Study Title: Spaced Education in the Specialist Palliative Care Setting: Exploring its potential to improve pain management.

Brief description of the study: Pain is almost universally experienced by people cared for by specialist palliative care nurses. Effective pain management is a complex process founded on robust assessment, intervention and reassessment. Yet, there is often little documented evidence of a comprehensive pain assessment having been routinely undertaken for palliative care patients who report having pain. Nurses’ pain assessment capabilities are one of many factors that contribute to sub-optimal pain management. Translating existing evidence into practice is challenging and requires consideration of a range of targeted strategies, including educational interventions. Spaced Education is a novel form of on-line learning that has been demonstrated to increase knowledge, and retention of new knowledge, whilst demonstrating a capacity to change entrenched clinical practice.

Aim: The primary aim of this study is to increase specialist palliative care nurses’ complex pain assessment and management capabilities through ‘Spaced Education’.

Objectives: To determine the impact of Spaced Education on: i) specialist palliative care nurses’ pain knowledge, attitudes and clinical behaviours; ii) the level and quality of nurses’ pain assessment and reassessment documentation; iii) on patients’ reports of pain and iv) explore the feasibility of using ‘Spaced Education’ in the specialist palliative care setting; and iv) the sample size needed to power a larger multi-site study.

Data collection: Survey and chart audit and patient reported pain scores will be collected at four points in time: Time 1 (Baseline): Immediately prior to the intervention commencing; Time 2: Immediately following the completion of the intervention; Time 3: 8 weeks after the completion of intervention; and Time 4: 16 weeks after the completion of intervention.

Study Methodology: (Please mark with an x which type of study methodology)

- Epidemiology
- Health Services / Health Economics / Quality Improvement
- Qualitative, Observational or Descriptive
- Mixed Method
- Systematic Review
- Intervention: RCT
- Intervention: Comparative or cohort study

Project details:

Funding source (Optional): This project was funded by the Curran Foundation and a St Vincent's Clinic Multidisciplinary Research Grant.

Has the study received ethics approval? X Yes No Not applicable

Project starting date: October, 2011
**Project completion date:** In progress

**Multi site:**
- **X** Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**RESEARCHERS**

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**Associated publications / reports:**

**Oral Presentations**


**Poster Presentations**


**Topics (Admin only)**
- Knowledge translation, Pain and it's management, Palliative nursing