CareSearch Project Research Studies Register: Registration Proforma	0047

Study Title: Toward the identification and minimisation of depression and psychological distress in family caregivers of people receiving palliative care

Brief description of the study:

Palliative Care is holistic, patient and family centred care provided for dying people and their families, before, during and after death. It acknowledges dying as a physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural process that is experienced uniquely by each person and family. Palliative care services are involved in the care of patients and families who are distressed, or who are at risk of being distressed as a consequence of this process (*Palliative Care Australia - Standards for Palliative Care Provision, 1999*). Currently the evidence base for preventing, assessing and responding to depression, anxiety and prolonged grief in family caregivers of people receiving palliative care at home is suboptimal. As family caregivers comprise a significant section of the Australian population this is seen as an area that has been overlooked. This 3 year longitudinal study will have two stages. The first stage of this project seeks to evaluate a strategy designed to more effectively screen family caregivers of people with advanced disease (such as cancer) for mental health problems. The second stage seeks to develop best practice guidelines for health professionals in order to better respond to and minimise depression and psychological distress in this population.

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

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

Project details

Funding source (Optional): *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*						
Has the study received ethics approval?	**X**	Yes		No		Not applicable
Project starting date: December 2006						
Project completion date: December 2009						
Multi site:	**X**	Yes		No		Not applicable

RESEARCHERS

Principal Investigator (name)	A/Prof Peter Hudson
Contact Details	Centre for Palliative Care Education & Research St Vincent's and The University of Melbourne Kristina.Thomas@svhm.org.au 03 9416 0000
Investigator B (Name)	Dr Cheryl Remedios

Investigator C (Name)	Dr Di Clifton
Investigator D (Name)	Michael Crewdson
Investigator E (Name)	Christopher Hall
Investigator F (Name)	Prof David Clarke
Investigator G (Name)	Prof Tom Trauer
Investigator H (Name)	Amanda Bolleter

Associated publications / reports:

Hudson P, Thomas K, Trauer T, Remedios C, Clarke D. (In press) Psychological and social profile of family caregivers upon commencement of palliative care provision. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*

Topics: Psychosocial, Caregivers