FROM THE WEBSITE

Hub reviews
We are currently reviewing the GP Hub and the Nurses Hub. These two hubs provide a valuable resource to colleagues working in primary care and for nurses working in any setting of care. If you have any suggestions for new content or want to make sure we know about a resource that you think would be useful, send us an email: caresearch@flinders.edu.au.

CareSearch usage
2013 saw unprecedented levels of use of the CareSearch website. Over the year there were 914,962 hits and 4,827,796 page views.

CareSearch newsletters
> The January edition of the nurses[HUB]news is now available. Find out about:
  - Case Study: Complementary Therapies
  - Pharmacy update: Haloperidol
  - Service Profile: Yorke Peninsula Palliative Care, South Australia, and
  - Project Summary: Telehealth in the home – Aged and palliative care in SA
> The January edition of the Allied Health Hub news is available.

CareSearch Review Collection
Several systematic reviews were added to the Review Collection in December 2013. They included:

This review aims to establish current evidence for the effectiveness of community-based interventions to encourage people to consider, and to discuss with those closest to them, their preferences for end-of-life care or what they wish to happen after their death. Five studies, described within seven journal articles and one book chapter, were included in the review. The authors noted that despite its importance in practice and for policy, there is currently very limited research evidence regarding the effectiveness of different interventions to encourage people who are currently well to consider and discuss their end-of-life preferences with the people closest to them.


The purpose of this study was to review evidence available on the efficacy of interventions used in the management of fatigue and/or unintentional weight loss in adults with advanced progressive illness held within Cochrane reviews. Twenty-seven systematic reviews (302 studies with 31,833 participants) were included in the overview. The authors noted a lack of robust evidence for interventions to manage fatigue and/or unintentional weight loss in the advanced stage of progressive illnesses, but saw some insight into possibly beneficial interventions such as exercise, some pharmacological treatments and support for self-management.


This review looked at commonly used terms such as “supportive care,” “best supportive care,” “palliative care,” and “hospice care” in the published oncology literature. The authors noted that common concepts for all three terms were symptom control and quality-of-life for patients with life-limiting illness. Supportive care appeared to focus more on patients on active treatment compared to other categories. Hospice care appeared to have a greater focus on volunteers, bereavement care and community care. The authors developed a preliminary conceptual framework unifying these terms along the continuum of care to help build terminology consensus.

This review addressed terminology and definitional issues relating to sedation at the end of life over time. The authors noted that that terminology has evolved from simple to complex terms with definitions varying in length, comprising different aspects of sedation such as indications for use, pharmacology, patient symptomatology, target population, time of initiation, and ethical considerations, in combinations of a minimum of two or more of these aspects.


This review looked at barriers and facilitators that could affect adult cancer pain assessment and management within a comprehensive framework of patient care. Seventy met the inclusion criteria, reporting 65 studies with 48 patient, 19 caregiver, and 21 healthcare provider samples. Findings suggest that integrating patient/family education within improved communication, individualising care, using more non-pharmacological strategies, empowering patients/families to self-manage pain, and reorganising multidisciplinary roles around patient-centred care and outcomes may be helpful.

Seven systematic reviews were added to the Review Collection in January 2014. They included:


Fentanyl is already used to treat or breakthrough cancer pain. This review looked at the current evidence for the use of fentanyl for the relief of breathlessness. Thirteen studies met the inclusion criteria for this review. The authors noted that while descriptive studies show promising results for the use of fentanyl for the relief of breathlessness, efficacy trials are lacking.


Childhood cancer can cause great suffering for patients and their families. Spirituality may be one coping strategy used to minimise possible damage. This review looked at the influence of spirituality in childhood cancer care, involving biopsychosocial aspects of the child, the family, and the healthcare team facing the disease. Twenty articles met the eligibility criteria. The authors noted that the relationship between spirituality and health has lately become a subject of growing interest among researchers, as a positive influence of spirituality in peoples’ welfare was noted.


This review examined the main methodological challenges and limitations to developing and evaluating palliative and end-of-life care services and requirements to further this field of research via meta-synthesis. Twenty-seven systematic reviews were included. The main methodological challenges identified were: implementation as a continuum, active precise recruitment, addressing randomisation and economic evaluation beyond cost savings.

CareSearch Grey Literature

This dataset includes abstracts of Australian ‘grey’ literature relevant to palliative care. They provide access to work in progress, areas of reflection and development, as well as work that may not be published in traditional avenues. The following three abstracts are from the current Grief Matters Journal.

Robert-Hendren, Dominique; Lennings, C. J.; Woods, Damith
The implications for mental health professionals when confronted with the perplexity of complicated grief

Eyers, Kerrie
Grief, complicated grief, depression – And the DSM-5

Hall, Christopher
Bereavement and depression: Practice issues for the bereavement clinician

To access these abstracts or other items, go to the Simple Searching page of the CareSearch Grey literature database and enter the author’s name, the abstract title, or search terms that describe your interest.
CARESEARCH RESEARCH PROJECTS

CareSearch has led or been involved with a wide range of research projects over the last three years, covering a diverse range of topics from telehealth or carer attitudes to knowledge use and bibliometrics. This has enabled us to support innovations for use within the website, create new knowledge around palliative care, and contribute expertise to other research groups. Each month we will provide a brief overview of one of our research studies and its relationship to the project.

Knowledge Exchange: Residential Aged Care

Funding Source:
Flinders University Knowledge Exchange Grant from the Southern Knowledge Transfer Partnership Office

Project aim(s)
> To facilitate knowledge exchange between a palliative care website and link nurses from the Southern Adelaide region
> To understand the barriers to knowledge translation
> To look at what is feasible in how evidence is communicated and utilised

Study overview
The study was conducted between March 2011 and June 2012. A mixed methods study was undertaken. Ethics approval was received in relation to the project (Project Number 5159) from the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee. The project was supported by an advisory group comprising the Director of SAPS (Community Leader), the SAPS Triage Nurse (facilitator of the Link nurse group) and an aged care consultant. CareSearch staff (Deb Rawlings, Erin Koop and Gail Dooley) assisted in study design, clinical content, marketing and administration. Education sessions were provided, a newsletter was designed and created, and resource kits were developed as suggested by the group. The study identified issues in communicating and engaging with the aged care workforce. While CareSearch is an online resource, aged care nurses often have limited computer access for their workforce and so paper resources may also be required. This project helped to inform the development of the Residential Aged Care (RAC) Hub on the CareSearch website. A paper has been submitted for publication. Information on the project and resources developed can be found on the ‘Working Together to Improve Care’ page on the website www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/2253/Default.aspx.

Further information:
Deb Rawlings, Project Lead
deborah.rawlings@flinders.edu.au

WHAT’S NEW IN THE PALLIATIVE CARE COMMUNITY?

Global Atlas of Palliative Care
The World Health Organization and the Worldwide Palliative Care Alliance have published Global Atlas of Palliative Care at the end of life. This resource attempts to quantify the need for and availability of palliative care worldwide.

Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship and Support Scheme
Scholarship applications to undertake continuing professional education activities and short courses will open 3 March 2014.

2014-15 Pre budget submission
Palliative Care Australia has released a pre-budget submission outlining ten areas of palliative care needs.

Medical Workforce 2012
The supply of employed medical practitioners in Australia increased from 323.2 to 355.6 full-time equivalent practitioners per 100,000 population between 2008 and 2012, which reflected a 16.4% rise in employed practitioner numbers. The Medical Workforce 2012 survey also showed that women made up 37.9% of practitioners in 2012 compared with 34.9% in 2008.

Review and evaluation of the National Pain Strategy
Pain Australia is seeking participation in a review and evaluation of progress being made to implement the National Pain Strategy and provide evidence-based care to patients with severe pain conditions.

Free palliative care workshops in Tasmania
People living in Tasmania are invited to register for the first round of palliative care workshops to be offered across the state, starting with Hobart, Launceston and Burnie in February. The half-day sessions are designed to familiarise participants with the COMPAC guidelines and provide the tools for participants to translate the guidelines into their own settings. Delivery of the workshops will be through two streams: professional and volunteer.
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. A new set of allied health resources are available, including:

> Allied Health and Palliative Care (Fact sheet)
> CareSearch Allied Health Hub (Fact sheet)
> CareSearch Allied Health Hub: FAQs (Fact sheet)
> Using CareSearch (Fact sheet)
> Allied Health Poster (A3 Poster)
> Allied Health Order Form

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

EDUCATION OPTIONS

There are a range of education options being promoted through CareSearch in the Education section, including conferences, short courses and community events. You can also explore web-based learning or complete one of the CareSearch My Learning modules:

> My Learning: Module One: Finding Evidence Part 1, (Looking for Clinical Information)
> Web Demonstration Module One
> My Learning: Module Two: Finding Evidence Part 2, (Looking for Clinical Information)
> Web Demonstration Module Two
> My Learning: Module Three: Searching the Web
> My Learning: Module Four: Residential Aged Care
> My Learning: Module Five: Dementia

March 2014 Newsletter

The next newsletter will be circulated on the first Monday in March 2014. 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.