

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2006

Queensland

6-Week Course Commencing 10 October and again on 21 November 2006

Caring for a person with a life-limiting illness
Direct Enquiries to Donna of Spiritus Care
Services 3286 2755

24 November 2006

Conference
Spiritual Connectedness:
Sustaining hope and compassion.
Sunshine Coast
For anyone who is a caregiver to someone
at the end of life or who would like to learn
more about spirituality, compassion and hope.
Direct Enquiries to Cittamani Hospice Service
(07)5445 0822

16th-20th October

Abstract Deadline: 8 September 2006

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Health
Care Symposium
Direct Enquiries to 3636 1524

National

8-9 September 2006

The Inaugural Palliative Care Nurses
Australia Conference
Strength in Working Together
Melbourne, Australia
Direct E-mail Enquiries to
sharni.randall@med.monash.edu.au

4-6 October 2006

Australia and New Zealand Society of
Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) Conference
Newcastle, Australia
Website: www.anzspm.org.au

International

26-28 October 2006

The 17th Hospice New Zealand Palliative
Care and New Zealand Pain Society
Conference
Dunedin, New Zealand
Website: www.hospice.org.nz

The Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC)—can it contribute to improved standards and quality in palliative care?

With funding for 3 years (ending in 2008) from
the Australian Government, PCOC aims to
develop and support a national benchmarking
system that will contribute to improve palliative
care outcomes. PCOC is working with palliative
care service providers to:

- Develop consistency in data collection
- Provide evidence through the collection and
analysis of data
- Assist with quality and standards reporting
- Provide a benchmarking service
- Promote and support palliative care research.

As a voluntary, quality initiative, the challenge
is to accommodate the varying models of
care and practices amongst palliative care
service providers throughout Australia. The
difference in current data collection practices
is vast—from sophisticated data collection to
none. Considerable work is required with some
services before they can start to collect data.

It has taken several months to develop and trial
the first version of the PCOC data set, which
includes demographic, episode and phase data.
It is an iterative process and in time will lead to a
second version. Lead service providers in each
state have begun to collect data and, as practices
become established, additional services will be

encouraged to join. When a service agrees to
join PCOC, Zone Coordinators meet with senior
administration staff of each service, followed
by meetings with clinical staff. Discussions
with service providers include an assessment
of current data collection methods and how
extraction and mapping issues can be resolved.

Feedback from services providers has led the
PCOC team to conclude that the Version 1 data
set requires improved definitions and guidelines
as well as the introduction of systematic training
programs for those responsible for collecting
PCOC data. If PCOC is to collect valid data that
can be benchmarked, it must ensure consistency
in understanding and interpreting PCOC data
items. PCOC staff are now working on the
development of training modules in clinical data
items. Training programs will be conducted for
trainers nominated by service providers who will
in turn train staff with responsibility for collecting
clinical data items for PCOC. This approach has
been strongly endorsed by lead services.

Participating service providers will receive their
first report later this year with the expectation
that this will become a half-yearly publication.
The extent to which these reports can be used by
services and assist with their standards reporting
will be a big determinant of the value of PCOC
to palliative care service providers.

The PCOC Scientific and Clinical Advisory
Committee (SCAC), which considers issues
relating to quality and standards, education and
training, research and benchmarking, highlight
the challenges ahead for PCOC and the benefits
to services if the project is successful.

For more information about PCOC and
contact details for the Zone Coordinators
visit the PCOC Website at <[http://uow.edu.
au/commerce/pcoc](http://uow.edu.au/commerce/pcoc)>.

Prue Watters, PCOC Manager
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CENTRE LINE

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The Centre

The Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education is an initiative of
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