

Farewell to Christine Scott, Manager of NEMICS

Autumn 2010

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After almost five years Chris has been enticed by a new challenge; leading the development of the Wellness program at Austin Health and the new Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre.

Chris has been with NEMICS since its inception five years ago, building its presence in the region and the NEMICS team. Under her guidance there has been substantial improvement in many aspects of cancer care in the region. Chris has been an invaluable leader and will be sorely missed.

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Northern Health



Mercy Health

Care first

Partnership Projects

The Victorian Department of Health has funded a series of collaborations between Integrated Cancer Services to support further improvements in cancer care across the state. NEMICS is collaborating in three projects.

PET Scans

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) images assist the identification and monitoring of many cancers and are recommended for the diagnosis and management of gastro-intestinal cancer. Based in the Albury-Wodonga area, this project focuses on:

- increasing access to and awareness of PET scans
- integrating their use into regional cancer multidisciplinary meetings
- providing education for regional clinicians in the use and interpretation of the images
- providing patients with the information they need about PET scans.

Rare GU Cancers

Specialist pathology services are integral to the diagnosis of cancer. For rare cancers, this expertise tends to be centralised in metropolitan areas.

In collaboration with Hume RICS and WCMICS, this project aims to improve specialist pathology review for patients with kidney and testicular cancers living in the Hume region.

This will include:

- linking regional pathologists with specialist pathologists to review cases of suspected rare cancers
- promoting referrals to existing multidisciplinary meetings
- promoting recruitment to clinical trials and tissue bank, and
- enhancing the collection of clinical and pathology data.

Regional to Metropolitan Referrals

Not all cancer care can be provided in all places. In regional areas in particular, many patients need to travel to metropolitan health services for some part of their treatment.

This project focuses on the development of a toolkit to support effective and efficient transfer of patients with haematological and brain cancers between Grampians ICS and two metropolitan ICS for treatment.

This toolkit will include:

- patient transfer documentation and handover documents
- patient flow diagrams for clinical and supportive care
- decision-support for transfer
- formal agreements between providers
- effective measurement & audit tools

What's New at Northern Health

Oncology at Craigieburn Health Service

Dietician

Nadia Szwed has recently joined the Oncology team at Craigieburn Health Service to provide nutritional support to cancer patients.

It is well documented that people undergoing cancer treatment are at high risk of malnutrition and weight loss due to the side effects of both the disease and treatment. Early intervention to improve nutritional status can decrease these risks and promote better clinical outcomes.

Nadia brings a wealth of experience from her previous role in an Oncology and Haematology ward at King's College Hospital in London.

Nadia is particularly interested in the nutritional implications of gastrointestinal and head and neck cancers and how nutritional intervention can promote improvement in the patient's general well being and quality of life.

She is involved in both the Day Oncology Unit and the Oncology outpatient clinics at Craigieburn.

"I am enjoying being a part of this amazing supportive care team and look forward to meeting many other professionals in the oncology field through my dietetics role.



Left-Right: **Hugh Burch** (Service Improvement Facilitator), **Clare Poker** (Supportive Care Project Officer), **Hunter Mulcare** (Psychologist), **Nadia Szwed** (Dietician), **Steve Meacher** (Nursing Services Manager)

Psychology Service

Dr Hunter Mulcare has joined Northern Health to set up a psychology service for cancer patients and their families. Based at Craigieburn Health Service, he is accepting referrals for anxiety, distress, depression, grief, body image and adjustment issues.

Psychologists can greatly assist patients by developing cognitive and behavioural strategies to manage anxiety, decrease depression, improve activity levels, help with assertiveness and increase self-esteem.

Dr Mulcare has a background in clinical health psychology. He completed his doctoral thesis at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

For his study he researched the information needs of lung cancer patients; examining how their psychological adjustment influenced what they want to know about their cancer and care.

The service is predominantly open to Northern Health patients, with some capacity for external referrals who live in the Northern area.

Enquiries: telephone **8338 3000** Monday and Tuesday
Referrals: fax to **9308 3022**

Did You Know.....

A new lung cancer resource is available

"Lung Cancer, Understanding, Managing, Living"

Produced by Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, with the support of the Australian Lung Foundation this DVD looks at what happens when a person is diagnosed with lung cancer through to available treatments and living with cancer.

It provides expert medical information from a team of health professionals involved in caring for people with lung cancer, as well as experiences from people living with lung cancer.

Patients, their carers and families can order a **FREE** copy of this DVD by going to:

<http://www.kjlcn.org.au/pages/resources.php>

or

www.lungfoundation.com.au

Alternatively contact The Australian Lung Foundation on 1800 654 301.

Psycho-Oncology Day Program

The Melbourne Clinic, Richmond is accepting referrals for their Psycho-Oncology Day Program.

This program offers psychological treatment and emotional support to cancer sufferers experiencing psychosocial distress and adjustment difficulties.

Fees may apply.
Contact Lily for further information:
Ph **0457 818 273**

Consumer Corner

Consumer Advocacy Training

In March this year, NEMICS held consumer advocacy training facilitated by Tere Dawson from the Health Issues Centre. This was a two day workshop attended by 10 participants.

Day one of training covered topics such as:

- What is consumer participation?
- Who are the contributors in the cancer industry?
- A detailed look at the work NEMICS and CanNET Victoria have undertaken, gathering peoples experience of cancer from both a rural and metropolitan perspective.

Day two gave participants the opportunity to identify an area important to them and begin to develop an advocacy plan to address this issue.

Participants then shared their ideas with the rest of the group for further exploration of the issue and ways to advocate for improvement.



Participants identifying priority areas for improvement in cancer services

Comments from participants included:

"It was good to talk to others about their experiences"

"Tired but enthused"

"Good. I feel I have learned heaps. Informative, friendly information"

NEMICS thanks Tere Dawson for facilitating the training and presenters Ian Roos, Anne Kay, Nicola Bruce and Chris Hamilton for their contribution to the workshop, presenting the information in such a friendly, and engaging way.



Professor Chris Hamilton presenting an overview of the causes and treatment for cancer

Highlights included:

- a presentation by Ian Roos and Nicola Bruce on the principles of advocacy using real and current situations to highlight the issues,
- an interactive session facilitated by Ian Roos identifying the contributors in the cancer industry. This session highlighted the extent and breadth of those involved from government, to industry groups, to health services and clinicians,
- a presentation by Professor Chris Hamilton (Director of Radiation Oncology at Austin Health) who gave the last talk of the workshop providing an overview of cancer; how and why it occurs: its diagnosis and treatment.

Money Matters

Money Matters is a web forum about managing finances after a cancer diagnosis.

**Thursday 27 May 2010
6.00pm—7.00pm**

www.cancerconnections.com.au

Topics include:

- Managing the financial impact of cancer
- Understanding Centrelink entitlements
- Accessing superannuation early
- Mortgage hardship
- Financial assistance schemes
- Insurance

Participants can submit questions prior to the forum and summary notes will be available for those who are unable to participate.

Registration is essential.

Email csg@cancervic.org.au
or call the **Cancer Helpline on 13 11 20**
to register your interest.

CanNET Victoria Update

CanNET

Since the completion of the first phase of CanNET, the CanNET Victoria team has facilitated the further use of WebEx to support linkages between clinicians in Hume RICS, NEMICS and WCMICS.



WebEx meeting in progress with images from a laptop displayed on the projector screen at an MDM meeting.

Meeting attendees and radiology images, including PET scans and pathology, can be seen by all participants, whether present in person or attending remotely.

This technology enables cancer clinicians from regional Victoria to join metropolitan health service multidisciplinary meetings (MDM). To date oncologists from Wodonga have successfully participated in lung cancer and haematology MDMs at the Royal Melbourne Hospital via WebEx. This is in addition to the ongoing link to the lung MDM at the Austin.

CanNET 2

Plans for CanNET 2 include extending the use of online meeting technology to establish or enhance linkages to MDMs in each metropolitan and regional integrated cancer service.

These linkages represent important steps in increasing the number of regional cancer patients discussed at MDMs where their case can be reviewed by a full range of cancer specialists.

Did You Know...

New Lung Cancer Resource

The Australian Lung Foundation has recently translated the resource *Answering Your Questions about Lung Cancer* into seven languages: Chinese, Dinka, Arabic, Bengali, Vietnamese, Italian and Greek.

This brochure is particularly useful for patients after diagnosis as it answers some common questions they and their carers might have. It also gives them a list of questions to consider asking their specialists.

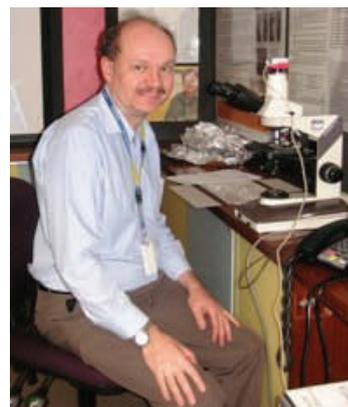
A lung cancer awareness poster has also been translated.

These resources can be found at the patient/carer support website — *The Kylie Johnston Lung Cancer Network*

www.kjlcn.org.au/pages/LOTE.php

NEMICS Grant

Box Hill Hospital has recently purchased a new microscope and camera thanks to a grant from NEMICS. The microscope and camera will allow clinicians to present pathology findings at multidisciplinary meetings.



Dr Richard Bunter,
Eastern Health Pathologist

Did You Know....

The timetables for multidisciplinary meetings held at NEMICS health services are now available on the NEMICS website.

Information on how to submit patients for the Austin Health meetings and submission forms can be downloaded directly from the site.

www.nemics.org.au/Display.aspx?tabid=2748

Who's New at NEMICS



Carmel Vermeltoort - *Service Improvement Facilitator - Austin Health*

Carmel has a background in clinical and managerial nursing with extensive experience in emergency and ambulatory care services. After ten years in northern California, Carmel completed a Masters of Business Administration in Australia and has consulted on projects such as the development of strategic and service plans for metropolitan health services.

Carmel has been pondering the nature of time – her first rotation as a registered nurse was in the haematology ward at St Vincent's and now it only feels like yesterday.



Nadia Ayres - *Grampians Cancer Patient Referral Collaboration - Project Officer*

Nadia is an experienced Radiation Therapist who has been employed at Austin Health for the past 9 years. Nadia is looking forward to utilising her wide and varied experiences of the cancer care pathway to improve outcomes for cancer patients by strengthening relationships and formalising pathways between rural and metropolitan services. She's thrilled to be a part of the dynamic NEMICS team!



John Lawrence - *PET Scan - Project Coordinator*

John is an experienced health and community services project manager with a background in regional health issues across Australia. He has worked in regional Victoria for most of his professional life as a teacher, tertiary lecturer, researcher and independent consultant and maintains a passion for improving regional health services.

Upcoming Events



8th Australasian Lymphology Association Conference, 27 - 29 May 2010, Melbourne
"Reflections of the Past, Inspirations for the Future"

The conference will cover a range of topics important to health professionals working in the area of lymphology. For further information email ala@thinkbusinessevents.com.au



American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting, 4 - 8 June 2010, Chicago, USA
"Advancing Quality Through Innovation"

Register at www.asco.org



Sydney Cancer Conference, 14 - 16 July 2010 Sydney
"Profiling Risk, Personalising Treatment and Predicting Outcomes"

Aimed at professionals working in the areas of basic biomedical, clinical, public health and psychosocial research across the cancer sector.

For further information visit www.cancerresearch.med.usyd.edu.au/SCC2010/



Cancer Nurses Society of Australia 13th Winter Congress, 29 - 31 July 2010, Perth
"Leadership, Diversity and Innovation: The Global Picture"

Register your interest at www.cnsa2010.com

Four Funerals in One Day

Four Funerals in One Day is an entertaining and inspiring palliative care play being staged as part of Palliative Care week, by the Eastern Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium.

The play delivers a message on communication, death, grief and living, and will be followed by a discussion forum and refreshments.

Wednesday 26th May at 7.30pm

Karralyka Centre, Mines Road, Ringwood East

Tickets cost \$25.00 full price or \$20.00 concession including refreshments

For booking enquiries please contact the Box Office. **Ph: 03 9879 2933**