FROM THE WEBSITE

Reflecting on 2017
This is the last newsletter for 2017 and it has been a very busy and successful year. We refreshed the look of CareSearch at the start of 2017 and released new pages to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander care. We repeated the Dying2Learn MOOC in 2017 and over 1,900 people joined in the conversation. In May, we launched palliAGED to support palliative care in aged care settings and for older people through access to the evidence for practice. We updated the resources in the Information for Nurses section and the Information for Allied Health section and also produced two new My Learning modules (New to Palliative Care and Allied Health). In September we were busy at the PCA conference and were delighted to learn we won the 2017 Innovation in Palliative Care Award for the Dying2Learn Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) at the conference dinner. Finally we have also moved to Flinders University main campus. We would also like to acknowledge that the work of 2017 was only possible because of the support and contributions of people working within the palliative care community.

CareSearch Blogs
Three blogs were posted during November 2017:

- **Reflections of the ‘Repat’**
  A guest blog post by Tony Lawson, Executive Officer, Daw House Hospice Foundation

- **Reflections on Daw House**
  A guest blog post by Kate Swetenham, Service Director, Southern Adelaide Palliative Services, SA Health

- **Learning and vulnerability in end-of-life communication**
  A guest blog post by Kim Devery, Lead of End-of-Life Essentials, Senior Lecturer and Head of Teaching Section, Palliative Care, Flinders University.

Share your Research Study
Did you receive a grant in 2017? Have you started a new study? If so, we would invite you to provide details for the Research Studies Register. The Register is a database of Australian research projects and studies in palliative care. It provides a means of sharing information, developing linkages, preventing duplication and promoting awareness of current research activities. You can filter the research projects by investigator, by study methodology or by topic. Follow this link to complete the Research Studies Proforma. If you have any queries email us: caresearch@flinders.edu.au.
MOOC 2018
Is death and dying changing in the 21st century? Is how we think about death changing? The Dying2Lean MOOC will challenge you to:

- Think about the language we use when we talk about dying
- Learn about how and what people die from now
- Find out how art, music, and media have shaped our ideas on death
- Discover what happens in the digital world when we die.

You can register for details on the MOOC which will be run again in May 2018. In the meantime you can check out some of the resources developed from the 2016 and 2017 MOOCS on the Sharing Dying2Learn page or join the conversation @Dying2Learn twitter.

CareSearch Review Collection
28 systematic reviews were added to the CareSearch Review Collection in November. They included:

  This study looked at the available palliative care-related smartphone applications for clinicians. Forty-six palliative care applications targeting clinicians were identified. The apps addressed clinical guidelines, advance care planning, training materials in palliative care and pharmaceutical tools as well as being platforms for distributing current palliative care news, articles, and opinions. The authors noted that there has been a rapid proliferation in the number of apps in recent years but it is not clear how palliative care apps are shaping clinical practice, patient referrals to hospice, and palliative care or patient/family outcomes.

  The aim of this narrative review was to provide a clinically oriented guide to the management of delirium in adult patients in palliative care settings following a systematic literature search. The author noted that depending on its precipitating factors, a delirium episode is often reversible, especially in the earlier stages of a life-threatening illness. The role of non-pharmacological strategies for the management of delirium was also discussed.

This review assessed the role of tapentadol given at medium-high doses in opioid-tolerant patients for cancer pain management in place of step-3 analgesics. Six studies and one secondary analysis were included in the review. The author indicated that Tapentadol, when used at ≥60 mg of oral morphine equivalents in opioid-tolerant patients with cancer pain, or passing from step-2 doses to ≥60 mg of oral morphine equivalents, was well tolerated and effective and could be considered as a flexible drug to be used for the management of moderate-to-severe cancer pain. Studies of tapentadol given at doses equivalent to step-3 level had some weaknesses.


This review aims looked at the barriers and enablers for patients with lung cancer participating in physical activity. Twenty-six studies were included. Barriers included patient-level factors (physical capability, symptoms, comorbidities, previous sedentary lifestyle, psychological influences, perceived relevance), HCP factors (time/knowledge to deliver information) and environmental factors (access to services, resources, timing relative to treatment). Enablers included anticipated benefits, opportunity for behaviour change and influences from HCPs and carers.


This study provided a narrative overview of the literature on dignity therapy. Thirty-nine publications were included and findings were grouped into the following areas: Efficacy; Feasibility with different study populations; Web-assisted delivery; Impact on families; Cultural studies; Case studies; Themes found in documents; Clinical perspectives; and Implementation studies. The authors concluded that while dignity therapy is well accepted in most cases, it may not always be effective, therapeutically valid, or practical, and may cause family or cultural frictions. They recommend that clinicians take into consideration each person’s unique circumstances in relation to the current literature before undertaking dignity therapy.
CareSearch Research Studies Register

This database provides a register of Australian research projects and studies in palliative care. Below are some of the studies that were added during 2017:

- **Enhancing community knowledge and engagement with law at the end of life** (72kb pdf)
  Professor Ben White. Professor Lindy Wilmott, Professor Jill Wilson and Associate Professor Cheryl Tilse

- **Pre-existing risk factors for in-hospital death among older patients could be used to initiate end-of-life discussions rather than Rapid Response System calls: A case-control study.**
  Dr Magnolia Cardona-Morrell, Ms Amanda Chapman, Dr Robin M Turner, Miss Ebony T Lewis and Dr Blanca Gallego-Luxan

- **So many questions**
  Stuart Ekberg, Patsy Yates, Prof Susan Danby, Anthony Herbert and Natalie Bradford

To find more research studies go to the [Research Studies Register](#). If you would like to submit a study, please complete the [registration form](#).

**WHAT’S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY?**

**Trends in Indigenous mortality and life expectancy 2001-2015**

This AIHW report examines [Indigenous mortality and life expectancy](#) during the period 2001 to 2015, based on evidence from the Enhanced Mortality Database. The study observed increases in life expectancy during the study period for both Indigenous males and females across most jurisdictions. Life expectancy however increased faster among non-Indigenous than among Indigenous males and females. As a result, there was little change in the life expectancy gap.

**Caring for Cognitive Impairment**

An updated campaign website has been released by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. The [Caring for Cognitive Impairment](#) campaign is about providing better outcomes and experiences for patients with cognitive impairment in hospitals, and for their loved ones and staff who care for them. The campaign website has a wealth of information, tools, stories and resources aimed at those working in hospitals caring for people with cognitive impairment. The website will also help hospitals prepare for the new cognitive impairment items in the [National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (second edition)](#).
New cancer data website
Cancer Australia has launched Australia’s first interactive website of national data across the continuum of cancer control - the National Cancer Control Indicators (NCCI) - which represents a significant advance in how population based cancer data in Australia is consolidated and presented. NCCI is a unique, dynamic national resource that forms a bridge between information and outcomes, enabling users to see interconnections and relationships across cancer control, and to monitor trends and benchmark internationally.

PCOC Evidence Hub (For consumers)
PCOC information indicates that palliative care is highly effective for the majority of people. A new Evidence Hub for patients. Carers, families and the general public showcases the evidence and summarise the effectiveness of palliative care in Australia.

GRIM and MORT books (deaths)
The AIHW has released two sets of data about death in Australia. The GRIM book presents age and sex-specific counts and rates by cause of death, alongside other summary measures. MORT books are Excel workbooks that contain recent deaths data for specific geographical areas, sourced from the AIHW National Mortality Database. Both the GRIM and MORT Books have been updated with deaths data for 2015.

Download data tables: General Record of Incidence of Mortality (GRIM) books
Download data tables: Mortality Over Regions and Time (MORT) books

CONFERENCES
There are a number of Australian conferences that have already been registered for 2018 including:

- **5th National Elder Abuse Conference**
  February 19-20
  Sydney, New South Wales

- **4th International Health Care Reform Conference**
  March 21-23
  Sydney, New South Wales
- **6th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium**  
  April 11-12  
  Canberra, Australia Capital Territory

- **National Medicines Symposium 2018**  
  May 30-June 1  
  Canberra, Australia Capital Territory

- **21st CNSA Annual Congress**  
  June 21-23  
  Brisbane, Queensland

- **The Australian & New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine Annual Scientific Meeting 2018**  
  June 27-29  
  Sydney, New South Wales

- **Australian Grief and Bereavement Conference 2018**  
  August 2018  
  Sydney, New South Wales

- **2018 Primary Health Care Research Conference**  
  August 1-3  
  Melbourne, Victoria

- **42nd World Hospital Congress**  
  October 10-12  
  Brisbane, Queensland

- **Palliative Care NSW 2018 Biennial State Conference**  
  8-10 November 2018  
  Kiama, New South Wales

You can check out other ways to learn more about palliative care in the CareSearch Education section. They include Major Education Initiatives and Conferences.
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.

If you would like to order our current materials please visit our online order form or email your contact details to caresearch@flinders.edu.au.

Do not forget you can follow what is happening on Twitter or you can join us on CareSearch LinkedIn.

February 2018 Newsletter
The first newsletter in 2018 will be circulated on Monday 5 February. If you have any item you would like to have considered for inclusion, please send details by the last Wednesday in January to caresearch@flinders.edu.au.