FROM THE WEBSITE

Finding and using evidence
As part of the content review process, the Finding Evidence section has been revised. The section still retains the set of evidence tools developed as part of the CareSearch project:

> The Palliative Care PubMed Searches are efficient ways of accessing the palliative care literature base quickly. Other sets of PubMed searches are provided for Heart Failure, Lung Cancer, Residential Aged Care and Dementia.

> The CareSearch Review Collection contains systematic reviews on a selection of key topics relevant to palliative care.

NBN Project
CareSearch is working with Flinders University on one of the nine NBN telehealth projects. The Flinders University project deals with Telehealth in the Home; Aged and Palliative Care in SA.

CareSearch Review Collection
Seventeen systematic reviews were added to the Review Collection in June 2013. They included:

> Gomes B, Calanzani N, Curiale V, McCrone P, Higginson IJ. Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of home palliative care services for adults with advanced illness and their caregivers. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2013 Jun 6;6:CD007760. This review looked at the effect of home palliative care services for adult patients with advanced illness and their family caregivers. Twenty three studies (16 RCTs, 6 of high quality), including 37,561 participants and 4042 family caregivers were included. The results show reliable evidence that home palliative care increases the chance of dying at home and reduces symptom burden in particular for patients with cancer, without impacting on caregiver grief.

> Clarke G, Harrison K, Holland A, Kuhn I, Barclay S. How are treatment decisions made about artificial nutrition for individuals at risk of lacking capacity? A systematic literature review. PLoS One. 2013 Apr 16;8(4):e61475. This review looked at how treatment decisions are made when patients are at risk of lacking capacity. The authors noted that when individuals lack mental capacity, decisions about artificial nutrition must be made on their behalf. Dynamic interactive factors, such as protecting right to life, not unneccessarily prolonging suffering, and individual preferences, need to be addressed and balanced.

> Morris S, Wilmot A, Hill M, Ockenden N, Payne S. A narrative literature review of the contribution of volunteers in end-of-life care services. Palliat Med. 2013 May;27(5):428-36. This narrative review explores the recent literature on end-of-life care volunteering and reflects upon the issues pertinent to current organisational challenges and opportunities. The themes identified were individual volunteer factors (motivation, characteristics of volunteers, stress and coping, role boundaries and value) and organisational factors (recruiting for diversity, support and training and volunteers’ place in the system).

> Reid J, Hughes CM, Murray LJ, Parsons C, Cantwell MM. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for the treatment of cancer cachexia: a systematic review. Palliat Med. 2013 Apr;27(4):295-303. This review looked at the literature on the use of NSAIDs for the treatment of cachexia in advanced cancer patients. Four studies were included. The authors noted, that while these studies provided some evidence of positive therapeutic effect on quality of life, performance status, inflammatory markers, weight gain and survival, there was insufficient evidence demonstrated for their widespread use in practice.

CareSearch Grey Literature
This dataset includes abstracts of Australian ‘grey’ literature relevant to palliative care. The following poster abstracts are from the International Society of Advance Care Planning and End of Life Care conference held in 2013.

> Lim, Ivan
Survey of attitudes of general practitioners and patients about discussing resuscitation status

> Thomas, Keri; Stobbart Rowlands, Maggie; Giles, Lucy; Thorn, Mandy; Bloomer, Carrie
Improving the routine uptake of advance care planning (ACP) discussions in many settings as part of the GSF training programmes in end of life care

> Appleton, Wendy
Impact of an advanced care planning clinic on patients of a regional care coordination service

To access these abstracts or other items from the CareSearch Grey Literature, enter the author’s name, the abstract title, or search terms that describe your interest.
BEHIND THE SCENES

Running a project like CareSearch relies on a diverse and well qualified project team. Many users may not be aware of the people behind CareSearch. This month we introduce:

Natasha Tsoupas Bachelor of Business Management, Marketing

After completing my university degree I worked in a couple of advertising agencies in Adelaide as a Media Assistant and Project Manager. I learnt many valuable skills in these two positions which allowed me to successfully gain employment with CareSearch in late 2007. I came on board right at the beginning of the project as the Marketing Coordinator. My main role was to select and work with a designer to develop branding and the new website for CareSearch, palliative care knowledge network, as well as develop a suite of printed materials to promote this resource across Australia. In addition to the above my responsibilities also included organising involvement with conferences, liaising with other organisations regarding CareSearch activities, filling orders, maintaining the brand identity with the development of new hubs, ensuring the monthly newsletters were written and presented well, writing submissions to external newsletters, preparing for events and launches and may other day to day things.

In 2011, I went on maternity leave and have since returned in 2012 on a part time basis working only two days a week alongside Erin Koop. My responsibilities are still the same as before although now Erin and I share the work load. Working for CareSearch has been an amazing and rewarding experience. Not only have I broadened my skills but I work with a wonderful and diverse team of people.

WHAT’S NEW IN THE PALLIATIVE CARE COMMUNITY?

Expansion of Carer Respite Program
The National Respite for Carers Program has been extended providing additional funding for services to frail aged people in regions where limited or no existing services were currently available. Respite services are delivered in a number of settings, including day respite in community centres, in-home respite, overnight respite cottages and community outings.

Andrew Fisher Applied Policy Institute for Ageing
The Department of Health and Ageing is seeking applications from suitably experienced, established research organisations to provide the required services of the Andrew Fisher Applied Policy Institute for Ageing (the Institute). The Institute will provide evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on issues across a range of age-related policy fields such as demographic change, infrastructure and support for an ageing world. The Institute will assist the Government in identifying and responding to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing and maximise the opportunities of people as they age to continue to contribute to their families, communities and the economy.

Medicare Locals website
A new government website gives Australians information about important health services being provided by Medicare Locals in their local communities.

Caring for children with life-limiting conditions
This new learning module from PCC4U helps health professionals and students develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide care across various health care settings to children with life-limiting conditions and their families.

The Prague Charter
The Prague Charter is a petition calling on all governments across the world to recognise palliative care as a human right. It was officially launched at the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) Congress in Prague in May 2013.

Better Care for Australians with Dementia
A number of projects have received funding through the second round of the Government’s Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund.
PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Many services and organisations are making use of the CareSearch promotional materials and have ordered factsheets or brochures for staff, patients and for their families. Materials can also be ordered for education and training activities. There is also a suite of resources related to Residential Aged Care Facilities that palliative care staff may want to make available to their aged care colleagues.

You can view all the CareSearch promotional resources on the website and download an order form. All enquiries regarding our promotional materials can be directed to caresearch@flinders.edu.au.

Don’t forget you can follow what is happening on Twitter.

If you are faxing promotional orders to us, please make sure you use our new fax number.

> Facsimile: (08) 7221 8238

August 2013 Newsletter

The next newsletter will be circulated on the first Monday in August 2013. If you have any items you would like to have considered for inclusion, please send details one week prior to the circulation date to caresearch@flinders.edu.au.

CONFERENCES

A number of major national conferences will be held in the next six months. They include:

Conference: Inaugural National Palliative Care Research Colloquium
Date: July 18-19 2013
Location: Melbourne, Victoria

Conference: Cancer Nurses Society of Australia 16th Winter Congress
Date: July 25-27 2013
Location: Brisbane, Queensland

Conference: 12th Australian Palliative Care Conference
Date: September 3-6 2013
Location: Canberra, ACT

Conference: COSA’s 40th Annual Scientific Meeting
Date: November 12-14 2013
Location: Adelaide, South Australia

You can continue to find information on conferences on the Conferences Page in the Education section of CareSearch.