

PEPA

Program of Experience
in the Palliative Approach

Funded by the Australian
Government Department
of Health and Ageing

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 08

THE NATIONAL
PALLIATIVE CARE
PROGRAM

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The Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA) provides an opportunity for primary health care providers to develop skills in the palliative approach by undertaking a workforce placement with a palliative care specialist service (host site) within a metropolitan or larger service. It has three components:

- Supervised clinical placement
- Integration of learning into the participant's practice
- Post-placement support

Please access the PEPA webpage for details: <http://www.pepaeducation.com>

The Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's National Palliative Care Program.

Happy New Year!

National Coordination Team News

Happy New Year to everyone and we trust 2008 brings health, happiness, new challenges and new beginnings. Welcome to the first newsletter for 2008. This edition of PEPA news provides an update on key PEPA activities this quarter.

The 2007-2010 phase of the PEPA program is well underway in all states jurisdictions, with funding from Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) available to support 1030 planned placements and 162 planned workshops for the period from 2007-2010. These planned placements and workshops include facilitated clinical placements in specialist palliative care services, and other tailored educational activities developed for specific populations including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups.

New Recruits

A warm welcome to Ms Kathy Parr who has joined PEPA, as our new WA PEPA Manager, Kathy can be contacted via phone 08 8226 6428 or email: Kparr@cancerwa.asn.au

National workshop for PEPA Managers – Friday 23rd November 07

A one day national workshop for PEPA Managers was held at Queensland University of Technology – Kelvin Grove Campus on Friday 23rd November 2007. The workshop included PEPA Managers, Department of Health and Ageing representatives and the National Coordination Team. An overview of progress to date was provided by Professor Patsy Yates. Stan Piperoglou (Director of Palliative Care Branch, Department of Health and Ageing) provided an update on activities in palliative care including providing an overview of the strategic context for PEPA.

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(Photo: PEPA Managers, Department of Health and Ageing Representatives and National Coordination Team)

PEPA: Tracking Achievements

A total of 90 clinical placements were completed across all jurisdictions between July and December 2007. Table 1 presents the total number of participants that have undertaken clinical placements in each jurisdiction respectively for the period from July – December 2007.

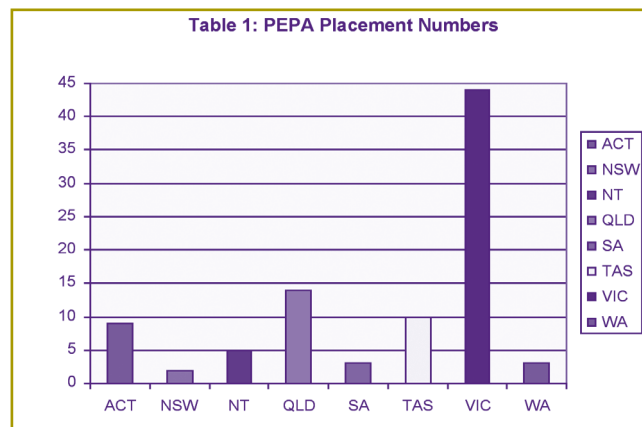


Table 1: Total number of participants that had undertaken clinical placements from July to Dec 2007

PEPA Managers in most jurisdictions have also been active in conducting PEPA workshops, with a total of 649 participants having attended PEPA workshops between July and December 2007. Table 2 presents the total number of participants that have attended workshops in each jurisdiction (except Northern Territory) respectively for the period from July – December 2007.

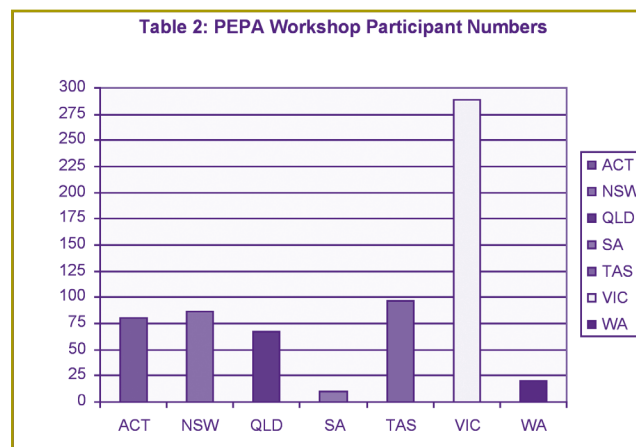


Table 2: Total number of participants that had attended PEPA workshops from July to Dec 2007

Participants who have attended the PEPA workshops during this reporting period have come from various discipline groups. Table 3 presents the discipline groups of participants who have attended the PEPA workshops in this period.

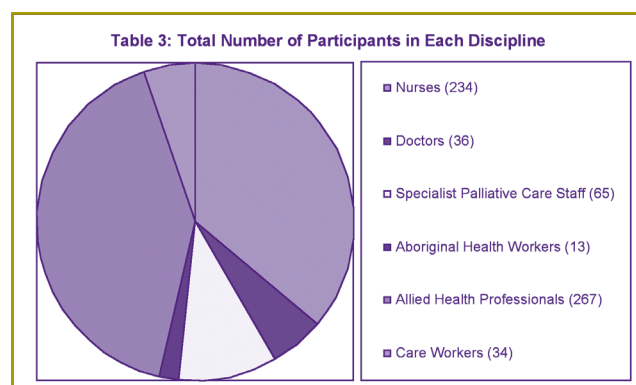


Table 3: PEPA participant's discipline (N=649, July – December 2007)

PEPA: Making a Difference

Evaluation responses during Jul to Dec 2007 show that PEPA continues to support participants in enhancing their skills and knowledge. Some of the workshop responses include:

- I learnt a lot about palliative care and about PEPA
- Cultural care presentation was excellent
- Importance of planning in palliative care
- Respecting differences among people from Indigenous and CALD backgrounds
- Importance of holistic approach in palliative care
- Learnt how to communicate better in relation to end of life issues with patients and families.
- Understanding how to deal with grief and loss, that is to listen and encourage talk with the person/s involved.

FEATURE ARTICLE

How PEPA can assist to implement the palliative approach within residential aged care facilities

Kathy Laurent - OLD PEPA Manager

A large portion of PEPA applications being received in Queensland are from staff of Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs). This trend is not exclusive to Queensland. This raises the question, how can a PEPA placement help to implement a palliative approach in a RACF?

As for any other primary health care worker, a positive experience during a PEPA placement creates a desire to learn more. This may mean that participants are more likely to seek out information from reference books and web-sites or seek assistance from a more experienced clinician, often their PEPA mentor. The placement allows the clinician to refresh their knowledge of the palliative approach or to gain knowledge if it was previously lacking. Participants may feel that they have an increased awareness of the need for good pain management and other symptom control and a strategy for the accurate recording of same. Therefore, a participant may feel more confident in their clinical skills. The PEPA participant's communication skills are likely to be enhanced and they may feel more confident in collaborating with other health professionals and services regarding the care of the resident and advocating for the resident's needs as required. They are also likely to be more aware of the resources and services available in their area and have enhanced relationships with their local palliative care services, especially if their placement was with that service. PEPA participants may also feel more comfortable with the dying process and find it easier to talk to residents and their families. The placement experience in a palliative care setting may also provide experiences with the holistic approach to the

care of the person, and need to do more than just assess their physical needs, that is fundamental to palliative care. They may also become more aware of the need for a multidisciplinary team and how the various team members can work together to improve the resident's quality of life.

This knowledge and range of experiences with the palliative approach may assist the PEPA participant to conclude that a key area in the aged care setting that requires attention is Advance Care Planning. Where possible, this planning needs to occur early in the process. Where appropriate, this should occur when a resident is admitted to the facility, rather than when a health crisis is reached. Staff who have completed a PEPA placement may feel more comfortable having a meeting with the resident and their family on admission to determine the resident's end of life wishes. These wishes need to be documented and reviewed regularly. One way to do this is to implement the concept of an End-of-life Care Pathway, which is integral to the palliative approach in residential aged care. These pathways systematically deal with all aspects of end-of-life care. Some PEPA host sites in Queensland are also implementing such pathways, so participants can see them utilised during their placement.

PEPA participants may also feel more comfortable being active members of a palliative care committee. They can act as a resource person and conduct training sessions thereby, sharing what they have learned with their colleagues. In summary, the whole facility gains by one staff member completing a PEPA placement.

(Note, the benefits mentioned here are from the experiences of the Queensland PEPA Manager and do not necessarily represent the complete list of advantages that may be experienced in your workplace.)

STATE NEWS

PEPA ACT

Sue Wood and Annette Cole

ACT PEPA is off to a busy start with Placements at Clare Holland House beginning on the 18th February. There will be 5 other placement opportunities in 2008, and the dates for these have already been set. The PEPA Managers can be contacted by phoning CHH on 02 62730336 or emailing Sue Wood or Annette Cole at PEPA@calvary-act.com.au which is a new email address for those of you who may be use to emailing us on the old addresses. There are also 6 general workshops planned for 2008 that will coincide with the week that participants are at CHH.

We are delighted to welcome Dr Dennis Pacl from San Antonio, Texas in the USA who has moved to Canberra to join the Specialist Medical Palliative Care team. With a full complement of medical staff in the ACT now in place we plan to run two GP workshops in the second half of this year – dates are still to be set.

The Palliative Care/Aged Care Flipchart for GP's is now at the printers and will be launched in the next few months. We hope that this will be a very helpful resource and look forward to your feedback.

A very successful follow-up evening for participants and their managers was held at the end of last year to discuss achievements and barriers. We will certainly be considering repeating this on an annual basis. Some of the positive outcomes reported were that more people are being kept "at home" in their RACF to die, reducing the transfers to acute care settings at end of life; a palliative care interest group has formed in one organization; and nurses are reporting increased confidence in discussing palliative care needs for their patients with GP's. These are all very positive outcomes as primary health care providers grow in their knowledge and understanding of a palliative approach to care. Well done!

We commence 2008 with renewed enthusiasm and look

forward to the opportunity of supporting you through the PEPA program again this year in the ACT.

PEPA NSW

Janeen Foffani

Supervised Clinical Placements are continuing in NSW and applications are now being accepted for 2008. To date over 20 applications have been received and it is anticipated that these placement will be completed by June 08.

A workshop was held at Batemans Bay in October 2007 and was attended by GPs, Clinical Nurse Consultants and Nursing Unit Managers in the area. Topics covered included Basic principles in palliative care; Innovations in pain management; Assessing and treating complex symptoms, bowel obstruction, spinal cord compression, terminal dyspnoea/agitation and Communicating with families. The mix of GPs and Senior Nurses from the area worked well and not only has the participants palliative care knowledge increased, it has also given those attending the opportunity to re-establish local networks through a common interest in palliative care.

The previous PEPA Workshops in Merimbula and Batemans Bay have raised the awareness and interest in palliative care in the area and as a result plans are underway to hold an 'Indigenous Community Palliative Care Education Day' at Narooma on 20th May 2008. The aim of this day is to provide healthcare workers and family members with information and ideas that will help them in their caring role.

A number of PEPA Workshops will be held throughout NSW in 2008 – please contact me for more information.

There are a number of Conferences coming up in NSW that may be of interest to you such as: Diversity in Health 2008, Darling Harbour 10-12 Mar; NSW Palliative Care Volunteers Conference, Harold Park Paceway, 24 Apr; Sydney Institute of Palliative Medicine – 17th Annual Symposium, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, 30 Apr – 2 May; Aged & Community Services Australia National Community Care Conference "Magic & Myths", Darling Harbour, 14-16 May and the

NSW State Palliative Care Conference, 'Palliative Care – a sea change', Coffs Harbour, 12-14 Nov 08.

If you would like any information regarding Supervised Clinical Placements, Workshops, Conferences mentioned or if you know of a conference that I have not included please do not hesitate to email me – PEPANSW@email.cs.nsw.gov.au

PEPA Northern Territory

John Carson

The NT's sub-focus for 2007/8 of renal patients and the palliative approach has resulted in several practitioners from Renal Dialysis units undertaking a PEPA placement. Significant numbers of Indigenous clients in the NT live with renal disease, and the largest Renal Dialysis unit in the southern hemisphere is located in Alice Springs. Approx. half of clients on renal dialysis have had to relocate from remote communities.

Outcomes from the PEPA focus on renal and the palliative approach beginning to emerge include: Strengthened links and referral pathways between the 2 specialist services; a greater understanding of when to intervene with the palliative approach; informed choices and a more coordinated approach to end of life choices; discussion of advanced directives being offered to clients and their families; and greater awareness of Aboriginal culture and cultural security issues.

To further enhance the NT's response to renal care and the palliative approach, an additional project has commenced that compliments the work of PEPA. Palliative Care for Renal Clients Living in a Remote Setting aims to raise awareness and understanding of the palliative approach for renal clients and staff. The project will determine palliative care options for clients staying at home in their communities and for those already on dialysis that wish to return to their home communities.

- **Territory Palliative Care network meeting dates 2008:** Regular Network meetings are held in the NT in the following 5 locations:
 - **Darwin** (3 monthly) – next meeting 3pm, Tue 4 March, Royal Darwin Hospital auditorium.
 - **Alice Springs** (3 monthly) – 2pm, Tue 12 February then 3pm Tue 13 May, Alice Springs Community Health Centre.
 - **Katherine** (6 monthly) – next meeting Tue 22 April, Katherine Hospital, training room.

- **Tennant Creek** (6 monthly) – next meeting Mon 12 May. Details tba.
- **Nhulunbuy** (6 monthly) – next meeting Wed 9 April. Details tba. Contact Jo Watts on 08 89226915 or Joanne.Watts@nt.gov.au for more information.

- **Palliative Care 2-day workshop:** 27 – 28 February 2008, Darwin

This introductory course is suitable for Nurses, Allied Health and Health Worker staff from hospitals, community, aged care facilities and remote clinics. Topics covered in relation to the palliative approach will include pain and symptom management, grief and bereavement, and case studies. For more information contact John.Carson@nt.gov.au or phone 08 89227679

- **The 3rd Territory Palliative Care Network Conference – NT**

The annual NT wide network conference as post-placement support for 2008 will be held in Darwin on Monday 2 June 2008. A registration form and call for expressions of interest for funding to assist attendance will be released soon.

PEPA Queensland

Kathy Laurent

Queensland is gearing up for a busy 2008. As we said in the last newsletter, we are now accepting applications for PEPA placements and we are keen to receive applications from GPs and allied health professionals. Doctors working in rural hospitals are also welcome to apply. If you are a past-PEPA participant, please tell your colleagues how valuable your PEPA experience was to your practice.

A PEPA Allied Health Workshop is planned in Townsville in May. The Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education is also conducting a workshop "Update in Allied Health for Health Professionals in Palliative Care" on 29th February, 2008.

Our PEPA for Indigenous Health Workers project has a 2-day PEPA program scheduled for Townsville on 18th and 19th March, 2008. This program is specifically designed for

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and will offer a combination of a workshop and a clinical observation visit with the Townsville Hospital palliative care specialist service and a community nursing service. The workshop section will be presented by Health Workers, clinicians and lecturers with experience in the specialty area. There is no cost to the participant and they may also be eligible for a travel and accommodation allowance. Employers will also be entitled to a backfill allowance of \$50 per hour (plus GST) up to a maximum on 16 hours. Similar programs will be offered in Rockhampton and Brisbane later in 2008.

Our Application and Information kit for PEPA placements and for the PEPA for Indigenous Health Workers program are available on our website www.cpcrc.com or by contacting the Queensland PEPA Manager.

PEPA South Australia

Janet Taylor and Peta Jackson

During the last several months, the direction of PEPA in SA was being re-established with host sites and the rural palliative community. I have appreciated the recommendations and suggestions given during these meetings. Thank you to the SA host sites and country palliative care services.

Workshops:

- GP workshop 5th March in Metro Adelaide
- GP practice nurses workshop 2 April Northern Adelaide
- Aged care workshop 23 April Northern Adelaide
- Aboriginal Health Workers Workshops
 - Ceduna, 18 March
 - Pt. Lincoln, 23 April
 - Mt. Gambier, 22 May

There are negotiations currently for two more aged care workshops, a paediatric workshop and one for nurses who work in the acute sector.

I am keen to collaborate with both metro and rural areas to provide workshops in your area.

Placements: As the result of discussions with the

Rural Palliative Care Nurses forum, the number of rural placements for nurses has been increased. PEPA has proven to be an excellent opportunity for country nurses in aged care and general practice to work along side the specialist service that covers their area and begin to form partnerships between the rural and metro regions. The success of this program in SA is reliant on spreading the word that clinical placements are available right now for GPs, nurses, careworkers, allied health professionals and Aboriginal Health Workers. For information and application forms go to www.pallcare.asn.au

Post placement support: Currently there are a few specialist palliative services that are completing programs funded by PEPA earlier 2007. Please ask your specialist palliative care service if they are providing any educational programs for 2008 that you may participate in. Again, I am keen to come up with ideas that help to provide support for those of you who have done placements through PEPA.

PEPA Tasmania

Angela Bresnehan

PEPA Tasmania is making good progress with 10 General Practitioners from across the state undertaking a 2 day intensive palliative care workshop which was followed by a four day clinical placement. The workshop, which was held in Launceston, was a great success with feedback indicating that participants enjoyed the interactive format and case based discussions. The themes for the workshop were decision making at the end of life, shared complex care, pain in the elderly and goal setting in palliative care.

The supervised clinical placements took place with the Specialist Palliative Care teams in the North, North West and South and the feedback has been very positive with participants reporting that they found the experience to be valuable and rewarding with important relationships being established with the specialist service.

In November the Specialist Palliative Care Service staff attended a PEPA Advanced Palliative Care Study day which was held in Hobart. Associate Professor Peter Martin, Barwon Health Victoria attended the study day as a guest speaker and presented sessions on communication challenges and anorexia/cachexia syndrome. Dr Guy

Bannink and Dr David Woods, Medical Specialists, Palliative Care Tasmania also presented on the day with Guy giving a very informative session on Methadone use in palliative care and David giving the group a valuable update on the palliative care outcomes collaborative. The workshop was well received by participants with comments and feedback indicating that staff enjoyed the opportunity to learn as well as to meet with palliative care colleagues from across the state.

Over the next 12 months PEPA Tasmania will be offering workshops and clinical placements for health care professionals across the state including acute care clinicians, community health nurses, Aboriginal health workers, and aged care health workers. There will also be further workshops and clinical placements offered to general practitioners and allied health professionals. For further information on PEPA activities, contact the PEPA Tasmania Project Officer.

PEPA Tasmania would like to acknowledge the support that it has received from the Palliative Care Service clinicians who continue to offer their time and expertise in assisting with the PEPA Program.

PEPA Victoria

Ellen Sheridan

Following a very successful 2007 Victoria is well on the way to having another productive year in 2008.

Applications are now being sought for supervised clinical placements. Additional information, including the Application Form and the Information & Application Kit, can be found on Victoria's PEPA website at www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare.

A workshop on 'Mentoring PEPA participants during their supervised clinical placements' will be held on 29 February 2008. Palliative care host sites have been invited to nominate staff to attend this workshop to learn more about mentoring participants during their PEPA supervised clinical placements.

Also another series of one-day workshops on the palliative approach will be held around Victoria during May. These

workshops will target allied health staff and will introduce them to the palliative approach. They will be advertised in the next few months.

Finally, if you are interested in finding out what palliative care education activities are being conducted in your region please contact either the relevant Palliative Care Consortia Manager or myself.

PEPA WA

Kathy Parr

PEPA WA has recently had a change of manager with Felicity Pickard taking some time away on maternity leave. Many congratulations to her on the birth of her son Mason. While she is away the program will be looked after by myself, Kathy Parr. The first couple of months have been a steep learning curve for me, having come from a clinical background but as the activities for 2008 start to take shape I am becoming increasingly excited about what PEPA will be offering health professionals in WA this year.

Already we have another GP workshop organized for February. The first day proved to be very popular so WA plan to repeat this workshop prior to offering the GP's the chance to take their Palliative knowledge further with an intermediate and then an advanced class. A similar format will be offered to nurses and allied health later in the year.

In 2007 a highly successful weekend Masterclass was attended by Palliative Care specialist and plans are now under way to offer a similar session to Palliative care doctors. Again, we hope to be able to extend this type of workshop to nurses and allied health.

PEPA WA is also currently in negotiations with the Cancer Council to participate in the Aboriginal Health Workers workshop being planned for June 2008. This workshop will run over 4 days and will incorporate all aspects of cancer including the palliative phase.

All this as well as the regular placements!! WA is currently promoting placements for 2008. If you are interested in applying for a clinical attachment of would like to know more about what's planned for the year please contact Kathy Parr on 9382 9372 or kparr@cancerwa.asn.au

For further information you can contact your local PEPA manager:

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