

## ANZSPM Member eNews – 12 February 2021

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### ANZSPM updates

Our ANZSPM Aotearoa Palliative Multidisciplinary Team Retreat –5-7 March 2021 in Hanmer Springs, NZ is nearly here, have you registered yet?



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!

Early bird registrations have just been extended to Monday 15 February and we would love you to join us to explore the theme of *"Exploring resilience within palliative and end of life care"* in beautiful Hanmer Springs, South Island, New Zealand. This unique event, for health and social care professionals involved in palliative and end-of-life care, brings together speakers from diverse backgrounds with experience in end-of-life settings. The aim of the conference is to stimulate debate and out of the box thinking, whilst also providing a context for reflection, renewal and restoration. Come and hear **Ben Booker, Eddie Condra, Liese Groot-Alberts, Fiona Hewerdine, Heather McLeod, Wendy Pattemore, Diana Saunders** and **Willem Vink** speak. For the full program, detailed speaker profiles and to register, please click [here](#).



ANZSPM AOTEAROA  
2021 TRAINEE & NEW  
FELLOW DAY  
4 MARCH 2021  
NURSE MAUDE HOSPICE  
CHRISTCHURCH, NZ

ANZSPM Aotearoa Trainees & New Fellows are invited to join us for the

2021 ANZSPM Aotearoa Trainee & New Fellow Day

A day full of training workshops, lectures and discussion.

Registrations now open!

### **2021 ANZSPM Aotearoa Trainee & New Fellow Day | 4 March 2021 | Christchurch, NZ**

ANZSPM trainees are invited to attend the ANZSPM Aotearoa 2021 Trainee and New Fellow Day on 4 March 2021 at the Nurse Maude Hospice in Christchurch, NZ. This full day of training workshops, lectures and discussion is an opportunity for Palliative Care trainees to engage with some of the leading practitioners in the field and to learn the latest and developing methodologies in Palliative Care practice. For the full program and to register (via Eventbrite), please click [here](#).

### **RECORDING NOW AVAILABLE: ANZSPM Aotearoa virtual Information session on Dexmedetomidine**

The recording of last week's ANZSPM Dexmedetomidine information session with Dr Lana Ferguson is now available in the members area of our website [here](#), allowing ANZSPM members to (re-) watch the session at their leisure. The recording has also been sent to everyone who registered for the event. Due to the excellent response we received to this first session, we are planning to continue this niche drug seminar series. Please look out for future communications from us to make sure that you are registered for the next session.

### **Western Pacific Palliative Care Advocacy Network (WPPCAN)**

ANZSPM is continuing its close involvement with the Western Pacific Palliative Care Advocacy Network (WPPCAN), a newly formed network of organisations and experts committed to promoting quality palliative care across the Western Pacific region. After a successful inaugural meeting in December 2020, WPPCAN plans to meet throughout 2021 to develop a strong palliative care advocacy agenda. The next WPPCAN workshop is taking place next Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 12:00-14:00 AEST. If you are interested in attending this workshop, please email us at [info@anzspm.org.au](mailto:info@anzspm.org.au) for more details.

## **COVID-19 updates**

### **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](#). ANZSPM members are encouraged to use and distribute these documents at their workplace. The Group met on February 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss recent developments and optimal responses to new challenges, including decisions around prioritisation of vaccinations and the application of clinical benefit and best interest tests, and restrictions on visitation. New guidance documents on medication access and symptom management will be available on the ANZSPM website shortly!

### **National COVID19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce**

Following a well-earned break, the Taskforce team has now returned to full capacity. Latest guidance on caring for people with COVID-19 includes oestrogen-containing therapies, bamlanivimab, colchicine, ivermectin and tocilizumab. The Taskforce looks forward to continuing to keep Australian clinicians armed with the latest evidence-based guidance. You can review the Taskforce Living Guidelines [here](#)

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

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

### **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.

### **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.

## **Government News**

### **AUS: Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety publishes new research**

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has published the following new research papers which are available via the link below:

[Research Paper 19 – Does the quality of residential aged care vary with residents’ financial means?](#)  
[Research Paper 18 – Hospitalisations in Australian Aged Care: 2014/15–2018/19](#)

### **TAS: Inquiry into Rural Health Services**

ANZSPM is currently preparing a submission to the Tasmanian Government’s *Inquiry into Rural Health Services*, in consultation with the ANZSPM Rural & Remote SIG and the ANZSPM VIC/TAS Policy Advisory Committee. If you would like to be involved in this submission process, please contact us at [info@anzspm.org.au](mailto:info@anzspm.org.au).

## **Other updates**

### **NEW: RACP Clinical Ethics Position Statement**

The RACP has published a Clinical Ethics Position Statement which was produced by a RACP Clinical Ethics Working Party led by Dr Linda Sheahan. The statement recognises that **ethics is fundamental to clinical practice**. During the development of the position statement other medical colleges in Australia, New Zealand, and around the world were approached. Responses and information received from many sources have helped to inform this work. RACP has also created a page of clinical ethics resources on its website that accompanies the Position Statement. More information, please click here.

### **RACP: NEW Ep67: Boosting Public Health in the Indo-Pacific**

This is the fourth and final part in the series on Global Health Security. Australia's Indo-Pacific Centre for Health Security was launched in 2017 to provide development assistance to health services in countries such as Fiji, Cambodia and Timor L'este. Its mission is always tailored to the needs of the partner government. In Indonesia it has provided training to the veterinary sector to foster antimicrobial stewardship. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic was a sudden shock to the development agenda and has forced a rapid redeployment of resources. Since recording this interview there has been an additional \$500 million dollar commitment to fund doses of COVID-19 vaccine and technical assistance to the Pacific and Southeast Asia. To access the podcast, [click here](#).

### **RACP CPD in 2020 and 2021: Important information for physicians**

#### 2020

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the RACP CPD team can confirm that it is not mandatory to record your CPD activities in MyCPD for 2020, although it is encouraged where possible. Your 2020 MyCPD record will remain open until 31 March 2021 if you wish to record your activities.

#### 2021

The MBA and MCNZ have decided that medical practitioners will need to resume meeting CPD requirements from 2021. Please review the RACP 2021 MyCPD framework to ensure you are familiar with your requirements and explore the College's CPD resources in the MyCPD Interactive Handbook and the Online Learning Resources platform. As always, please don't hesitate to contact the CPD Team if you have any questions (AU: 1300 697 227 or MyCPD@racp.edu.au NZ: 64 4 460 8122 or MyCPD@racp.org.nz)

### **WHO issues new guidelines on the management of chronic pain in children**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued new guidelines on the management of chronic pain in children, which provide recommended physical, psychological and pharmacological interventions for pain relief in children aged 0-19 years. For more information, [click here](#).

### **PhD opportunity at UNSW to research end of life issues**

UNSW Canberra and Palliative Care ACT are seeking PhD/MPhil candidates to research end of life issues, helping them to further the support, understand and evidence base for end of life care in the ACT. For more information, [click here](#).

### **ARTICLE: Currow DC, Glare P, Louw S, Martin P, Clark K, Fazekas B, Agar MR.: 'A randomised, double blind, placebo-controlled trial of megestrol acetate or dexamethasone in treating symptomatic anorexia in people with advanced cancer'**

Nature Scientific Reports | 28th of January 21 | This multi-site, double blind, parallel arm, fixed dose, randomised placebo controlled phase III study compared megestrol acetate 480 mg/day with dexamethasone 4 mg/day for their net effects on appetite in people with cancer anorexia. Patients with advanced cancer and anorexia for  $\geq 2$  weeks with a score  $\leq 4$  (0-10 numeric rating scale (NRS) 0 = no appetite, 10 = best possible appetite) were recruited. Participants received megestrol 480 mg or dexamethasone 4 mg or placebo daily for up to 4 weeks. Primary outcomes were at day 7. Responders were defined as having a  $\geq 25\%$  improvement in NRS over baseline. There were 190 people randomised (megestrol acetate n = 61; dexamethasone n = 67, placebo n = 62). At week 1 (primary endpoint), 79.3% in the megestrol group, 65.5% in the dexamethasone group and 58.5% in

the placebo group ( $p = 0.067$ ) were responders. No differences in performance status or quality of life were reported. Treatment emergent adverse events were frequent (90.4% of participants), and included altered mood and insomnia. Hyperglycemia and deep vein thromboses were more frequent when on dexamethasone than the other two arms. There was no difference in groups between the three arms, with no benefit seen over placebo with anorexia improving in all arms.

Congratulations to ANZSPM members David Currow, Meera Agar and the other authors on this recently published paper.

**Full article:** DOI: 10.1038/s41598-021-82120-8

**ARTICLE: “Flattening” one curve: What about “raising the line” on the other? COVID-19 and palliative care in low-income and middle-income countries**

*BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care* | Online – 4 February 2021 – The death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the public to the reality of death and dying, raising awareness of the fragility of one’s mortality. It has revealed to many care professionals and policymakers the need for integrated, comprehensive care provision across public health and medical services, including palliative and end-of-life care. With large disparities in the capacity of health systems globally prior to the pandemic, inequity in the response to COVID-19-related palliative care (PC) needs was inevitable across low-income, middle-income and high-income countries. Importantly, the immediacy of the dialogue around COVID-19 response preparedness has largely muted calls around the need to enhance PC service provision in low-income and middle-income countries, and the longer term development necessary to inform future disease outbreaks specifically and the needs of the dying generally. PC was initially deprioritised in the contagion compared with efforts aimed at curbing the infection, medical management and vaccine development. However, escalating admissions to high-income countries intensive care units increased awareness of the prevalence of patient symptoms that can be highly distressing, including breathlessness, pain and delirium. They also highlighted the often poor quality of dying and death of those affected by COVID-19, and the grieving needs of bereaved families and friends, colleagues and communities, challenging the feasibility of individualistic Western conceptions of a “good death.” **Full text:** <http://bit.ly/36KcFR4>

**ARTICLE: PSST! I need help! Development of a peer support program for clinicians having serious illness conversations during COVID-19**

*Journal of General Internal Medicine* | Online – 24 January 2021 – Clarifying patients’ values and priorities is always important but especially so during a pandemic when many people will rapidly become seriously ill. The authors describe the design and implementation of a novel service, the PSST[Peer SIC Support Team], which utilized non-palliative care, volunteer peer supporters who offered rapid, confidential assistance to clinicians working to clarify the values and priorities of their patients across settings from ambulatory care to the ICUs. This service required moderate, upfront, administrative time but was otherwise a low-cost program. It gave an opportunity for clinicians with advanced communication skills to build a community through which they could offer important support to frontline clinicians which the peer supporters found rewarding. PSST took place in a hospital with an established program in serious illness conversation training and leveraged its staff with skills in this space, which may limit its replicability in other settings. However, serious illness conversation training materials are open access and many hospitals have access to social workers and others with interests and skills in communication who could participate in such a service. Thus, this service could be replicated in other institutions for this or future crises. **Full text:**

<https://bit.ly/3pqyzjn>

## Professional training and development opportunities

### **NZ: University of Otago: HEALTH PROFESSIONALS COURSE: Application of the Hui Process / Meihana Model to Clinical Practice | online modules and one day course on 27 July 2021 | Christchurch, NZ**

Open to the anyone working in the health community, this course comprises on-line learning modules and one on-site training seminar held in Christchurch on 27 July 2021. The course objective is to support health practitioners to feel informed and confident in the development of Hauora Māori competencies, with a special focus on the application of the Hui Process and Meihana Model. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

## Upcoming Events

**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**

#### **UTS CST workshop on clinical challenges in pain management for people with cancer | 23 February 2021 | 2-4pm**

For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

#### **The Centre for Palliative Care Webinar | 25 February 2021 | “Respiratory Supportive Care: A flexible model of respiratory and palliative care for patients with advanced lung disease”**

This webinar will provide an overview of an innovative evidence based supportive care service for patients with advanced lung disease that has been shown to improve symptom management and decrease healthcare utilisation. This free webinar is running on 25 February from 4:30pm-5:30pm. Register by Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, please click [here](#).

#### **2021 ANZSPM Aotearoa Trainee & New Fellow Day | 4 March 2021 | Christchurch, NZ**

For more information, the full program and to register (via Eventbrite), please click [here](#).

#### **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.

#### **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**

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

### **2021 Oceanic Palliative Care Conference | 7-10 September 2021**

Early Bird Registrations and the Call for Abstracts will open on 27 January 2021. More at: <https://oceanicpallcare.com/>

### **European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC): 17th World Congress | Online | 6-8 October 2021**

The EAPC Congress will be held online on 6 - 8 October 2021. Abstract submission now open until 14 February 2021. More at: <https://www.eapc-2021.org/scientific-information/abstract-presentation/>

## **Careers**

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

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The Australian & New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine Limited | ABN 54 931 717 498

E: [info@anzspm.org.au](mailto:info@anzspm.org.au) | T: +61 2 6189 2244 | [www.anzspm.org.au](http://www.anzspm.org.au)

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

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