

Continuing Care newsletter

December 2003



Susan Race, Brydie Quinn

Team wins Valuing Achievement Award

We are very proud to announce that Brydie Quinn and Susan Race are one of the successful teams presented with the Valuing Achievement Awards, an annual Departmental event. The Department's Secretary, Patricia Faulkner, presented the accolade for their enormous contribution to the policy, *Improving care for older people*.

Congratulations Brydie and Sue!!

Improving care for older people

Recent statistics have revealed that older people are significant users of health services, with people over the age of 70 years using more than 46 per cent of all multiday patient stays. This figure is set to increase as the population ages.

In response to this, a new policy – **Improving care for older people: a policy for Health Services** – aims to change the approach to older people's health care in Victoria.

The Minister for Aged Care, Mr Gavin Jennings, launched the policy on 12 November 2003. At the launch a number of industry speakers relayed first hand experiences that illustrated how the new policy would work.

The focus of this policy is on improving the care provided for older people by Health Services, and integrating care across settings to ensure that people have the appropriate care in the appropriate place.

Three fundamental issues have emerged in relation to this policy – these are the need to:

- 1) adopt a strong person-centred approach to the provision of care and services
- 2) better understand the complexity of older people's health care needs
- 3) improve integration within Health Service's community-based programs and between Health Services and ongoing support services available in the broader community.

For further information on the policy go to <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/older/>



Introducing Linda Muller

Linda joined Continuing Care in September this year, taking on the role of Project Officer, Specialist Clinics. These clinics provide treatment and assessment/diagnostic services in the areas of continence, falls and mobility, cognitive dementia and memory. More information can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/subacute/

Recent reviews have shown that the clinics provide an invaluable service to the Victorian community, and Linda says it is a pleasure to be working with such a dedicated and professional group of people.

Linda has a background in nursing, social work and service management. She has worked in local government, community health, rehabilitation teams, ACAS and hospitals in metropolitan Melbourne and rural Victoria. Linda hopes that this broad range of experience has given her an appreciation of how different elements of the health system work and the different perspectives of people within it.

For further information, or to subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, contact Coralie Kennedy on coralie.kennedy@dhs.vic.gov.au



Review of Victorian renal dialysis services

Renal dialysis services in Victoria are to be the subject of a major review. The aim is to develop a revised model for the provision of maintenance dialysis services that will meet the future needs of Victorians with end stage renal failure. The department is committed to ensuring that future dialysis services will be developed using a patient-centred approach to care and service planning.

Healthcare Management Advisors Pty Ltd has been contracted to undertake the project, which will be completed by June 2004. The project has received strong support from the field, with many of the key stakeholders having input into the development of the project brief. A Reference Group that includes representatives from health services, peak bodies, consumer organisations and various branches and divisions within the department has been established to provide advice and support to the project team.

Further information can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/renaldialysis/

Farewell to one of our team

It is farewell to Leanne Butler who is leaving Continuing Care on the 12th December to



take a position at Ballarat Health Services in the Internal Medicine Service as a Project Worker, Clinical Risk Management. *Good luck Leanne and enjoy the new challenges.*

Promoting partnerships project

What helps to create continuity of care for people with a life threatening illness? This will be the focus of a new project called Promoting Partnerships in Palliative Care. This is a Commonwealth funded project which will provide specific recommendations about how to strengthen the hospital-community interface in palliative care.

PPR Consulting have been appointed to conduct the project which will include an examination of the literature and consultations with key stakeholders. The consultations will help to identify where the hospital-community relationship is working well and what makes it successful. The project is due for completion in April 2004.

Further information contact
Amanda.bolleter@dhs.vic.gov.au



All the staff in the Continuing Care Unit would like to wish you all the best for the festive season. A special thankyou to all of the people who have supported us in our work throughout the past year. Hope you have a safe and healthy New Year and we look forward to working with you all next year.

Look out for our first newsletter for 2004 in early February.