

# Continuing Care and Clinical Service Development News

September 2007



## Advance care planning: policy and program development in Victoria

Advance care planning (ACP) can, "...shape future clinical care to fit the patient's preferences and values...to increase the odds that people will live and die the way they wanted to..."<sup>1</sup> This aspect of care can be challenging and to be done appropriately it involves,

"...a process whereby [a person] in consultation with health care providers, family members and important others, makes decisions about his or her future health care".<sup>2</sup>

In Victoria, ACP has mainly occurred in an ad hoc way, underpinned by the *Medical Treatment Act 1988*, the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1986*, and 'case' law.

Despite the existence of these laws, the community, including many health services and health care practitioners, remain largely unaware that if people want to express their wishes regarding *future* health care and have those wishes respected, the law supports them to do so as part of 'usual' care delivery.

More recently, emerging advance care planning models of care, including the department-funded Respecting Patient Choices program, have highlighted that health services are often providing less than optimal service to patients regarding provision of information about their right to participate in their future *as well as current* health care treatment decisions. Further, it is apparent that health care education and information systems across the acute, sub-acute and community sectors most usually do not readily facilitate the process of ACP, nor the patients' right to participate in it so their wishes are known.

The recent enactment of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* in Victoria further supports ACP, underlining a person's legal right 'not to be subjected to medical or scientific experimentation or treatment without his or her full, free and informed consent'.

The department is currently developing policy and exploring models of care for ACP in Victoria. The policy will build upon existing ACP models of care, including the Respecting Patient Choices Program, to identify appropriate models of care for the future. The policy development process will identify key principles to guide the direction and implementation of ACP, and also outline how to facilitate integration of ACP as a component of existing services in Victoria.



## Introducing Gail Roberts

Gail Roberts joined the Sub-acute Services team in April 2007. Gail was seconded from Northern Health, where she managed the Respecting Patient Choices program, to work on policy and program development in advance care planning.

Prior to her time at Northern Health, Gail has worked over a number of years in socio-legal and health research, project management, administration and as an educator and clinician (nurse and counsellor). Settings for these roles include La Trobe University, University of Melbourne, the acute, sub-acute and community health sectors, and General Practice Divisions Victoria, where her main focus was organisational and professional capacity building and systems change facilitation.

Gail has a strong and enduring interest in human rights, ethics, education, patient advocacy and the law. She balances these interests with her passion for time with family and friends, travel, film, literature, swimming, and generally having as much fun as possible.

An ACP expert advisory group is meeting regularly, an extensive consultation process and literature review is underway and an ACP forum is planned for 30 November 2007 (details available in the CC&CSD newsletter in October). It is anticipated the draft policy will be completed by April 2008.

For further information, contact Gail Roberts on 9096 1338 or by email: [Gail.Roberts@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:Gail.Roberts@dhs.vic.gov.au)

1 Teno, JM, Nelson, HL and Lynn, J 1994, 'Advance care planning: priorities for ethical and empirical research'. *Hastings Center Report*, Nov-Dec; 24(6): S33

2 Singer, PA, Robertson, GR and David, J 1996, 'Advance care planning. Bioethics for clinicians series 6', *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, vol. 155, no. 12.

### When ACP is implemented appropriately, it can perform a number of functions including:

- promoting patient autonomy
- accurately identifying the 'person responsible', who can provide consent to treatment if the patient did not or does not have the capacity to do so
- informing people who the law identifies as their 'person responsible', so *they* can choose who *they* want to represent their treatment choices, should they lose capacity to do so in future (this process is called 'appointing an enduring power of attorney – *medical treatment*')
- help facilitate peace of mind for patients, families and surrogate decision makers
- help increase the clarity of instructions to health professionals about appropriate actions for the person they are caring for
- help reduce the incidence of intra-family conflict and disputes between families, medical and other health care professionals at a potentially very stressful time.

## 2007–08 New Technology/ Clinical Practice Program

In 2007–08 the Department of Human Services will continue to strengthen its approach to the introduction and use of new and existing technology and clinical practice in public health services through the continued role of the Victorian Policy Advisory Committee on Clinical Practice and Technology (VPACT). The committee advises the department on the identification, assessment, introduction, monitoring and evaluation of new technology and clinical practice and approves funding of \$9 million for new and existing initiatives.

New technology and clinical practice comprises prostheses, implantable devices, diagnostic tests, medical and surgical procedures and high cost pharmaceuticals.

This year, the New Technology/Clinical Practice Program is funding the following new initiatives:

- ABO blood group incompatible kidney transplantation for end-stage kidney disease (Royal Melbourne Hospital)
- Endobronchial ultrasound for lung cancer staging (Eastern Integrated Cancer Service)
- Infliximab for severe psoriasis (St Vincent's Hospital)
- Complex movement disorders service for paediatric dystonia (Royal Children's Hospital)
- Rapid determination of carrier status for breast cancer predisposition genes (Peter McCallum Cancer Centre and The Royal Melbourne Hospital)
- Bone-anchored hearing aid program for ear canal atresia and chronic middle/outer ear disease (Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital and The Alfred).

As a result of the *Future direction for health technology uptake, diffusion and disinvestment in Victorian public health services* workshop in March 2007, a strategy around health technology uptake, diffusion and disinvestment in public hospitals will be developed, in consultation with health services and other relevant stakeholders, to provide robust evidence-based frameworks to support the VPACT decision-making process.



## Continuing Care and Clinical Service Development contact details

Name	Title	Email	Phone
<b>Susan Race</b>	<b>Acting Manager, CC &amp; CSD</b>	<b>Susan.Race@dhs.vic.gov.au</b>	<b>9096 2721</b>
Hannah Cameron	Executive Assistant, CC & CSD	Hannah.Cameron@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 2136
Coralie Kennedy	Project Support, CC & CSD	Coralie.Kennedy@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1337

### Health Independence Programs

Elisa Tumino	Senior Project Officer	Elisa.Tumino@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1334
Juliet Coles	Senior Project Officer	Juliet.Coles@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 0507
Charlotte Dart	Senior Project Officer	Charlotte.Dart@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1412
John Masci	Senior Project Officer	John.Masci@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 2169
Carol Pyke	Senior Project Officer	Carol.Pyke@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1335
Chelsea Simpson	Senior Project Officer	Chelsea.Simpson@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 7138

### Clinical Service Development

<b>Louise Devereux</b>	<b>Manager</b>	<b>Louise.Devereux@dhs.vic.gov.au</b>	<b>9096 1348</b>
Greg Dowling	Senior Project Officer	Gregory.Dowling@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 7374
Paul Fennessy	Senior Project Officer	Paul.Fennessy@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 2142
Usha Mudaliar	Senior Project Officer	Usha.Mudaliar@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 0509
Cathy Krishnan	Senior Project Officer	Cathy.Krishnan@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1332

### Sub-acute & Transition Care Services

<b>Nicole Doran</b>	<b>Manager</b>	<b>Nicole.Doran@dhs.vic.gov.au</b>	<b>9096 2689</b>
Sylvia Chen	Senior Project Officer	Sylvia.Chen@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1336
Joan Snyder	Senior Project Officer	Joan.Snyder@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 2027
Tania Cossich	Senior Project Officer	Tania.Cossich@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 0487
Gail Roberts	Senior Project Officer	Gail.Roberts@dhs.vic.gov.au	9096 1338