

## ANZSPM eNews – 17 November 2019

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### Government News

#### NZ: End of Life Choice Bill

On 13 November 2019, the third reading of the End of Life Choice Bill took place in Wellington. In the subsequent conscience vote, the bill was passed by 69 votes to 51. It will now go to a public referendum at next year's NZ general election.

ANZSPM previously made a submission outlining our published position on assisted dying and opposition to the bill, and joined Hospice NZ and Palliative Care Nurses NZ on 12 November 2019 at a MP/media panel in a united sector position opposing the draft bill. You can view ANZSPM President A/Prof Leeroy William's address as part of the panel on [ANZSPM's website](#).

#### Council of Australian Governments (COAG) – Palliative care items

Health Ministers from the Commonwealth, each state and territory and New Zealand met in Perth on 31 October – 1 November at the COAG Health Council to discuss a range of national health issues. Three major palliative care items were included on the agenda:

- Progress update on the implementation of the Comprehensive Palliative Care in Aged Care Measure, with Ministers agreeing to work in partnership to improve access to palliative care in residential aged care facilities.
- Potential amendment to the Medicare Benefits Schedule – Advance Care Planning.
- Palliative care education for clinical staff: Health Ministers asked the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council to consider adopting a national approach to support the update of existing palliative care education for all clinical staff who provide care to palliative care patients.

For more information read the COAG Health Council communique [here](#).

#### Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Interim Report

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's Interim Report, entitled 'Neglect' was [released](#) on 1 November. The Interim Report found that the Australian aged care system fails to meet the needs of older citizens in the delivery of safe and quality care. Seven major quality and safety issues have been highlighted by the Commission, including patchy and fragmented palliative care for residents who are dying, creating unnecessary distress for both the dying person and their family. Read the full report [here](#).

#### Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety: Workforce submissions

Following the third Melbourne hearing, which focused on workforce issues, the Aged Care Royal Commission announced on 30 October 2019 that it is seeking written submissions relating specifically to the aged care workforce. Issues can relate to:

- Staffing levels
- Registration schemes
- Remuneration and working conditions
- Skill, knowledge and competency levels of staff
- Workforce leadership
- Institutional changes

Policy submissions will be accepted until close of business on Friday 6 December 2019. To make a submission, visit the Workforce Submissions page and follow the instructions.

### **Funding boost for GP telehealth**

From 1 November 2019, GPs will be able to conduct regular telehealth consultations with their patients in remote areas, with rebates available through the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Minister for Health Greg Hunt announced that the Federal Government will invest \$45.5 million over three years for this initiative, which aims to encourage patients to maintain a strong relationship with their existing GP.

## **ANZSPM Updates**

### **ANZSPM Annual General Meeting slides**

The slides from the ANZSPM Annual General Meeting are now available in the Members area under “Notices” (please login to view).

### **ANZSPM Webinar 5 recording: Clinical ethics to help with decisions around nutrition & hydration**

A recording of ANZSPM webinar 5 on using clinical ethics to help with decisions around nutrition and hydration presented by Dr Linda Sheahan and Dr Helen Irving is now available online via RACPs Youtube channel and under the RACP member login here.

### **Feedback sought from NZ members: PHARMAC clinical advice regarding sublingual fentanyl tablets for BTCP**

ANZSPM’s Aotearoa Committee has received an invitation from PHARMAC for comment on clinical advice regarding sublingual fentanyl tablets for BTCP.

At its meeting in March 2018, the Analgesics Subcommittee reviewed an application from a pharmaceutical supplier to list fentanyl sublingual tablets in Section B and Section H of the Pharmaceutical Schedule for the treatment of breakthrough cancer pain. The Subcommittee noted the health need of patients with BTCP, the low-quality evidence in support of fentanyl sublingual tablets, the availability of funded alternatives, and the significant risks of harm with divergence of fentanyl sublingual tablets. The Subcommittee considered that on balance, the risks of societal harm outweighs the benefits, and recommended that this application to fund fentanyl sublingual tablets for the treatment of BTCP be declined. The Subcommittee considered that PHARMAC staff should forward a copy of these minutes to key palliative care groups within New Zealand for comment. You can read full details of the discussion on pages 10 – 13 of the meeting record which is available on the PHARMAC website.

If ANZSPM members would like to provide comment, please email info@anzspm.org.au with “PHARMAC feedback” in the subject line.

## Other updates

### **Pain Australia: New National Pain Services Directory launched**

A new [national Pain Services Directory](#) was launched at Parliament House on 23 October. Federal Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP announced that more than 200 pain treatment services would be listed and mapped, ensuring that people living with chronic pain are able to access treatment that is appropriate and effective for their needs.

### **NPS Medicinewise Education program**

Pain Australia has partnered with NPS MedicineWise on a new education program, *[Opioids, chronic pain and the bigger picture](#)* that aims to equip health professionals and consumers with tools and resources to reduce the harms of opioids while ensuring adequate pain management and quality of life for people with chronic non-cancer pain.

### **ELDAC home care toolkit**

The End of Life Directions for Aged Care (ELDAC) [website](#) contains a home care toolkit to assist staff working in aged care services supporting clients at home to provide information and resources on providing palliative care and advance care planning. Access the toolkit [here](#).

## Upcoming ANZSPM Events

### **ANZSPM Aotearoa Palliative MDT Retreat – 3-5 April 2020**

The ANZSPM Aotearoa Committee is hosting a multidisciplinary team retreat over three days on the theme “Exploring resilience within palliative and end of life care” in April 2020.

*Where:* Silverstream Retreat, 3 Reynolds Bach Drive, Lower Hutt Wellington, NZ

*Who:* Suitable for all professionals working in palliative care.

*What:* The aim of the retreat is to allow you to return to your place of work affirmed, invigorated, motivated and refreshed.

More information, including program and pricing, will be shared in due course with members via email and on the website [events page](#).

To enquire about the retreat please email [nzadmin@anzspm.org.au](mailto:nzadmin@anzspm.org.au)

### **SAVE THE DATE: ANZSPM Conference 2020, 17-20 September 2020 | Auckland, NZ**

The ANZSPM Conference 2020 will be held at the Pullman, Auckland from 17 to 20 September 2020. More details coming soon: [www.anzspm.org.au/anzspm20](http://www.anzspm.org.au/anzspm20).

## Other Upcoming Events

Other upcoming events that may be of interest to members:

### **PCOC Outcomes & Benchmarking Conference: *Improving palliative outcomes for patients & families*, 20-21 November 2019 | Sydney, NSW**

This international gathering will build upon and showcase key initiatives and developments in outcome measurement for patients and families affected by life-limiting illness and mark an exciting new direction for outcome measurement in palliative care in Australia and internationally. For more information and to register, please visit the Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration conference website: <https://www.pcoconference.com.au/>

### **Renal Supportive Care Masterclass, 29 November 2019 | St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne**

The aim of the one-day Masterclass is to provide clinicians with an educational event using the highest level of evidence drawn from the national and international literature combined with local experience in Renal Supportive Care. The target audience is Nephrology and Palliative Care Physicians, advanced trainees, nursing, management and allied health professionals with an interest in Renal Supportive Care. Registrations are open [here](#). There will be 10% off for trainees, students and Renal Society of Australasia members (enter 10PCOFF in the Promocode box). For further information please email [centre.palliativecare@svha.org.au](mailto:centre.palliativecare@svha.org.au)

**Pain Management Research Institute Symposium: “Descending the Analgesic Ladder: The how, when and why of opioid de-prescribing”, 29 November 2019 | Sydney NSW**

Current guidelines recommend de-prescribing opioids for patients with chronic pain, however de-prescribing opioids in this population is challenging and a source of confusion for clinicians and patients alike. This symposium brings together local and international experts to address the complex challenges of de-prescribing opioid medications. To read more and register, please click [here](#).

**Palliative Care in Queensland Annual Summit, 2 December 2019 | Brisbane, QLD**

The Palliative Care in Queensland Annual Summit is an annual sector check-up. This innovative event includes a two-hour State and National update, roundtables (resulting in sector position statements), presentations, posters and exhibitors. To read the program and to register, please click [here](#).

**Empathy Symposium, 7 December 2019 | UTS Sydney, Australia**

The UTS Empathy Symposium on Friday 7 December 2019 will explore the need to embed empathy in Australian healthcare education and practice. The symposium will showcase the [Virtual Empathy Museum](#) (VEM), which is a new digital resource funded by an Australian Technology Network of Universities grant. See [here](#) for more details or to register to attend.

**MND NZ Research Conference, 9 December 2019 | Auckland NZ**

MND New Zealand, in association with the NZ MND Research Network, will be hosting the Inaugural MND New Zealand Research Conference on the 9th December in Auckland. This is your opportunity to learn more about the latest developments in MND research and advances in the clinical management of MND. Speakers at the MND New Zealand Research conference are international experts in their field and key members of the New Zealand research community. Early bird pricing is available until 4 November with discounted pricing for students, people with MND and their carers. Click here (link=<https://events.mnd.org.nz/research-conference/>) to register or find out more. Please contact [claire.reilly@mnd.org.nz](mailto:claire.reilly@mnd.org.nz) with any queries or questions.

**Building Palliative Care Clinical Research in NZ Workshop, 14 February 2020 | Wellington NZ**

IMPACCT (University of Technology) in conjunction with Capital and Coast District Health Board (NZ) and Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCCSC) are running a workshop to introduce clinical research to new or experienced researchers in New Zealand.

Who should attend? Anyone with an interest in learning more about PaCCSC and conducting clinical research in palliative care. The workshop will be multi-disciplinary in focus.

Symptoms of Focus – Pain, Fatigue, Breathlessness, Appetite & Cachexia, Nausea, Cognitive & Neurological Disorders, Gut Dysfunction

A call for new study concepts will open in November 2019. Online registration will open soon via Eventbrite. Contact [PaCCSC@uts.edu.au](mailto:PaCCSC@uts.edu.au) for more information

**Advanced European bioethics course “Suffering, Death & Palliative Care”, 24-27 March 2020 | Netherlands**

The course is organised by the section of Healthcare Ethics, IQ Healthcare, Radboud University Medical Centre and the aim is to educate participants on a range of ethical issues related to suffering and dying, palliative care and medically assisted death. The key-note lecture will be held by Els van

Wijngaarden PhD, associate professor and researcher, Dept. of Care Ethics, University for Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, the Netherlands. More information [here](#). Direct registration: [registration](#). Contact: Valesca Hulsman: [Valesca.Hulsman@radboudumc.nl](mailto:Valesca.Hulsman@radboudumc.nl).

### **2020 Australian Pain Society 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting | 5-8 April 2020 | Hobart TAS**

This is the only multidisciplinary conference in Australia offering insights into the complex nature of pain management from a variety of medical, nursing and allied health perspectives. Further information is at [www.dccconferences.com.au/aps2020/](http://www.dccconferences.com.au/aps2020/)

### **Careers**

New positions have recently been advertised on the ANZSPM website – visit the ANZSPM [Careers](#) pages for details!

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Our standard office hours: Mon-Thurs 9.15am-2.45pm AEST

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