An Australian Knowledge Network for Palliative Care

Professor David Currow
Department of Palliative and Supportive Services
Flinders University
1. The Project

Background and specified outcomes
1.1 Purpose of Project

“To scope the development of a Knowledge Network for palliative care in Australia. It is envisaged that the Knowledge Network will be multi-phased, incorporating a number of discrete components.”
1.2 What is meant by a Knowledge Network?

- Repository of resources
- Vehicle to link practitioners
- Mechanism to integrate and support various existing facilities and resources
- Support the development of communities of practice
- One stop shop
1.3 What is to be produced by the project

- Conceptual model of a Knowledge Network for palliative care in Australia including components and functions; stakeholders and partners; governance and ownership.

- Business plan identifying the resources needed; potential partners; implementation process; IT issues; and marketing and promotional strategies.
2. The Issues

Key framing factors
2.1 For whom are we designing the network?

- The palliative care community?
- Practitioners?
- Where do carers, patients and the community sit in the network?
- Are there special needs groups e.g. rural and remote, multicultural, indigenous, MND, paediatric?
2.2 What is the purpose of the network?

- To improve care of the patient?
- To bring about clinical change?
- To prevent isolation and create linkages?
- To be a repository of resources?
- To develop communities of practice?
- To be a one-stop shop for everyone?
2.3 What should be on the network?

- Clinical resources?
- Community resources?
- Research resources?
- Service resources?
- Education resources?
- Communication networks and facilities to encourage interaction?
2.4 How should we link to what is currently available?

- How do we make use of the resources currently available in Australia?
- What relationship should CareSearch have to the network?
- How do we organise relationships with other groups and facilities?
2.5 What are the barriers?

- Is there a need?
- “Silo” mentality
- Duplicating existing resources
- Insufficient resources and skill level
- Too expensive
- Trying to do too much
3. The Process

How we are investigating the concepts
3.1 Who is investigating the concepts

- Role of the palliative care community
- Role of Knowledge Network Management Group
- Role of local project group
- Role of experts and specialist consultants
3.2 Membership of the Knowledge Network Management Group

- Representative of CareSearch project: L. Kristjanson
- Representative of ACEBCP: P. Philips
- Representative of Palliative Care Inter-Governmental Forum: S. Hanson
- Representatives from Academic institutions: P. Martin, H. Buchanan
- Departmental representative: R. Evans
- PCA Representative:
- IT Expertise: G. Doherty
- Indigenous Needs:
- Consumer Health Forum:
- Carers Australia:
3.3 Steps in the process

- Investigating concept issues
- Determining the final concept(s)
- Analysing the IT, financial, governance, legal, marketing, partnership implications of the final concept(s)
- Communicating with stakeholders
- Developing the business plan
3.4 The role of communication

- Importance of communicating and developing relationships with all who may be involved with, affected by, or use the Knowledge network

- Communication strategies being used:
  - Webpages in CareSearch;
  - Project newsletters;
  - Promotions within existing newsletters;
  - Conference presentations;
  - Knowledge Network tour.
3.5 How we are investigating concept options

- Needs survey
- Literature review
- Website reviews
- Identifying Australian sites
- Feedback from the palliative community
- Communications strategy
3.6 Analysing the concept option

- Knowledge Network Management Group to determine the final concept option
- Specialist advice from various groups will be sought on the implications of the final concept option
3.7 The Business Plan

- A document that will allow a decision about a Knowledge Network

- To cover concept framework and content; resource needs; legal and governance issues; relationships and linkages; IT status; marketing and promotional needs; sustainability proposals; and evaluation
3.8 How to get involved

- Get project updates at the CareSearch website at www.caresearch.com.au
- Join the email list for newsletters or send comments and ideas to Jennifer.Tieman@rgh.sa.gov.au
- Speak to someone on the Knowledge Network Management Group
- Complete a needs survey for the Knowledge Network at www.caresearch.com.au