

## ANZSPM Member eNews – 18 December 2020

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### ANZSPM Christmas message



Dear ANZSPM members,

2020 has been an unprecedented year for everyone and very busy for the ANZSPM office and Council. As we reflect on the past year, we would like to thank our members for their ongoing support and contribution to The Australian and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine.

Apart from adapting to working during a global pandemic, we had the pleasure of hosting ANZSPM's first virtual conference, as well as trialling our own ANZSPM webinar series for our trainee members. We were thrilled to have 250 attendees at our virtual conference. ANZSPM would like to acknowledge our members and their volunteer contributions to this important event, as it would not have been possible without you.

On behalf of everyone at ANZSPM, we hope you have a restful and safe holiday period and we look forward to working with you in the New Year. Our office will be closed from 25 December until 4 January 2021.

### COVID-19 updates

#### Australian COVID-19 Palliative Care Working Group (ACPCWG)

ANZSPM continues to work with the ACPCWG on supporting the palliative care response to COVID-19 in partnership with Palliative Care Australia (PCA), Palliative Care Nurses Australia (PCNA), the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine (AChPM) of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) and the End of Life Directions for Aged Care (ELDAC) program.

Other ACPCWG-related updates and resources are below:

- Latest ACPCWG newsletter (16 December 2020)
- Previous ACPCWG newsletter (21 October 2020)
- An online hub of resources can be found on the CareSearch website.

### **ANZSPM COVID-19 Special Interest Group (COVID-19 SIG) guidance documents**

ANZSPM guidance documents developed by the COVID-19 SIG relating to palliative care in the COVID-19 context are available here. With further updates coming soon! ANZSPM members are encouraged to use and distribute these documents at their workplace. You can download the guidance documents here.

### **NEW: Palliative care flow chart published by National COVID19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce**

The National COVID19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce published its new MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH COVID-19 WHO ARE RECEIVING PALLIATIVE CARE flowchart.

### **NZ Taskforce on COVID-19**

COVID-19 related resources for NZ health care professionals can be found hosted on the Hospice NZ website here.

### **AUS: Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for the health and aged care sector**

The Australian Department of Health regularly provides up-to-date and authoritative information and advice on COVID-19 for the health and aged care sector here.

### **NZ: Health advice and latest updates on COVID-19**

The Ministry of Health in New Zealand provides regular updates, information and health advice on COVID-19 on its website here.

### **ANZSPM updates**



ANZSPM AOTEAROA  
PALLIATIVE  
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM  
RETREAT  
5 - 7 MARCH 2021  
HANMER SPRINGS RETREAT  
HANMER SPRINGS, NZ

Join the ANZSPM Aotearoa Committee for a 3-Day MDT retreat exploring resilience within palliative & end of life care.

Suitable for all health & social care professionals involved in palliative & end-of-life care.

Registrations now open!

### **REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN: ANZSPM Aotearoa Palliative MDT Retreat –5-7 March 2021**

The ANZSPM Aotearoa Committee is delighted to announce that it will be hosting a multidisciplinary team retreat over 3 days on the theme of *“Exploring resilience within palliative and end of life care”* on 5 – 7 March 2021 in Hanmer Springs, NZ. The aim of the retreat is to allow you to return to your place of work affirmed, invigorated, motivated and refreshed. For the program and to register via Eventbrite, please click here.

### **NEW EDITION! ANZSPM December 2020 newsletter published**

ANZSPM published its December 2020 newsletter which includes reflections on ANZSPM20 from the conference co-chairs and some attendees. It also includes a transcript of the Rosalie Shaw Oration by Prof Rod MacLeod. You can download a copy of the newsletter from the member section on our website here. Members who have elected to receive hard copies of the newsletter will receive them by post shortly.

## Government News

### **AUS: MBS Review Taskforce Final Report**

In June 2019 ANZSPM made a submission to the MBS Review Taskforce. The Taskforce's final advice to the Australian Government, including its recommendations, was published on 14 December and is now available on the Department of Health website. ANZSPM made a submission to the review, which is available here. To access the MBS reports, please click here.

### **AUS: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care publishes revision of the *Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard***

ACSQHC published the revised Standard on 24 November 2020. ANZSPM provided input into the Standard via the RACP's submission. Note the Commission has added wording on adverse reactions (p19) and around the value of patient indicators although they have avoided being specific. To download the revised Standard, please click here.

### **NZ: NZ Aotearoa Aged Residential Care Pandemic Response policy published**

On 17 December 20, the Ministry of Health published the New Zealand Aotearoa Aged Residential Care Pandemic Response Policy online resulting in nationally consistent guidance for aged residential care (ARC) stakeholders to prepare for, prevent and respond to any epidemic or pandemic. The Ministry has been working across the sector to develop this Policy, as part of its work to deliver the action plan for the recommendations of the independent review of COVID-19 clusters in ARC facilities. In early 2021, the Ministry will begin user-testing a COVID-19 toolkit for ARC facilities that will be an accompanying resource to the New Zealand Aotearoa Aged Residential Care Pandemic Response Policy. For more information, please click here.

### **TAS: Independent review on End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Bill 2020 calls for submission**

On December 3 & 4, the Tasmanian House of Assembly debated the merits of the End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Bill 2020. In the debate, seven MPs took a stand against euthanasia and assisted suicide. The Bill will come back to the Tasmanian Parliament for a debate over amendments in the week of March 2, 2021. Over the summer an independent review of the Bill will be conducted by the University of Tasmania. ANZSPM is considering making a submission. For more information, click here.

### **AIHW report: Australian bushfires 2019-20: exploring the short-term health impacts**

The 2019–20 bushfire season saw unprecedented fires sweep across Australia with a massive impact on many communities, devastating the natural environment and compromising air quality. This report examines a range of health data sources to assess the short-term health impacts of the bushfires, including emergency department visits, prescription and purchase of asthma medicines, mental health service use and GP visits. Results show clear associations between increased bushfire activity, including poor air quality, and people seeking assistance for their health. To read the report, please click here.

## Other updates

### **RACP: Case study and research project markers needed in Palliative Medicine**

RACP have advised that they are looking for members to join their Palliative Medicine Marking Panel. The panel assists with case study and/or project marking for their Advanced Training and Clinical Diploma trainees. Marking guidelines with FAQs will be sent to new markers to assist the process. As a marker, you can advise:

- how many and frequently you would like to receive marking requests
- when you are unavailable to mark (on leave, taking a break etc.)
- your preferences to mark case studies or projects only.

Voluntarily dedicating your time and expertise to mark case studies and research projects can also earn you Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits and can be included on your CV. For more information on joining their marking panel, please see the following link If you have any questions please

contact the Palliative Medicine Education Officers via +61 2 9256 5444 or email [PalliativeMedTraining@racp.edu.au](mailto:PalliativeMedTraining@racp.edu.au).

### **Australian National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce survey**

SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS #HealthcareProfessionals are invited to participate in a brief survey to help us understand how the guidelines & flowcharts are being used, & how we can improve the value of our guidance. <http://bit.ly/TaskforceSurvey> Click here for the survey which will take approximately **20 minutes** to complete and will close today **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020**.

### **PCA launches new outcomes paper**

Palliative Care Australia launched a new outcomes paper on [Palliative Care and COVID-19: Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health](#) at their Parliamentary Friends of Palliative Care forum. The paper provides recommendations for policy makers, health and aged care leaders and professionals, and consumers and carers to meet the mental health, grief and bereavement needs of Australians during the current pandemic and any future pandemics or disasters.

### **Palliative Care Australia holds online Parliamentary Friends of Palliative forum**

On 4 December 2020, PCA held an invite-only live-streamed event hosted by ABC broadcaster, Dr Norman Swan, and Parliamentary Friends of Palliative Care Co-Convenors, Senator Catryna Bilyk and The Hon Nola Marino MP. The online forum was an opportunity to reflect on the issues that have emerged for palliative care during the pandemic and also the activities and issues addressed by the Australian COVID-19 Palliative Care Working Group. More information on the event including the video is available [here](#).

### **OP-ED: Saving the baby: palliative care and the opioid debate**

In this MJA Insight+ op-ed, authors, Prof Meera Agar and colleagues say opioids must remain an essential part of the pharmacological options needed to help someone living with a life-limiting illness. **Full text:** <https://bit.ly/3g2dYhl>

### **ARTICLE: How views of oncologists and haematologists impact palliative care referral: A systematic review**

*BMC Palliative Care* | Online – 23 November 2020 – The findings of this review suggest that some oncologists and haematologists liked to control and coordinate the care of their patients at all stages of illness trajectories and determine the timing of referral. They considered palliative care (PC) referral as abandonment, a break in the therapeutic relationship and loss of hope. They also expressed concerns regarding the professional competency of the PC providers and felt that they had the self-efficacy to manage the PC needs. Although illness-related factors acted as triggers for PC referral, the stigma associated with PC, patient and family attitudes, organisational challenges, lack of referral guidelines and limited PC resources made referral a daunting task. The findings of this review suggest that the majority of oncologists appreciated the pain and symptom management and psychosocial support role of PC. Lesser-known roles of PC were seldom elucidated. Some oncologists and haematologists felt that PC referral comes with a cost due to incongruencies in communication and curtailment of care. They felt that an integrated model of care, changing the name of PC and augmenting PC resources might facilitate a referral. There is a need for PC trainees to have training in oncology, and likewise, there is a need for oncology trainees to have PC training. PC providers regularly joining the multidisciplinary team meetings might provide an excellent opportunity for both the teams to bond and build confidence, which could better inter-team communication. Moreover, to facilitate integration, a rebranding strategy is probably required. **Full text:** <https://bit.ly/3m042HD>

### **ARTICLE: Barriers in implementing the dying patient law: The Israeli experience – qualitative study**

*BMC Medical Ethics* | Online – 11 December 2020 – In Israel and the western world, the relationship between clinician-care teams and patients is strong. Medical teams in the community are in daily contact with elderly and sick populations. However, the proportionate increase in the elderly population of developed economies

such as Israel in relation to the number of medical teams will, in the not-too distant future, strain care team access to this demographic. This will thus affect implementation of laws dealing with end-of-life (EoL). It is recommended that the role of the family doctor in EoL treatment should be strengthened. The structure and response of the units for home treatment should be taken into account, to enable greater accessibility to homes for the aged, medical assistance housing, and hospice homes that can provide appropriate response to EoL patient needs. At the same time, awareness must be raised among the general population, medical staff as well as other therapists in the health system. This is needed to channel the resources, knowledge, support, and tools to these medical teams for improving treatment and responding to patients who need information and support for mastering EoL laws, with the aim of promoting the legitimate rights of all citizens who are at the end of their lives. **Full text:** <https://bit.ly/3maEM0z>

## Upcoming Events 2021

**Please note:** In light of the evolving situation around the current COVID-19 pandemic, many events previously promoted in our eNews may have been postponed, cancelled or moved to a virtual format. ANZSPM recommends members check this directly with event organisers!

### 2021 EVENTS

#### **ANZSPM Aotearoa Palliative MDT Retreat –5-7 March 2021**

The ANZSPM Aotearoa Committee is hosting a multidisciplinary team retreat over 3 days on the theme of “*Exploring resilience within palliative and end of life care*” on 5 – 7 March 2021 in Hanmer Springs, NZ. More information to follow soon.

#### **Kidney Supportive Care Symposium | 12 March 2021 | Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital Education Centre**

The 2021 Kidney Supportive Care Symposium will be an opportunity to hear from leading international and local speakers on the latest in Kidney Supportive Care. This Symposium is targeted at renal and palliative care clinicians across all disciplines, academics, and consumers. This symposium is a blended event and can be attended in person or on-line. Event Program and registration details TBA. For further information please email [Laura.Austin@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:Laura.Austin@health.qld.gov.au)

#### **PaCCSC & CST Annual Research Forum 2021: Clinical Trials in a Changing World | 11-12 March 2021 | via ZOOM**

This will be a joint forum that brings together leaders in palliative care & cancer symptom management. For more information about the program and speakers, [click here](#). To register, [click here](#).

#### **Advanced European bioethics course “Suffering, Death and Palliative Care”, Nijmegen, the Netherlands, 16-19 March 2021**

This course is organized by the section of Healthcare Ethics, IQ healthcare (Radboud University Medical Centre). More information at: <https://bit.ly/2eqVZ4A>

#### **Australian Pain Society 41st Annual Scientific Meeting | 18-21 April 2021 | National Convention Centre, Canberra**

More information at [dconferences.com.au/aps2021/](https://dconferences.com.au/aps2021/)

#### **7th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium | 24-25 May 2021 | Alice Springs, NT**

<https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/7rrhss/>

## Careers

For the latest positions advertised on the ANZSPM website – visit the ANZSPM Careers pages for details!

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