

Continuing Care newsletter

November 2004

New palliative care policy launched

Strengthening palliative care: a policy for health and community care providers 2004-09 was launched at the Palliative Care Victoria conference on 18 November at Churchill.

The policy was developed over the last 18 months following extensive consultation with the field. It aims to strengthen service delivery for people with a life threatening illness and their carers and families through improving the equity of access to specialist palliative care services and building effective links between hospitals and specialist palliative care providers and other relevant community, health and allied health providers.

Key components of the policy are the incorporation of the palliative approach by all generalist providers, provision of specialist palliative care to patients where appropriate, and the formation of regional consortia. Consortia will consist of publicly funded palliative care services who will be responsible for:

- The preparation of a regional plan
- Role designation of hospitals
- Service coordination and
- Determining priorities for future service development.

The consortia will be informed by regional advisory groups that will include representation from Divisions of General Practice, HACC services, integrated cancer services, consumers and carers.

Funding of \$650,000 will be provided to consortia in 2004/05 and \$860,000 in 2005/06 to develop and commence implementation of regional plans. The department has developed a draft Memorandum of Understanding and a range of tools for consortia to assist in the planning process. Bi-monthly meetings will be organised so that consortia can get together and learn from each other.

An information session was held in late November for metropolitan providers, and in rural regions, departmental regional offices are organising meetings of consortia members.

A limited number of copies of the policy paper will be sent out to all palliative care providers and hospitals in coming weeks. In the meantime, the policy and other tools to assist can be downloaded from the website in www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare



Introducing Simon Moy

Manager, Sub-Acute Inpatient Services.

Simon came to the department in 1997, after working at the Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing on a wide range of residential aged care and community care programs. Simon joined Continuing Care in March 2001, as Manager, Sub-Acute. Prior to this he worked in the Aged Care Branch on strategic aged policy and planning projects. Simon has also had the opportunity to work on the Ministerial Review of Health Care Networks and acted as the Aged Care Advisor in the Office of the Minister for Aged Care and Aboriginal Affairs (Gavin Jennings).

At the moment Simon's team is heavily involved in the development of Transition Care services and the review of the Victorian Respiratory Support Service. After some time with staffing vacancies, he is overjoyed to be working with two project officers (Belinda and Joan) to progress the policy agenda, with support from Coralie.

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

Farewell to Deirdre Willis

After 20 years in the public service, Deirdre Willis is retiring. Deirdre has spent the last 10 years working in the health arena. Some of the program areas she has left her mark on are Hospital in the Home, Post Acute Care and more recently, palliative care.

Deirdre is a whiz on Excel and her patience and persistence has meant that the department and providers have excellent data on Post Acute Care and over the past two years, community palliative care.

We know you will join us in wishing Deirdre all the best for the future. Her many voluntary activities and her granddaughter will gain from our loss.



Deirdre Willis

Funding to Centres Promoting Health Independence

The Minister for Aged Care, the Hon Gavin Jennings MLC announced funding of \$4.5 million for Centres Promoting Health Independence (CPHI) at a briefing session attended by service providers on Friday 12 November.

The establishment of CPHI in each departmental region forms a key objective of the *Improving Care for Older People* policy. The role and philosophy of CPHI was outlined at the briefing session. Each CPHI will receive funding of \$300,000 to assist the implementation of new initiatives for the care of older people.

Other initiatives to advance the implementation of the policy were also presented. These include:

- Workforce development to enable a person-centred approach to the care of older people;
- The Pathways Home Program; and
- Links to the national agenda through the Care of Older Australians Working Group.

Please contact Brydie Quinn, via email at brydie.quinn@dhs.vic.gov.au if you would like further information.

Welcome to Joan Snyder

Joan Snyder joined the Continuing Care Unit on 22 November. Joan is working in the sub-acute inpatient services team and her immediate priorities will be the review of the Victorian Respiratory Support Service (VRSS) and hospital community interface issues for younger people with disabilities. Joan comes to the unit from the DHS Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative – a DHS Flagship project. She has extensive experience in the Aged Care and Disability Services Divisions of DHS.

Seasons Greetings

All the staff in the Continuing Care Unit would like to wish you all the best for the festive season. We would like to thank all of those people who have supported us in our work throughout the past year. Hope you have and 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.

