

# Ambulatory and Continuing Care News

December 2007



## Health Independence Program guidelines update

The Health Independence Program guidelines are integrated guidelines for Hospital Admission Risk Program-Chronic disease management (HARP-CDM), post-acute care (PAC) and sub-acute ambulatory care services (SACS).

A draft version of the Health Independence Program guidelines was planned for circulation in December. The guidelines will now be released for comment at the beginning of February 2008.

Written feedback on the guidelines will be welcomed from program managers and clinicians until early March. The Health Independence Program forum on 27 February 2008 will also focus on the guidelines and provide further opportunity for feedback.

Further information on the guideline release and timelines around providing feedback will be circulated to health services in January.

For further information please contact Charlotte Dart ([charlotte.dart@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:charlotte.dart@dhs.vic.gov.au) or 9096 1412).

## Sub-acute ambulatory care services equipment review update

The Pathways Home Program funding provided by the Australian Government has been used to undertake a review of SACS equipment across Victoria. Further funding will be used to upgrade and replace this equipment.

Contractors from Monash University Centre for Biomedical Engineering have recently visited all health services across Victoria that deliver SACS. Each site was asked to consider additional equipment items they required or current items that required replacement. The contractors have since developed a prioritised list of equipment items required by health services.

In the near future, health services will receive information informing them of what equipment items will be funded. The health services will then be able to purchase these equipment items and will be reimbursed for the cost. Details of the reimbursement plan will also be provided.

For further information please contact Juliet Coles ([juliet.coles@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:juliet.coles@dhs.vic.gov.au) or on 9096 0507).



## Welcome Cathy Krishnan

Cathy Krishnan joined the Programs Branch in April 2007. She is on secondment from the Service and Workforce Planning Branch, where she has worked as senior data analyst in the forecasting section for five years.

Prior to working in the department, Cathy worked for Maroondah Breastsreen, as a data manager in community health, and as the state data manager for the Victorian Breastsreen Co-ordination Unit. Her current role within the Programs Branch includes providing data support and analysis to the Ambulatory and Continuing Care team.

Cathy returned to part-time work after taking 12 months' maternity leave and spends her time away from the department with her three young children.

Merry  
Christmas  
and Happy  
New Year!



A Victorian  
Government  
initiative



## A new life in the community

In June 2007, the opening of four purpose-build houses in Thornbury was a dream come true for a number of ventilator-dependent people who had no option other than to live in a hospital ward due to a lack of accommodation services able to safely support their specialised needs. For one resident, nearly 60 years in shared hospital wards came to an end with the move to a new home and life in the community.

The new service provides 24-hour support within the context of an ordinary home in the community. Service users have control over how attendant care staff provide this based on their individual wishes. The routines and limits of life in a hospital ward have been replaced by choice, flexibility and privacy. Barbeques and cooking a meal with family or friends, 'having a garden of your own', and 'sleep-ins' are now part of the daily lives of residents.

Moving residents of Austin Health's Bowen Centre to their new homes in the community bought the successful conclusion of a Department of Human Services \$7.1 million capital project to establish a state-of-the-art 20-place community-based residential and respite service to support the specialised needs of high-dependency ventilator users. The Ventilator Accommodation Support Service is operated by Yooralla as a disability accommodation service, with on-site 24-hour nursing support. The service, purpose-designed for ventilator dependent people, is an Australian first.

Ambulatory and Continuing Care staff worked with their colleagues across three departmental divisions and the North and West Metropolitan region, together with Austin Health staff, to ensure that close consultation with the residents, families and advocates informed every step of the building and service operation design. The Australian Ventilator Users Network and service users led the development of the support model, within a strong stakeholder partnership that was crucial to successful outcomes. This was reflected in the Austin Health 2007 Victorian Public Health Care Award in the category 'Excellence in consumer and carer participation'.

For further information please contact Joan Snyder ([joan.snyder@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:joan.snyder@dhs.vic.gov.au) or on 9096 2027).



< ACP forum audience

## Advance Care Planning Forum

The Improving Care forum on Advance Care Planning (ACP) was held on Friday 30 November at the department's head office in Lonsdale Street.

More than 160 people registered for the forum from a range of rural and metropolitan-based services and organisations including aged care, palliative care, acute, sub-acute and primary care. In addition to the guest speakers, the mix of health professionals in attendance included health service and project managers, Victorian ACP Advisory Group members, Department of Human Services managers and staff, Respecting Patient Choices managers, health professional organisational representatives, clinical leaders and consultants, staff from general practice networks, nurses, medical practitioners, allied health professionals, educators and trainers, care coordinators and case managers.

The program was designed to provide information about the policy and program development project that the government is currently undertaking in advance care planning. Further, it sought to address the expectations that registrants had expressed and to provide an opportunity for input into policy and program development.

The department is grateful for the time and considered input that participants and guest speakers gave to help make the day a success.

Most of the ACP forum presentations are available on the department's website at: [www.health.vic.gov.au/improvingcareforums](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/improvingcareforums)

Feedback from the day has been overwhelmingly positive, with some constructive comments regarding how government can best meet the needs of the community through future policy and programs.

*This forum was absolutely priceless...my compliments!  
(Residential aged care manager)*

*Provoked thought re: (ACP) process and implementation  
(Allied health professional)*

*Great, interesting and informative presentations  
(Palliative care educator)*

*The forum generated some interesting discussion and my brain has been working overtime since then-thanks!!  
(Medical practitioner)*