

Rural Palliative Care Project

Newsletter
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The Rural Palliative Care Project –The Southern Highlands Division of General Practice will manage this project with funding from the Department of Health and Ageing through the Australian General Practice Network. Our aim is to consider and develop processes which will assist in delivering high quality consistent care to palliative patients within the Wingecarribee Shire.

This project will focus strongly on multidisciplinary and team approaches to care and education. It aims to consider all aspects of patient care - medical treatment, nursing care, allied health input, psychosocial and spiritual support and carer concerns including bereavement support.

Support from our project partner the Wingecarribee Community Health Service and Bowral Hospital, the Southern Highlands Private Hospital, local residential aged care facilities and nursing agencies has been most encouraging and we look forward to working with their enthusiastic staff.



A Local Advisory Panel provides guidance in the management and direction of the project. The group is pictured here at a working breakfast meeting.

Focus groups have been held with GPs and hospital nursing representatives to gain insight into how the present Palliative Care Service operates and to consider possible improvements. There have also been meetings with the **social work** department and the **pastoral care** committee. We are fortunate to have Anna Chetan Bloemhard from the Mid North Coast Division of General Practice to provide **Spirituality Workshop** to be held on **Saturday, 13th June** at Satori Springs, Canyonleigh. This event will be sponsored by PEPA – Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach.



The Program launch - “*It’s the Journey not the Destination*” held on 19th February provided an opportunity from GPs, nurse and other health professionals to meet over dinner. The highlight of the evening was an excellent presentation by Dr. Amanda Walker, Director and Medical Specialist for SSWAHS Palliative Care Service.



Jane Mahony joins the team as the Clinical Nurse Project Officer.

Jane, a local Palliative Care CNC will be working with the RPCP for 2 days per week for 24 weeks, her role is to trial the use of the **Liverpool Hospital End of Life Care Pathway** in the local area. This will be piloted at the Southern Highlands Private Hospital and The Abbey Nursing Home. Jane will be providing education about the pathway and other aspects of clinical practice to nursing and other health staff.

The Link Nurse Program – this part of the project brings nurse representatives from the public and private hospitals, community health and private duty nursing agencies, residential aged care facilities and practice nurses together for education and discussion. The program aims are for these nurses to become the expert resource personnel within their organizations, to assist with the distribution of information to other staff including management and family carers and to assist in policy development, communication and collaboration with GPs, other allied health staff, the patients and families/carers. An education needs survey has been completed and monthly education sessions have been organized by Jane, it will include sessions from her and other expert speakers.

Contact: Margaret Mogg, the RPCP Coordinator on 48 616084 or email Margaret@shdivgp.com.au for any additional information about the Project.