

WORKING TOWARDS BEST CANCER CARE

Message from the Director

Welcome to the first NEMICS newsletter for 2011. We have changed both the format and the frequency of the newsletter this year. This newsletter will be published every two months and we have also created a new look; we hope the changes mean that the newsletter provides timely, easy to read information.

As a result of the 2010 NEMICS governance review report, this year the NEMICS Reference Group is undergoing some structural changes. To improve the level of participation we have decided to align the projects arising from the Reference Group with the priority outcomes areas in Victoria's Cancer Action Plan. These outcome areas include multidisciplinary care, supportive care and improving research and participation rates in clinical trials. Special interest groups will be formed around these areas to provide guidance and advice for the duration of the individual projects.

The Reference Group will also be expanded with the aim of providing representation for a broad range of clinical disciplines as well as for all our member health services and community-based services. See below for more information.

It looks as though it will be a busy year; there was very little down-time over the holiday break. We are looking forward to a year of hard work and exciting challenges.

A/Prof Paul Mitchell

Palliative Rehabilitation Seminar

Deidre Morgan, PhD candidate and senior OT, presented a seminar on the topic of palliative rehabilitation in late January.

About 34 staff members from across the disciplines attended the seminar, which was held at Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre and was attended by Austin Health staff members from all three campuses.

Recent clinical guidelines for patients with primary brain tumours have reinforced the importance of providing rehabilitation to improve the independence and quality of life for patients after surgery. This development represents an evolution in thinking about rehabilitation and was the focus of lively conversation during the seminar.



Seeking Members for the Reference Group

The NEMICS Reference Group supports the delivery of high quality cancer care across the region, providing advice to the Governance Committee and Directorate, driving improvements in the delivery of care. Focussing on the priorities of Victoria's Cancer Action Plan, the membership comprises representatives from the cancer workforce, health services and consumers.

As the peak clinical advisory body for NEMICS, the Group is seeking cancer care clinicians with a passion for improving cancer care. Of interest are people from cancer sub-specialty surgery, allied health, nursing and primary health. There is also a vacancy for a consumer representative.

Meetings are held two monthly on a Wednesday evening at 6 pm. Please contact Carmel Vermeltfoort, Quality and Projects Manager, phone 03 9496 3322 or email: carmel.vermeltfoort@austin.org.au to register your interest or for further information.



Victorian Integrated Cancer Services SUPPORTIVE CARE CONFERENCE 2011
Monday 11th July 2011 - Melbourne's Hilton on the Park
Supportive cancer care into the future – sustaining, surviving, and growing




This state wide supportive cancer care conference is being organised by the nine Victorian ICS and aims to:

1. build on the outcomes of the inaugural supportive care conference with exploration of sustainable implementation of supportive care practice,
2. focus on the specific supportive care and resilience building needs associated with people affected by cancer including survivorship and adolescents and young adults,
3. consider models that will shape the future of supportive cancer care provision,
4. promote the voice of people affected by cancer in the provision of supportive care.

The program will be innovative, exciting and rich in content that should appeal to a wide range of professionals working at many different levels and within many cultural contexts as part of multidisciplinary cancer care, such as

- supportive cancer care clinicians
- ICS staff
- health service managers
- consumer representatives
- palliative care and pastoral care workers

For full details please go to <http://supportivecancercarevictoria.org/>

Supportive Care Project starts at Mercy Hospital for Women

Mercy Hospital for Women started work on its Supportive Care implementation project in November 2010. The project was outlined to Mercy staff in a presentation to staff as part of Ovarian Cancer Awareness month. Marja Steur, supportive care project officer, and Carmel Vermeltfoort, NEMICS Quality and Projects Manager, presented the background information, project outline and expected outcomes at an education session for MHW staff members.

The Supportive Care Steering Committee also held its first meeting for the project last week to provide organisation wide leadership and advice on this project.



Supportive Care in the News



At Northern Health supportive care has hit the mainstream with a snippet in the *Northern Weekly* 15 February 2011, page 8:

Help for Cancer Patients

Northern Health is in the process of permanently implementing Supportive Care, a pilot program referring patients to the appropriate cancer care. "The Supportive Care program will complement existing cancer support services at Northern Health

but is the first program to address specific needs for cancer patients, and the first in Victoria to be implemented with an electronic follow up process," Northern Health chief executive officer Greg Pullen, said.

Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer

Youth Cancer Network

What is the Youth Cancer Network project?

The Youth Cancer Network (YCN) project is a federal government initiative, administered by CanTeen with the aim of improving delivery of coordinated services and support for adolescents and young adults with cancer - those aged between 15 and 25 years.

How is Victoria involved?

Each year, Victoria and Tasmania combined have close to 300 people between 15 and 25 years receiving a cancer diagnosis. Cancer is the leading cause of non-accidental death in this age group. Approximately 90% of this group are treated in adult hospitals.

The aim of this project is to:

- develop a model that provides high quality, coordinated care & responds to the variety of psychosocial needs of this group
- increase enrolment in clinical trials
- build up the capacity of the workforce

Consumer involvement

As part of the YCN project, a Consumer Advisory Board has been formed to provide advice to aid in improving services for young people with cancer.

How can clinicians within the NEMICS region be involved?

If you have an interest in this group and/or wish to hear more about the project, please contact Anna Mascitti - Victorian and Tasmanian Project Officer (NEMICS) by phone on 9496 3261 or via email anna.mascitti@austin.org.au.



Pictured above are some of the members of the Victorian & Tasmanian Youth Cancer Network project.

Upcoming AYA Professional Development Opportunity

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre is running a full day AYA education program on **Tuesday April 5th 2011**.

The program is being run by a variety of AYA clinical experts and topics will include:

- Biology, Epidemiology & Treatment
- Fertility
- AYA development
- Recognising anxiety and depression

The session is open to all interested health professionals. Cost per person is \$143.00.

For further information contact Tracey Taylor – Short Course Coordinator at Peter MacCallum on 9656 1001 or via email Tracey.Taylor@petermac.org. Registration details and information on other short courses can be found at: <http://www.petermac.org/ShortCourseProgramNursingEducation>

NEMICS Staff Raise Funds for the Leukaemia Foundation

On Sunday 6th February, Directorate staff members, Anna Mascitti and Melissa Shand took part in a 5km fun run around Albert Park Lake to raise funds for the Leukaemia Foundation.

The Leukaemia Foundation provides personalised and practical support services for patients and families living with leukaemias, lymphomas, myeloma and other blood cancers. They provide a wide range of services including emotional support/ counselling, information, accommodation, travel and practical assistance and all services are provided free of charge.

The girls joined the Sporting Spirit running club in 2010 and trained for 9 weeks with the Fit for 5 running group to prepare for the event.



Photographed, right, are the girls at the completion of the event with Sara Andrews, the Support Services Manager at the Leukaemia Foundation.

Introducing Nadia Ayres

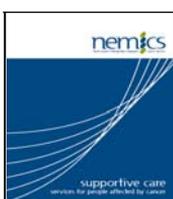
NEMICS is pleased to welcome Nadia Ayres to the role of Service Improvement Facilitator with a focus on Austin Health.

Nadia has worked with NEMICS for the past 12 months as a project officer for the Grampians Cancer Patient Referral Collaboration.

Prior to this she worked as a Radiation Therapist at Austin Health for 9 years. Nadia is looking forward to utilising her knowledge of cancer care to create opportunities for improving cancer outcomes and strengthening the NEMICS clinical network.



www.FindCancerCare.org.au



In 2009 NEMICS published a directory of services available to people affected by cancer who live in Melbourne's northern and eastern suburbs.

An updated and searchable electronic version of the directory is now available at www.FindCancerCare.org.au

If you are aware of a service that should be listed in the directory, please go to the "contact us" tab on the website and select the option "request addition of new service". Alternatively email us at contactus@nemics.org.au