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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.

In the 2007–2010 phase of the PEPA program, funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) is available to support 950 clinical placements and 204 workshops across all Australian states and territories.

National Office Update

Welcome to the final edition of the PEPA newsletter for 2009. What an exciting year we have had. Highlights include the continuing success of our Indigenous program, strengthening our mentor relationships, building and maintaining effective post-placement support, developing greater sector linkages and launching new and updated resources. The most recently released resource being our revised GP Learning Guide. We have also commenced our longitudinal and qualitative review of PEPA.

As another year draws to a close, we would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to all PEPA supporters, particularly our dedicated host site mentors and services, our outstanding workshop facilitators, our passionate PEPA staff and the Department of Health and Ageing. Our achievements in this valuable area could not be achieved without your ongoing support and endeavours.

Finally, we wish you all a joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year!



PEPA: Tracking Achievements

During January to June 2009, PEPA clinical participants came from various geographical locations. The majority of the PEPA participants came from highly accessible (68%) and accessible areas (17%). A smaller number came from moderately accessible (5%), very remote (7%) and remote (3%) areas. Figure 1 shows a graphical representation of the PEPA participants from the various sectors.

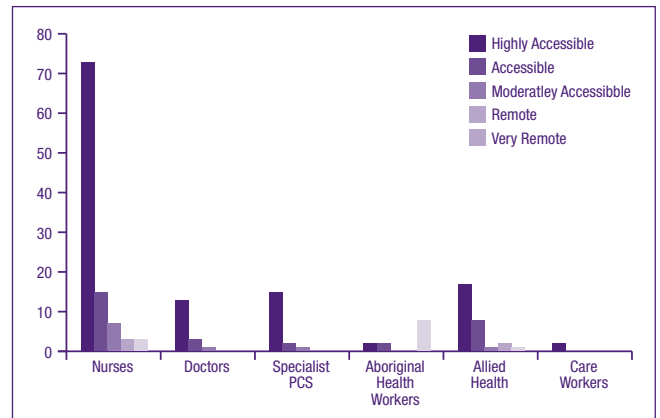


Figure 1: PEPA participants by area (Jan-Jun 2009)

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PEPA: Making a Difference

Evaluation responses between January and June 2009 show that PEPA continues to support participants in enhancing their skills and knowledge. Some of the responses from participants following their placement include:

- PEPA has given me more knowledge and confidence to deal with palliative care patients and knowing that there is a local service available.

- After my placement I recommended that a client be referred to a palliative care unit two weeks before he died. This ensured that the client received the best care at the time of his death.
- I have a better understanding of discharge planning that I gained from my PEPA placement.

FEATURE ARTICLE

OUTCOMES FROM CULTURAL AWARENESS CAMP

The South Australian Aboriginal PEPA Project Manager organised and facilitated a 3-day cultural awareness training camp during May 2009. Recently, a six month follow up evaluation session was held. This included a review of the recommendations and barriers to the provision of a palliative approach for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The cultural awareness training camp was held at Iga Warta community in the Northern Flinders Ranges to coincide with reconciliation week and palliative care week. The program was attended by 17 participants (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal) from across specialist palliative care and Aboriginal health services. The program was jointly facilitated by Glenise Coulthard, Aboriginal Consultant, from the Port Augusta Hospital.

During the 3-day program, participants collaborated in the development of recommendations to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients admitted to specialist palliative care services. The recommendations were forwarded to specialist palliative care services and Aboriginal health services. They will also be sent to the newly formed Palliative Care Clinical Network.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPECIALIST PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

- Demonstrate an interest and a welcome to Aboriginal people by having Aboriginal specific art/photos/logos and Iga Warta Principles visible in entrances to palliative care wards and hospices.
- Palliative care information days for Aboriginal people, i.e. NAIDOC Family Days. Make use of storytelling as examples of how an Aboriginal person did/could have benefited from a referral to a specialist palliative care service.
- Aboriginal specific flyers/brochures advertising the benefits of palliative care and what specialist services can offer.
- Regular smoking ceremonies within the specialist services, i.e. hospices, acute wards that are palliative specific. Include a ngangkari/traditional healer and/or minister. Have this notice listed at the entrance to the hospice, palliative care ward. (Contact Port Augusta Hospital regarding how this can be implemented)
- Annual mandatory cultural awareness for all staff.
- Bimonthly or monthly collaborative meetings with Aboriginal Liaison Officers/ Aboriginal Health Workers regarding their patients to discuss who would benefit from a palliative approach.
- Target groups that provide support to chronic disease persons, i.e. Shine, Kidney Health Australia 'Operation Angel'.
- Improve access through the referral process by identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the referral form.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES

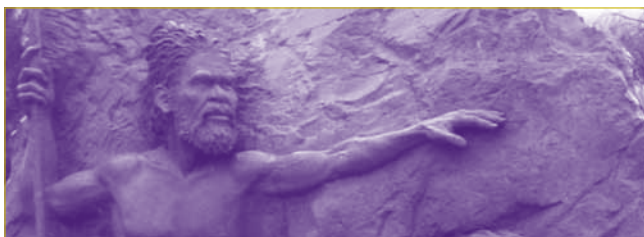
- Service delivery issue. Need for Palliative Care Aboriginal Health Workers just as there are specific Diabetes, Chronic Disease and Child & Youth specific Aboriginal Health Workers.
- Bimonthly or monthly collaborative meetings with local palliative care services to discuss clients who would benefit from a palliative approach.
- Inclusion of the topic palliative care approach for educational updates for Aboriginal Liaison Officers/ Aboriginal Health Workers.

In the six months since attending the camp a number of participants have achieved key work outcomes in the application of skills in palliative care. This includes:

- Publication of an article in The Circulatory Bulletin, June & August 2009
- Presentation to the social work and palliative care department at the Royal Adelaide Hospital
- New position created at Alzheimer's Australia SA, Palliative Care Coordinator
- Submission of a grant proposal for a project officer to focus on increasing the access of Mary Potter Hospice to Aboriginal people
- Iga Warta Principles are visible in the entrance to the Modbury Hospice
- Purchase of Aboriginal paintings for the hospice

Feedback from the participants and services indicates that more Cultural Awareness training and networking would be beneficial. The SA PEPA project is planning for the next program to be delivered in February 2010 in Adelaide.

Any enquiries can be forwarded to peta.jackson@health.sa.gov.au



BEST PRACTICE:

Placements

A 'best practice' PEPA placement would include the following components (where possible):

- Identify mentor for the day/placement (prior to participant arriving at service)
- Meet the participant upon arrival
- Orient the participant to the service (e.g. OH&S, confidentiality, facilities etc)
- Discuss the participant's learning goals

- Identify activities/opportunities to achieve the learning goals including:
 - Ward rounds
 - Hand over
 - Case conference/team meetings
 - Family meetings
 - Home visits
 - Training/in-services
- Arrange times for participant to meet with other disciplines working in the service
- Invite participant to join staff for lunch
- Allow 'reflection time' when participant can read patient records (where appropriate), policies, pamphlets, PEPA facilitators guide etc
- Debrief participant at the end of each day

Contribution by Ellen Sheridan, VIC PEPA Manager

PLACEMENT REFLECTION:

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

I am a Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Specialist, currently based in Orange (rural) NSW and for my 4 day PEPA clinical placement I was keen to see a couple of specialist units in the Sydney metropolitan area.

My first area of interest was Motor Neurone Disease (MND), and it was arranged that I spend one day at Calvary Hospital, Kogarah and one day at Prince of Wales Hospital. MND is a challenging disease and made more so in rural NSW. The disease is rare enough that health professionals across the board get very little exposure and therefore little experience caring for someone with MND. My goal was to see what services the city units offered their patients, and to see how that could be adapted to a rural setting.

The first day I tagged along with the vivacious Patsy Pynn – Social Worker in MND. I had met Patsy on a previous occasion and value her understanding of the implications of living with MND. With Patsy I visited 3 MND patients in a variety of settings and at different stages of their disease. Her patience and understanding is inspirational.

Day Two, and I was lucky enough to be in Sydney for the Prince of Wales Hospital monthly MND clinic. This involves a diverse range of allied health and medical personnel coming together once a month to see patients with MND. The clinic is coordinated by MND (guru) Clinical Nurse Consultant Margie Zoing. In just a few short hours, I felt I could walk away having had my fill of the potential of what services we can offer MND patients. I was also inspired by the care and dedication of the staff I met there.

Day Three and off to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH) for the first of 2 days there looking at the workings of a Radiation Oncology Unit. My interest in Radiation Oncology is partly driven by my ignorance in the field and partly because in 2011 Orange will have its own Radiation Oncology Department and I wanted to have a better understanding of the nurses' role within a Radiation Oncology Department.

My first day at RPAH was spent for the most part following a man through his brachytherapy treatment (for Prostate Cancer). I was amazed at the amount of preparation and personnel involved for what turned out to be a 15 minute treatment. The amount of OH & S checking involved was impressive.

My final day, still at RPAH was mostly spent observing the role of the nurse. The lovely ladies there were very patient in answering all of my questions, and taught me some very basic but effective dressing techniques for skin reactions to the radiation.

I returned home having exhausted my poor brain, but very grateful for having had the opportunity to see and do so much in such a short time.

Louise Hoffman
Palliative Care CNS
Orange

SPOTLIGHT ON A HOST SITE:

Central Adelaide Palliative Service

Central Adelaide Palliative Service is a metropolitan specialist palliative care service located in the centre of Adelaide, South Australia. We provide a consultative service seeing in excess of 1300 new clients a year in both hospital and community settings. We have been a PEPA host site since 2004. During this time we have hosted a total of 46 participants including 6 Aboriginal Health Workers/ Aboriginal Liaison Officers/ Aboriginal Aged Care Workers involved in the Aboriginal PEPA Program.

Based at the Royal Adelaide Hospital we have been able to offer placements with our specialist service for participants to observe our inpatient liaison and community outreach roles. We have been thrilled as a service to teach the fundamental philosophies of palliative care and the palliative approach to our rural colleagues who come from different regions of our state. These include Adelaide, Yalata, Murray Bridge, and most recently Ernabella to name a few.

Participants come with different knowledge and skill sets including aged care workers, aboriginal health workers and enrolled nurses, and are all eager to learn about palliative care. This program has also provided a learning experience for our service too, as we have gained greater insight into the needs of Indigenous Australians to ensure the best end-of-life care available for all in a culturally appropriate context. As a consequence of the program we have

strengthened our partnerships with rural colleagues who all have similar attitudes and responsibilities in the delivery of end-of-life care. We are happy to provide ongoing mentorship to our PEPA participants.

We look forward to supporting the PEPA Program in the future and hope that other services take the opportunity to host our rural partners as this experience provides learning and building of partnerships for both parties. We look forward to hosting as many more health care workers as we are able in the months ahead.

Karen Jacquier
Clinical Service Coordinator
Central Adelaide Palliative Service
Royal Adelaide Hospital
South Australia

Post Placement Support

New Palliative Care Clinical Network and Palliative Care Website launched in Tasmania

On 23rd September the Health Minister Lara Giddings formally launched the State's new Palliative Care Clinical Network, with the launch of a new Department of Health and Human Services palliative care website.

The Palliative Care Clinical Network is one of the first of the Clinical Networks to be established in Tasmania and aims to support and improve palliative care services, as well as promote public awareness of what can be done for those who face a terminal illness, and those who look after them.

The Palliative Care Website includes a number of important new resources which have been developed by medical specialists and other clinicians such as:

- an Adult Palliative Care Drug Formulary;
- care management guidelines for health professionals; and,
- patient fact sheets.

The formulary provides at glance information about drug prescribing for pain and symptom control, and is one of the most comprehensive and now accessible formularies in Australia.

The new care management guidelines are designed to assist health professionals in providing clinical care.

The fact sheets provide important information for patients and their families about common symptoms and challenges that arise when caring for a person who is dying.

The Palliative Care website address for health professionals is www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/palliative_care/health_professionals

The Network, which is led by Professor Michael Ashby, is open to all clinicians, researchers etc. For more information on how to join the network, or to be made aware of network activities/developments please contact Carole McQueeney, Project Officer on 6233 3784 or at carole.mcqueeney@dhhs.tas.gov.au.

PEPA ACT

Annette Cole

Summer has burst into our lives rather early this year bringing the heat generated not only by the warmer weather patterns but also by end of year activities and planning for 2010. We have endeavoured to increase our numbers of placements this year to accommodate for the time lines required to manage post-placement support and the collection of data required for this phase of PEPA. ACT PEPA will have put through 25 placements by the end of 2009, including our first GP placement. This is a marathon effort for our one host site who welcome PEPA placements and share their knowledge generously ... Thank you Clare Holland House.

There has been no let up on the workshops with an increase in workshops rolled out throughout 2009. Registered Nurses, Enrolled Nurses, AIN's, Allied Health professionals and GP's have all benefited from the expertise of the staff at Clare Holland House who willingly present on a variety of topics.

A new resource has been developed in 2009 called *PREPARED: Difficult Communication in Palliative Care*. This resource is a one page read for new and/or inexperienced staff and provides a framework for managing difficult communication. It also has phrases that help to prompt ideas on how to initiate communication. This resource is at the printer at the time of writing and should be available by December '09. Interested parties may collect copies of the resource from Annette Cole, at Clare Holland House.

The PEPA Network Group has had a number of guest speakers this year. The last speaker was from the ACT Organ and Tissue Donation Service. The participants found this an interesting and challenging topic as they reflected on how organ and tissue donation is managed for Palliative Care and Aged Care patients and residents. Organisations interested in having an in-service for their staff on this topic may contact them by emailing: Organ.Donation@act.gov.au

Together in Perth, the Palliative Care Australia (PCA) Conference that was held in late September was a great success with many interesting and varied sessions to attend. The keynote speakers were inspiring and the atmosphere was friendly and enjoyable. PCA have the sessions available on their website www.pallcare.org.au

The first half of 2010 will see ACT PEPA introduce a new initiative coined 'Reverse PEPA'. This will involve introducing an experienced palliative care nurse into organisations for a placement; coming alongside the staff to mentor and educate them in a palliative approach to care. Planning has begun and there will be more about this in the next newsletter.

I would like to leave you with a comment from an Intensive Care Health Professional at the end of her post-placement phase during 2009.

"The unit has changed the way we do End-of-Life care. We now routinely take hand-prints and take locks of hair; we no longer monitor dying patients or do vital signs; comfort care as THE criteria for determining care is being taken on board...."

At times it may seem like change is slow; however, it only takes a little reflection to see where we have come from.

Have a blessed Christmas from PEPA ACT.

PEPA NSW

Janeen Foffani

Interest in PEPA continues to grow in NSW and we are receiving a steady stream of enquiries and applications for supervised clinical placements.

Since the Spring newsletter PEPA NSW has participated in one form or another in a number of activities across the State including the GWAHS Aboriginal Health Workers Forum, Palliative Care Forums (Nowra, Orange), Palliative Care Paediatric Education Days (Liverpool, Eugowra & Dubbo), and the Annual Rural GP Conference. More than 240 Health Professionals have attended post placement activities and over 500 people have attended PEPA NSW Education/Awareness Days and workshops.

A recent highlight would be the Palliative Care Specialist Interest Education Day in Orange focusing on End of Life Care in Advanced Kidney Disease (AKD). The workshop covered topics such as prognosis, illness trajectory, treatment options, psychosocial implications of dialysis, symptom control, the role of Specialist Palliative Care in the dialysis unit, AKD Indigenous aspects/challenges, and Advanced Care Planning in AKD. The day was attended by both palliative care and renal health workers (nursing, medical and allied health) from Orange and the surrounding area. This workshop came about from an informal discussion with the palliative care providers after a PEPA NSW workshop for nurses and allied health workers in the area. A simple comment mentioning that there had been an increase in the number of renal patients being referred to the palliative care nurses soon fuelled a conversation centring on challenges, new networks and current treatment trends for this new group of patients. From this discussion, the goal of the education day was born – to develop the networks between Renal and Palliative Care providers, to learn about current AKD treatment options, to discuss the role of palliative care and how it can help support the patients and staff. We were fortunate to have Dr Frank Brennan (Palliative Care Consultant Calvary & St George Hospitals) as a speaker for the day and James Daley (CNC, Palliative Care, GWAHS) grasped the opportunity to engage Dr Brennan in a second activity while he was in the area. Dr Brennan has an interest in all aspects of Palliative Care including how story telling and the humanities illuminate this area of the human experience. The local Library was secured for an evening of 'Tales from the Edge' for Health Professionals and Community members. The interest in this activity from the community was remarkable with both James and Dr Brennan being interviewed by Radio National and the local television station (PRIME).

PEPA NSW has been involved in a number of education activities in Greater Western NSW and it is inspirational to see past participants in PEPA placements and workshops come together, increasing their networks and sharing their knowledge. Many thanks to all the speakers and a special thank you to James Daley for his assistance and perseverance.



End of Life Care in Advance Kidney Disease, Orange – Nov 2009

Upcoming PEPA NSW activities.

- 15th Dec 09 – Palliative Care Awareness Day, Aboriginal Health Professionals, Nowra
- TBA Feb – Bereavement Education Session, Kogarah (GPs)
- 24 Mar – Palliative Care Education Day, Moree (Nurses)
- 17–18 May – Palliative Care Awareness Day & site visit, Dubbo (Aboriginal Health Professionals)

Across NSW

- 4th Mar – 7th Annual Paediatric Palliative Care Symposium 2010, Westmead
- TBA Mar – Annual Palliative Care Education Day, Dubbo
- 25–26 Mar – NSW Rural Palliative Care Nurses Meeting, Moree
- TBA May – Sydney Institute of Palliative Medicine. Annual Palliative Care Symposium, Sydney
- 28 May – NSW Palliative Care Association. Professional Education Day & Awards night, Sydney
- 3–5 Nov – NSW Palliative Care Association Bi-annual Palliative Care Conference, Cessnock

PEPA NT

John Carson and Cindy Paardekooper

In the past few months practitioners from Allied Health, General Practice and Aboriginal Health Workers have completed placements. No new Nursing placements have occurred as the current target for these was exceeded some time ago. NT PEPA now has eight people on a waiting list with further enquiries still coming in.

It is encouraging to see many employers and organisations expressing their satisfaction with PEPA and the outcomes produced. Many employers report improved linkages with the specialist palliative services. Other comments include:

“Cultural awareness and flexibility within our organisation has improved”.
 “A better understanding has resulted between our employee and the family members of clients”. “[Our employee has] advanced involvement with the remote palliative care team”. “The employee has much more confidence in involving herself in planning for palliative clients.” “[Our employee] bridged the gap and assisted in understanding the role of palliative care services”

Aboriginal Health Workers from Timber Creek and Bulla community spent time with us recently and enjoyed their experience, building great confidence dealing with their current patients and learning more about the dynamics involved in case management. Another two staff from Tennant Creek Hospital work closely together delivering practical help to patient care including accommodation support, transport and renal education. Their experience provided a chance to link strongly with the team in Central Australia as well as in Darwin and become more familiar with the holistic approach used in Territory Palliative Care.



Alice Springs workshop participants

The final 2 Community Outreach Program workshops were completed in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. Attendees included Aboriginal Health Workers and Aboriginal Liaison officers from Alice Springs Hospital who



Beverley Derschow NT Aboriginal Health Worker Awards



Caroline and Marilou from Tennant Creek with Cindy

found it of great benefit learning how and what to advocate for with Aboriginal palliative care clients. This also offered a great relationship building day for specialist palliative staff at TPC Central. The Tennant Creek workshop was an opportunity for aged care staff to receive support and education including assisting in case management.

An inaugural seminar for Government agencies was held in Darwin with key staff attending from Centrelink and Territory Housing. We achieved our aim of demystifying palliative care, with staff from all agencies getting a lot from the day and formulating some recommendations about all three agencies working together for better outcomes for clients. A similar workshop for Alice Springs is planned for early in the New Year.

Finally, big congratulations to our own palliative Aboriginal Health Worker Beverley Derschow. Bev won the 2009 NT Aboriginal Health Worker Excellence Award for the specialist category. Bev has mentored many PEPA participants at the Darwin service over recent years. Her dedication and knowledge imparted to so many is a great credit to her work for Indigenous palliative care.

PEPA QLD

Kathy Laurent

The PEPA Qld team is happy to report that current placement targets have been achieved in all disciplines. While allied health and nursing targets have been easily achieved, the GP placements required strategically tailored promotions to encourage uptake. Thank you to all those who have assisted with this task in 2009, especially to the GP Divisions who were instrumental to this success by disseminating GP promotional packs to practices. Applications are still being accepted at this time and waiting lists are being compiled. The Qld Manager will spend an increased proportion of her time in post-placement support for the remainder of this phase of PEPA.

The Allied Health and GP Update workshops in Toowoomba were well attended with 22 and 26 participants respectively. Thank you to all those who made these events possible, especially the local GP Divisions, GP Connections and R Health who worked tirelessly to promote the event. Thanks especially to Associate Professor Liz Reymond and Associate Professor Judith Murray for travelling to Toowoomba to speak at the workshop. Thank you also to local palliative care physician Dr Rob Brodribb who gave up his Saturday to contribute to the event.

The Qld Manager also travelled to Gympie, Fraser Island and Maroochydore in October and November to promote the PEPA opportunity and disseminate results to date. These events were well attended and were instrumental in achieving the placement targets. Thanks especially to Gail Palmer and Denise Simmons for inviting me to the two Sunshine Coast events.

An additional Allied Health workshop was held on 27th November at Princess Alexandra Hospital and was well attended. The response to the event was so overwhelming that a waiting list was established and an additional Allied Health workshop will be held in 2010 to meet the demand.

Currently we are negotiating with speakers for a GP Update to be held on the Sunshine Coast in March 2010. This event will be in collaboration with the Sunshine Coast Division of GPs and the team working on the Rural Palliative Care Project.

Best wishes for an enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year.

PEPA TAS

Angela Bresnehan

PEPA Tasmania completed its final workshop for 2009 on the 26th of November. This event was an interactive palliative care workshop for nurses working in residential aged care facilities in Southern Tasmania. A total of 21 nurses attended the sessions to hear presentations from a range of palliative care specialists including a session on pain management presented by Dr Guy Bannink, Palliative Care Medical Specialist, a session on neurological conditions presented by Jane Jupe, Clinical Nurses Consultant and Gayle Hazelwood, Senior Speech Pathologist and psychosocial issues in palliative care which was presented by Chris Batten, Social Worker. Feedback from participants was very positive.

Supervised clinical placements continue to be planned and scheduled for the New Year and while most places have been filled a waiting list has been established to accommodate applicants in the event of places becoming available. There have been some very constructive comments received from participants who have completed placements in the last 12 months. In particular several have noted the benefits of attending a workshop prior to undertaking their placement while others have noted the value of the resource folders issued to them in preparation for the placement.

As part of a PEPA post placement support initiative past participants were invited to attend a Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Forum held in Launceston on the 23rd October in 2009. The forum was facilitated by MND Tasmania in partnership with MND Victoria and was titled Opportunity, Practice and the Future. Dr Paul Dunne, Palliative Care Medical Specialist from Hobart presented a session on Palliative Care and MND and overall feedback from forum participants was very positive.

For further information on palliative care in Tasmania visit the new DHHS website at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/palliative_care/welcome.

PEPA VIC

Ellen Sheridan

2009 has been an incredibly busy year for PEPA in Victoria.

146 supervised clinical placements have been arranged and interest from GPs, nurses and Aboriginal health workers continued to be very strong. We recently surveyed PEPA host sites about their experiences mentoring PEPA participants and one palliative care service commented that:

"Being selected to be a PEPA host site was an excellent experience for our organisation. We are proud of our service and delighted to share and support knowledge. The networking with local primary services has been invaluable, literally 'strengthening palliative care' for our community."

22 workshops were conducted in 2009 with 497 participants. Workshops continue to play a strong role in increasing the knowledge, confidence and skills of generalist health professionals in the palliative approach. Participants included allied health staff, Aboriginal health workers, aged care services and disability services. Workshops for allied health staff will be held in March/April 2010 and advertisements will go up on the Department of Health's palliative care website approximately two months prior to the workshops being conducted.

Palliative Care Victoria (www.pallcarevic.asn.au/-pepa/podcasts) has several new PEPA podcasts available including:

- Mr Rod Harris (CEO, Motor Neurone Disease Association of Victoria) speaking on 'Motor Neurone Disease and palliative care'
- Dr David Brumley (Palliative Care physician, Grampians region) speaking on 'Back to basics: starting and using morphine' and 'Management of nausea in end stage disease'
- Ms Molly Carlile (Palliative Care Consortium Manager, North & West metropolitan region) speaking on 'Preparing families for an imminent death' and 'Including children when a family member is dying'

Also on 14th October 2009 the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and Palliative Care Victoria (PCV) re-signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This was a very exciting occasion as it brought together two sectors who publicly committed to continue working together to improve Aboriginal palliative care over the next five years.

My sincere thanks to all of the palliative care services who have been involved in PEPA this year. Your willingness to support PEPA placements and share your expertise makes PEPA so successful and well-regarded across not only the state, but also the country.

Ellen Sheridan
Victorian PEPA manager
www.dhs.vic.gov.au/palliativecare/PEPA

PEPA SA

Janet Taylor and Peta Jackson

A workshop for social workers was held in November with the support of the South Australian Palliative Care Social Workers, a group of social workers some of whom are also the bereavement coordinator for their service. The response was overwhelming with 40 social workers from acute, mental health, aged care, disability and domiciliary care services (with a waiting list of 14 social workers!)

Topics for this inaugural event included: Advanced care planning and directives, South Australian Palliative Care Plan 2009–16, Dignity Therapy; case studies and current trends and models in grief and bereavement. Evaluations demonstrated high outcomes of improved knowledge about a palliative approach and a greater understanding of social workers' role in the care of people with a life-limiting illness. Other comments:

"Really refreshing having a room filled with social workers!"
"Every talk offered something as this is a new field of knowledge for me"
"Very valuable particularly for a SW with limited experience with pall care, loss and grief".

Three 3hr cultural awareness workshops for acute medical and nursing services as well as students were held at Flinders Medical Centre. This was done in conjunction with discussion regarding end of life care for Aboriginal people.

Workshops for 2010

- February 2010 Cultural Awareness for Specialist Palliative care Services and Aboriginal Health Services
- February 2010 Nurses and Allied Health who work in disability services
- March 2010 Mentoring and Networking Workshop for clinical placement participants who did placements from 2007–2009

Two Aboriginal Health Workers and two Aged Care workers from the APY lands completed a 5 day clinical placement with two specialist palliative care services. They worked in pairs and the response from the specialist palliative services was extremely positive considering English was not the first language for two of the women. Their warm smiles, willingness to engage in conversation and interest to learn about a palliative approach made their placements beneficial to all who came in contact with them.

They have returned to their communities speaking highly of their PEPA experience and requesting that there be further palliative care education within their respective communities.

Peta and I would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas and healthy/joyous New Year.

PEPA WA

Kathy Parr

PEPA WA continues to have growing numbers of health professionals interested in undertaking a clinical supervised placement. By the end of December 53 placements, consisting of nurses, GPs, allied health professionals and Aboriginal health workers will have been completed in 12 months. With the end of the current phase in sight PEPA WA is still able to offer placements to GPs. There are a few available placements for allied health professionals and Aboriginal health workers but a waiting list is now being compiled for nursing staff.

The last few months have been busy for PEPA WA with attendance at the 'Palliative Care Australia Together!' conference held in Perth at the end of September. This was a great opportunity for all participants to gather new information and have some quality time with colleagues. The final regional visit of the year was in October with a trip to Geraldton. This resulted in a 2 day PCA workshop and 2 PEPA palliative care workshops for aged care staff. There was also time spent at St. John of God (SJOG) Hospital Palliative Care Unit to discuss the program and how best to mentor participants. SJOG have now become a host site for PEPA along with the Geraldton Palliative Care Service so giving applicants the opportunity to attend a placement in their own region.

The highlight of this quarter though would surely be the nurses & allied health retreat titled, 'Resilience in Palliative Care' which was held over the weekend of November 13th – 15th in collaboration with the Cancer Council WA. Fifty participants who work with patients suffering life threatening diseases enjoyed a weekend of resilience building and self care. The evaluations from the weekend suggest that this was a timely and much needed event. Guest speakers at the retreat included Marcus Gibney. – a Registered Counsellor and Psychotherapist.

Marcus gave a very light hearted talk entitled "Is resilience in humour something to laugh about?" The talk discussed using humour in dealing with death, spirituality and professional fatigue. This set the scene for a weekend of laughter and a few tears with stories and experiences being shared. The weekend also offered an opportunity for participants to learn about complementary therapy including a practical session on using essential oils, meditation and the importance of reflective practice.



Marcus Gibney discussing humour in palliative care.



Carol Gibney (no relation to Marcus!!) introducing her presentation on self care and complementary therapies.

In the coming weeks PEPA WA will hold the first Allied Health workshop for this round of funding. Due to popular demand this 2 day workshop will be repeated in March 2010. Please contact the PEPA manager for further information.

In conclusion I would like to wish all the host sites and participants a very happy Christmas and a safe New Year. I look forward to working with you all again in 2010. Many thanks to all the mentors and host sites for making this role so enjoyable.

For further information you can contact your local PEPA manager:

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