LOCAL PALLIATIVE CARE GRANTS PROGRAM - ROUND 1

Name of project: Home Care for Palliative Care Patients.

Organisation: St Vincent's Hospital, Lismore

PO Box 572

LISMORE NSW 2480

Duration of the Project: July 2006 - March 2007.

Purpose of the Project: To improve access for palliative care patients to home care services

Project Summary: A brokerage service agreement was negotiated with Home Care Service NSW to provide services to registered palliative care patients in the Richmond Valley.

Home Care staff underwent palliative care training, the expectation being that they would be more confident and competent in providing the care needed by palliative care patients and their families.

Activities:

Services were contracted through Home Care offices in Lismore, Ballina, Casino and Brunswick Heads. Agreement was reached on timeframes for assistance and protocols for referring new clients. Templates for referral were designed in consultation with palliative care service staff and protocols developed in line with the envisaged level of services. Home Care workers were offered training in the provision of palliative care.

Education sessions were held for Home Care workers in Casino and Kyogle, but an offer of similar education was not taken up in the other areas.

Statistics were kept on the number of patients using the service, time spent on referrals by Palliative Care Service staff, occasions of service by both Home Care and Palliative Care service staff, cost per patient/family and the number of home deaths. A client satisfaction survey was conducted at the end of the project.

Results:

A sound relationship was established with Home Care NSW and the referral service was developed satisfactorily and worked well. Good working relationships were established between the three teams involved – the Palliative Care Service, Home Care Workers and Community Nurses.

Of note was the dissatisfaction amongst those carers who did not attend the education sessions that were provided on provision of palliative care.

Only 25% of the Palliative Care Service registered clients received Home Care which shows that the majority of the patients don't require this kind of assistance. For those that did receive the Home Care it was felt to be of great assistance.