative Care? - For Patients and Families - Finding Services - Clinical Practice - Finding Evidence - Education - Research Resources Professional Groups - About CareSearch - Contact CareSearch - Home	Professional Groups - Aboriginal Health Workers - Bereavement Counsellors - Dietitians - Doctors - GP Home > Patients Needing Palliative Care > Managing Symptoms - Opioids and Pain - Important Skills - Support for Carers - Managing Emergencies - If Patients and Families Aren't Coping - Specific Populations - Complex Problems > Making it Work in Your Practice > The Dying Patient > Following Up the Bereaved > Professional Development	Opioids and Pain Login Contact CareSearch Email Page: Search You are here: Professional Groups » GP Home » Managing Symptoms » Opioids and Pain Font size: A A A Print page: Opioids and Pain When to start an opioid Opioid analgesics are frequently needed by palliative care patients whose pain does not respond to simple analgesics, weak opioids, adequate doses of adjuvants, and other measures. Adjuvants should be continued. Persistent pain should be treated promptly. A high index of suspicion about the presence of pain is needed in agitated patients who are unable to verbalise their experiences, due to dementia, communication problems or reduced level of consciousness. <i>TIP - There is now evidence supporting the use of opioids for dyspnoea as safe and effective, both for patients with lung malignancies and those with other primary lung diseases, including COPD.</i> About specific opioids Morphine, oxycodone or hydromorphone are appropriate strong opioids to start. Fentanyl transdermal patches are an option for stable pain, but they are long-acting and take 12 – 24 hours to full effect, and are therefore often not suitable for initiating analgesia. Some analgesics are less suitable for use in palliative care, either because of their inappropriate pharmacokinetics, potential for drug interactions, or other problems. These include: > Pethidine > Dextropropoxyphene (Capadex, Digesic, Paradox, Doloxene) > Dextromoramide > Pentazocine.
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The GP pages were developed following a consultation – they told us they wanted “two click access” to information

Specific concerns of non-specialist palliative care providers were identified

Links take users who want to know more to deeper levels of information, and to the evidence that informs the pages

Information has been translated into three community languages.

CareSearch – our *content*

Challenges

- How to shape the content of this huge field – so that we and others can actually find stuff!
- Boundaries – deciding where palliative care begins and ends
- Covers many disciplines, many conditions and problems, many settings of care
- How to determine specifically what is and is not included – quality control, relevance, transparent processes

CareSearch – our *content*

Strategies

- First of all design your site ...Structure comes before content!
- The “Hub” concept – grouping together content for specific audiences (eg for GPs & nurses)
- Crosslinks between different sections and layering of content allow users to choose - they can either “go deep” or get a quick summary
- Transitions – give patients / families some warning about what will be covered

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For Patients and Families

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For Patients and Families

Palliative care will affect all of us at some stage in our lives whether as a patient, carer, family member, neighbour or friend. The sections below will take you to detailed information and resources.

About Palliative Care

What is palliative care and why is it important?

Living with Illness

Information on living with illness, and changes over time.

How to Care

Information on the practical things that can help daily life.

At the End

What happens when someone is nearing the end of life?

Bereavement, Grief, Loss

Information on how to manage after someone has died.

Groups with Specific Needs

Some groups have specific needs such as the aged or homeless.

Finding Out More

Learn more about how to search for quality information.

Do you need help now?

Contact numbers if you need help now.

This page was created on 26 May 2009 and is due for review in May 2011

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CareSearch – our *content*

- One stop shop:
CONTENT → RESOURCES → TOOLS ... are all linked
- We avoided the “disease by disease” approach – instead...
 - ***Clinical Practice*** pages: are structured around a list of symptoms used to routinely assess palliative care patients (the SAS Symptom Assessment Scale - like the ESAS)
 - Patient and Family*** pages: are structured around the experience of the disease trajectory
- National Advisory Group (NAG) helps make “big picture” decisions about structure and content

CareSearch – our *architecture*

Granular

Each page can stand alone

Connected

Each page sits within a logical set of content

Links to *other* relevant parts of the website are on each page

User-driven

Users can jump between pages, or in and out of the site to explore external links

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Clinical Practice

[Physical](#)[Psychological, Social, Spiritual](#)[Patient Considerations](#)[Professional Considerations](#)[Service Issues](#)[Specific Populations](#)

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Clinical Practice

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Clinical Practice

Palliative care as a specialist health field draws upon a body of evidence to support its practice. As a multidisciplinary field it uses research from different academic disciplines and research traditions. Some of this work comes from allied medical areas such as oncology or geriatrics. Other knowledge is contributed by disciplines such as psychology, social work and occupational therapy.

These pages are designed to support clinical practice by summarising the state of the evidence and by providing clinicians with access to relevant literature where possible. They are intended to be dynamic being modified as the evidence base evolves.

The pages have been developed following a pragmatic search of multiple literature databases for systematic reviews relevant to the clinical topic. From this basis, the key issues, limitations and contexts for practice have been summarised. Each page also provides links to sources of clinical guidance and ways to find out more.

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End-of-Life Care

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Delirium

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Delirium

Background
Delirium is defined as a condition of disturbed consciousness, with reduced ability to focus, sustain or shift attention. The DSM IV diagnostic criteria [1] for delirium require

- altered cognition or a perceptual disturbance (which is not due to dementia),
- symptoms develop over hours to days and tend to fluctuate during the course of the day, and
- evidence of an aetiological cause for the delirium.

PubMed Searches

Delirium

Free full-text only

Recent evidence

Everything

All citations

Recent evidence

Everything

Last 3 months

About these searches

Review collection

Delirium

Delirium may be

- hyperactive (presenting with agitation, hyperarousal, and restlessness), or
- hypoactive (presenting with drowsiness, lethargy and reduced levels of arousal), or
- a mixed pattern in which the symptoms fluctuate between hyperactive and hypoactive. [2]

Delirium is often reversible, although there is evidence that in some patients it may be associated with longer term cognitive problems. [3]

Delirium is extremely common in palliative care patients.[4] It becomes more frequent towards the end of life, and is associated with a worsening prognosis. [5] The diagnosis is often missed, or may be confused with depression or dementia. Hypoactive delirium in particular is under-diagnosed. [6] Nonetheless the importance of making the diagnosis is that delirium is a potentially treatable problem, and one which causes serious distress to patients and their families.

Much of the evidence about prognosis and treatment of delirium comes from the aged care and critical care literature. However the focus of care in these populations is different from that in palliative care, particularly in very advanced disease. [7] In palliative care patients delirium is frequently multifactorial. The underlying precipitant, though reversible in many instances, may be irreversible in advanced disease, or due to other factors the decision may be made not to pursue active investigation or intervention.

NCBI Resources | How to Go

PubMed.gov

U.S. National Library of Medicine
National Institutes of Health

Search: PubMed | RSS | Save search | Limits | Advanced search | Help

(confusion[mt] AND (advance care planning[mt] OR attitude to death[mt]) OR | Search | Clear

Create Settings | Summary: 20 per page, Sorted by: Recently Added

Results: 1 to 20 of 31

1. Prosopita M, Hsler LM. *Inf Psychogeriatr*. 2010 May;23(3):373-84. Epub 2010 Jan 21. Review. PMID: 20050453 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

2. Currow DC, Sheehy-James TM, Agar M, Plummer J, Rowett D, Clare P, Spry G, Hardy J. *Support Care Cancer*. 2009 Nov;29 (Epub ahead of print). PMID: 20019109 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher] [Related citations](#)

3. Motion analysis in delirium: a discrete approach in determining physical activity for the purpose of delirium motoric subtyping. Godfrey A, Conway R, Leonard M, Meagher D, O'Leary GM. *Meeting Proc*. 2010 Mar;202:161-16. Epub 2009 Nov 25. PMID: 19931600 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

4. A classification system for delirium subtyping with the use of a commercial mobility monitor. Godfrey A, Conway R, Leonard M, Meagher D, O'Leary G. *Gait Posture*. 2009 Aug;30(2):245-52. Epub 2009 Jun 17. PMID: 19338473 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

5. Is there a role for hydration at the end of life? Dale S, Del Padone E, Biviera E. *Ann Open Respir Palliat Care*. 2009 Mar;3(1):72-4. Review. PMID: 19345165 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

6. Treatment of delirium in supportive and palliative care. Gagnon PS. *Can Dis Support Palliat Care*. 2008 Mar;2(1):65-4. Review. PMID: 18485397 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

7. Defining management of people with advanced cancer and delirium by four sub-specialties. Agar M, Currow D, Plummer J, Chye R, Draper B. *Palliat Med*. 2008 Jul;22(5):633-40. PMID: 18102029 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE] [Related citations](#)

8. Terminal delirium: recommendations from bereaved families' experiences. Morita T, Azechi T, Benagay M, Inoue S, Kohara H, Matsubara T, Matsuo H, Namba M, Shiro T, Tani K, Uchitomi Y. *J Pain Symptom Manage*. 2007 Dec;34(5):579-85. Epub 2007 Jul 26. PMID: 17662072 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

Filter your results: All (31) Review (2) Free Full Text (2) [View Results](#)

1 free full-text article in PubMed Central: Methylphenidate hydrochloride improves cognitive function in J Psychiatry Neurosci. 2005

Find related data: Database: Select [Find items](#)

Search details: ["*confusion" (MeSH Term) AND ["advance care planning" (MeSH Term) OR "attitude to death" (MeSH Term) OR "mortality" (MeSH Term)] [Search](#) [See more...](#)

Recent activity: Set Off Clear [confusion\[mt\] AND \(advance care planning \[mt\] OR attitude to death - 37\)](#) [See more...](#)

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Review Collection: Delirium

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Review Collection: Delirium

19 reviews

2010
Hatherill S, Fisher AJ. *Delirium in children and adolescents: a systematic review of the literature*. J Psychosom Res. 2010 Apr;68(4):337-44. Epub 2010 Jan 12.

2009
Cole MG, Campi A, Belzile E, Zhong L. *Paradoxical delirium in older hospital patients: a systematic review of frequency and prognosis*. Age Ageing. 2009 Jan;38(1):19-26. Epub 2008 Nov 18.

Lorenz KA, Dy SM, Naem A, Walling AM, Sanati H, Smith P, Shanman R, Rath CP, Asch SM. *Quality measures for supportive cancer care: the Cancer Quality ASSIST Project*. J Pain Symptom Manage. 2009 Jun;37(6):943-64. Epub 2009 Apr 8.

Pertogiannis V, Stefanou E, Lixourouts C, Glogolos C, Rizos DV. *Atypical antipsychotics in the treatment of delirium*. Psychiatry Clin Neurosci. 2009 Oct;63(5):623-31. Epub 2009 Aug 10.

Seltz DP, Gill SS. *Neuroleptic malignant syndrome complicating antipsychotic treatment of delirium or agitation in medical and surgical patients: case reports and a review of the literature*. Psychosomatics. 2009 Jan-Feb;50(1):8-15.

2008
Bourne RS, Tahir TA, Borthwick M, Sampson EL. *Drug treatment of delirium: past, present and future*. J Psychosom Res. 2008 Sep;65(3):273-82.

Keeley P. *Delirium at the end of life*. Clin Evid (Online). 2007 Jun 1;2007, pii: 2405.

Leonard M, Agar M, Mason C, Lawlor P. *Delirium issues in palliative care settings*. J Psychosom Res. 2008 Sep;65(3):289-98.

O'Malley G, Leonard M, Meagher D, O'Keefe ST. *The delirium experience: a review*. J Psychosom Res. 2008 Sep;65(3):223-8.

CareSearch – our *navigation*

Multiple navigation strategies

- Double menu
- Search boxes
- Quick links
- Site map
- And of course – many people just use ...
Google ...!

CareSearch - *accessibility*

- Open to all
 - No password-protected areas apart from private forums and research databases
- Offline promotion
 - **Direct** - to professionals
 - **Brokered** - to patients and non-professionals
 - **Printed** resources – our own pages, other information
- Search engine optimisation
- WWW3C standards
- Multilingual and multimedia resources

CARESEARCH PAGE PROFILE: FINDING OUT MORE (CNIN FEB 2009)

It is not uncommon for patients and their families to approach the internet to find out more about their condition. This information seeking is not always controlled over what is happening.



Within the patients and carers pages is a section called 'Finding out more' which contains information on a number of issues that can help patients. It covers:

- where information can be found about **good information**
- **assessing the quality of information**

CLINICAL USES: FATIGUE (CNIN FEB 2009)

- Many patients suffer from fatigue which affects their capacity to cope with and participate in daily life.
- Is there any evidence to help in managing fatigue?

Fatigue is an extremely common problem amongst palliative care patients. It is often described as a constant tiredness that intensifies as the disease progresses.

Fatigue is one of the symptom pages included in the Clinical Practice Guidelines developed by the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand. The Fatigue page provides an overview of evidence relating to fatigue and what you can also find out more about fatigue by using some Finding out more.

- **Fatigue PubMed Search Topic:** Automatically runs a search of the literature for fatigue. You can run the search with a free evidence limit.
- **Review Collection Fatigue:** The CareSearch Review Collection contains a collection of systematic reviews relevant to fatigue. There are currently 10 reviews in this collection. New reviews are harvested from the literature.

EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE: LEVELS OF EVIDENCE (CNIN FEB 2009)

A level of evidence is used to describe the strength of the evidence. Evidence may be described as numbers, that is, Level I to Level V. Level I evidence would be regarded as Level I and an RCT as Level I evidence.

Levels of evidence are commonly used when developing evidence based practice. The Foundation clearly describes the levels of evidence being used.

Levels of evidence are decided based upon the characteristics of the study. For example, the NHMRC Levels of Evidence are five. The Royal Melbourne Centre for Evidence Based Medicine provides an overview of the Joanna Briggs Institute has developed evidence across five areas of consideration.

Different groups have developed different hierarchies and levels while the Oxford Centre for Evidence Based Medicine. The Joanna Briggs Institute has developed evidence across five areas of consideration.

Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council currently reviews all levels of evidence and is

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL? (CNIN FEB 2009)

Over the last twenty years there has been increasing interest in one type of research study design - randomised controlled trials (RCTs). Some researchers and policy makers see RCTs as the gold standard for developing research evidence as to whether an intervention such as a new drug or surgical technique is effective. When people talk about levels of evidence, systematic reviews and randomised controlled trials are generally regarded as the highest levels of evidence.

Basically an RCT is an experimental design that randomly allocates subjects in a study to an intervention or control group to take into account other variables. Subjects and clinicians normally don't know to which group they are allocated. Randomisation of allocation is an important way of reducing potential bias.

Good quality randomised controlled trials try to eliminate or balance between groups potential or actual confounders that could affect the outcome other than the intervention. Researchers will plan for and then report on aspects such as:

- Characteristics of the patients they were studying so that people can check that research question was relevant to the study group.
- Ensuring that control groups and the intervention groups have a similar composition at the start of the trial.
- Checking that the groups are similar at the end of the trial.
- Putting



CLINICAL USES: ADVANCE CARE PLANNING AND DECISIONS (CNIN JUNE 2009)



You are admitting a patient with Motor Neurone Disease. The patient is determined that he does not want care proposed such as antibiotics, PEG feeding and artificial ventilation. The patient is determined that he does not want care proposed such as antibiotics, PEG feeding and artificial ventilation. The patient is determined that he does not want care proposed such as antibiotics, PEG feeding and artificial ventilation.

There are many resources in CareSearch that can help you find out more about them, so that you can facilitate the patient's wishes.

Initially there is consumer information in the patient section that you can direct them to.

For yourself and any colleagues there is information on the evidence and issues. There is also information on the evidence and issues.

In the National Palliative Care Program pages, Planning and on the evidence and issues. There is also information on the evidence and issues.

There are also resources that can be accessed through the Choices Program, being implemented nationally.

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CARESEARCH PAGE PROFILE: CHILDREN AND PALLIATIVE CARE (CNIN JUNE 2009)

When someone is ill, or when someone has died, the whole family is affected. The special needs of children can sometimes be overlooked. The special needs of children can sometimes be overlooked. The special needs of children can sometimes be overlooked.



Ava's Rainbow

There are pages within CareSearch that have been specially designed for children and young people.

Information can be found in the communication section on the website that describe the differing levels of understanding of children and young people and at what age they can understand complex issues and at what age they can understand complex issues.

Something that is not always recognised is that children and young people are often looking after a family member, and have to juggle this with their own lives. There is information in the How to Care section that can help you find out more about them, so that you can facilitate the patient's wishes.

Following the illness and death of a family member or child, the Bereavement, Grief and Loss section is a page on the website that provides information and resources that may be of help. There is information and resources that may be of help. There is information and resources that may be of help.

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CARESEARCH PAGE PROFILE: INDIGENOUS RESOURCES (CNIN JUNE 2009)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a diverse group of people, made up of many different nations and language groups. Past policies have had very negative impacts on these people.

In 2006 the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was estimated to be 455,028 representing 2.3% of the total Australian population (ABS, 2008).

Indigenous health is an important policy issue. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are less likely to live to an old age than Australians, with higher disease rates for diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. The Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet provides a summary of Australian Indigenous health.

Indigenous Summary Page

There is information on the CareSearch website that can help you find out more about them, so that you can facilitate the patient's wishes.

Information can be found on the Indigenous page of the CareSearch website that can help you find out more about them, so that you can facilitate the patient's wishes.

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CLINICAL USES: GP INFORMATION NEEDS (CNIN JUNE 2009)

- You are working alongside a GP in the community, or are communicating from hospital about a patient's care needs at home.
- The patient has symptom management issues and wants to be cared for at home. What information and resources can the GP access to help in providing care?

Providing palliative care is one of the most significant roles that a GP fulfils when meeting the care needs of their patients and families. GPs care for many patients with life-limiting illnesses such as advanced heart or respiratory disease, end-stage renal failure or liver disease, progressive dementia, cancer, or degenerative neurological conditions. For most, this is a small but challenging part of their practice.

Staying in touch with changes in palliative care can be difficult for GPs given the diverse demands of a busy practice. The new GP pages look at the practical issues for GPs in providing care in the general practice setting. They include a number of specific pages that can assist the GP in managing symptoms and supporting the patient at home.

- **Opioids and Pain**
- **Important Skills**
- **Support for Carers**
- **Managing Emergencies**
- **Specific Populations**
- **If Patients and Families Aren't Coping**
- **Complex Problems**

Easy access

As the majority of GPs can go some time between looking after patients with palliative care needs, easy access to a resource that is available 24 hours a day is important. There is a quick link from the home page of CareSearch to the GP home pages - suggest they save it to their favourites and then put it as a shortcut on their desktop.

They can also print out pages from the website to give to patients and their families. 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



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CareSearch DVD's

Health Professionals



Volunteers: Palliative care volunteers speak about their role in a hospice. [Play](#) 



Aged Care: Nurses working in Aged Care speak of issues they face. [Play](#) 



Social Work: Social workers speak of working with palliative care clients. [Play](#) 



Rural: A nurse speaks of issues faced by those living in rural areas. [Play](#) 

Finding Evidence



Professor David Currow talks of the importance of evidence in palliative care. [Play](#) 

For Patients and Families



About palliative care: Palliative care helps those with an illness that cannot be cured by managing symptoms as well as providing emotional and spiritual support. [Play](#) 



Living with a terminal illness: There are many things to consider whether it be financial, emotional or practical matters. [Play](#) 



How to care: When someone is very ill at home, they need help and support to manage. [Play](#) 



Groups with specific needs: Death is a reality of life, but the circumstances can vary greatly as different groups have different needs. [Play](#) 



At the end: Many people have little or no prior experience of dying and death. As much as possible, people like to have choice at the end of life. [Play](#) 

CareSearch – our *quality assurance processes*

- Content map overviewed and approved by National Advisory Group
- Internal and external reviews of all content before uploading
- Review cycles – 2 years, but more frequent in rapidly changing clinical areas
- Research projects
- Evaluation (formative and summative) including useability studies

CareSearch – *maintaining currency*

- Updating content – the two year cycle requires dedicated staffing and resources
- Search boxes on each page which link to PubMed searches using the palliative care filter
 - Users can stay up to date with a single click
- Collection of systematic reviews – continually being added to
- News from the field ... *“What’s New”*

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> Breathing

> Constipation

– Laxatives

> Delirium

> Fatigue

> Nausea

> Pain

> Sleeping Problems

> End-of-Life Care

Psychological, Social, Spiritual

Constipation

Login | Contact CareSearch

Email Page: 

Search

You are here: Clinical Practice » Physical » Constipation

Font size:  A A A

Print page: 

Constipation

Constipation is a frequent complaint in the general community, and more common in palliative care patients. [1-2] Chronic constipation is one of the most frequent side effects of opioids, and occurs in 40 – 70% of patients treated for cancer pain with oral morphine. [3] However other causes of constipation should also be sought and addressed.

An assessment of constipation in the palliative context needs to address opioid induced bowel dysfunction. Other possible contributing factors include:

- > Medications – 5-HT3 antagonists, anticholinergics, iron, some antihypertensives
- > Decreased oral intake, alterations in diet
- > Metabolic abnormalities (eg. hypercalcaemia, uraemia, hypothyroidism, hypokalaemia, diabetes)
- > Decreased mobility, weakness
- > Obstruction
- > Neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis

PubMed Searches (Constipation)

Free full text only

[Strongest evidence](#)
[Everything](#)

All citations

[Strongest evidence](#)
[Everything](#)

[Last 3 months](#)

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You are here: [Finding Evidence](#) » [PubMed Topic Searches](#)

Font size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#) Print page: 

PubMed Topic Searches

Follow these links to run real-time PubMed searches. They give you a broad entry point into the relevant English, palliative care related literature. When you select a topic, different search options will be provided.

Patient problems

[Airway Obstruction](#)
[Anorexia](#)
[Anxiety](#)
[Appetite](#)
[Artificial Nutrition](#)
[Bereavement](#)
[Bowel Obstruction](#)
[Cachexia \(Weight Loss\)](#)
[Constipation](#)
[Cough](#)
[Delirium](#)
[Depression](#)
[Dysphagia](#)
[Dyspnoea](#)
[Existential Distress](#)
[Fatigue](#)
[Haemoptysis](#)
[Nausea](#)
[Pain](#)
[Prognosis](#)
[Respiratory Secretions](#)
[Sexuality](#)
[Sleeping Problems](#)
[Suffering](#)
[Vomiting](#)

Specific groups

[Aged](#)
[Aged Care Facilities](#)
[Carers \(all\)](#)
[Carers \(young\)](#)
[Dementia](#)
[Disabled](#)
[Homeless](#)
[Indigenous Health](#)
[Multicultural](#)
[Paediatrics](#)
[Rural & Remote Health](#)

Health Professionals

[General Practitioners](#)

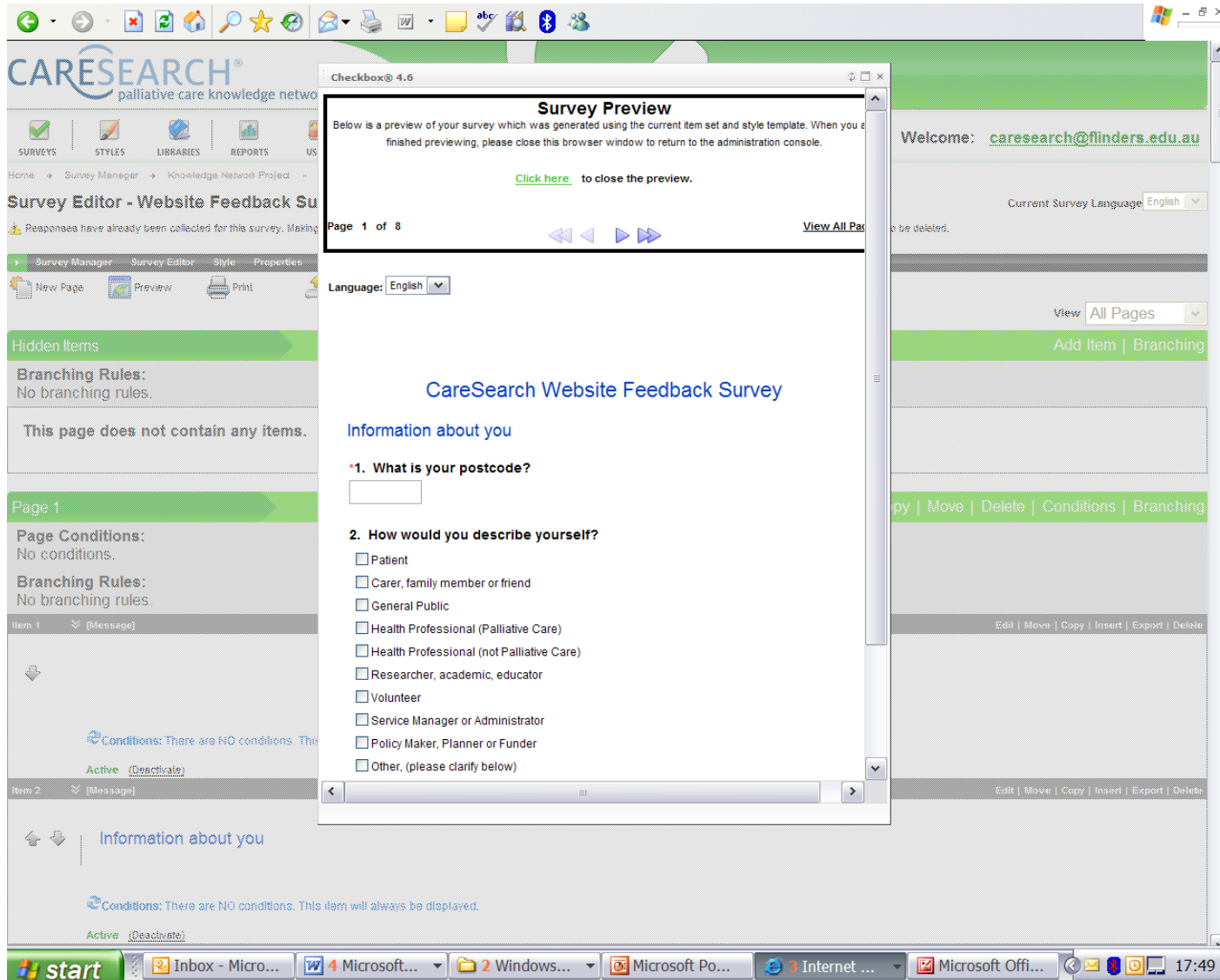
Issues relating to care & treatment

[Advance Care Planning](#)
[Advance Directives](#)
[Audit](#)
[Complementary Therapies](#)
[Dignity](#)
[Euthanasia](#)
[Family Distress](#)
[Models of Service Delivery](#)
[Multi-disciplinary Teams](#)
[Palliative Sedation](#)
[Patient Education](#)
[Professional Burnout](#)
[Quality of Life](#)
[Resuscitation Orders](#)
[Social Support](#)
[Spirituality](#)
[Terminal Care](#)
[Volunteering](#)

CareSearch – *our functionalities*

- Research Data Management System
- Databases
- Palliative care filter – which drives the PubMed topic searches and can also be used independently
- Professional Connect

... and more coming



The Research Data Management System

Supports multisite clinical trials, audits, and palliative care research

Some of the things we decided *not* to do

- Online chat
 - Duty of care, follow up, provision of clinical advice online
 - Staffing of the website not adequate to support this function
 - Provide a formulary or make direct clinical recommendations
 - Duplication of existing resources
 - Medicolegal concerns
 - Different local practices and clinical settings of care
 - Evidence gaps
- **Alternative:** we provide links to online guidelines or other high quality resources
- “Disease by disease” approach to content
 - Unable to be “encyclopaedic”

Some of the things that have worked well...

- Specifically building sections of the site for GPs, and for patients and families
- The online newsletter for nurses – focuses on “how to use CareSearch”
- Intensively promoting the use of the search capacity by clinicians, students, researchers (“Caresearching...”)
- Collecting web-based educational resources
- The branding and identifiability of the site (credible – reliable – accessible information)

So – how are we doing?

Usage Patterns

Item	June 2006	May 2009
<i>Web Metrics</i>		
Visits	4,991	38,270
Page views	35,526	199,252
Hits	97,926	2,052,558
<i>RDMS</i>		
No of users	2	201
No of studies	1	103

What lies ahead: knowledge translation research areas

- Filters: Palliative care, heart failure
- Online communication: eHealth literacy, consumer search, readability
- ICT evaluation: Formative, summative
- Translational tools: Carer toolkit,
- Online learning

CareSearch would like to thank the many people who contribute their time and expertise to the project including members of the National Advisory Group and the Knowledge Network Management Group.

CareSearch is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the National Palliative Care Program.

www.caresearch.com.au

And I would personally like to thank the fantastic CareSearch team, especially Jennifer Tieman

www.caresearch.com.au

The Knowledge Challenge

The application of what we know already will have a bigger impact on health and disease than any drug or technology likely to be introduced in the next decade

Muir Gray 2005

And now...

... its over to the Canadians!

