Welcome

Welcome to the second issue of Dementia Dialogue, which highlights a selection of activities and initiatives being implemented across our health system under the NSW Dementia Services Framework 2010-2015.

As the ‘baby boomers’ move into older age a significantly greater percentage of the Australian population will be living with dementia. In its recent report Dementia in Australia the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare predicted that between 2011 and 2020 the number of people living with dementia in NSW will increase from 101,800 people living with dementia in 2011 to 132,100 people living with dementia in 2020. This is an increase of 29.8%. In the Hospital Dementia Services project the AIHW has also found that in NSW in any given year 25% of people with dementia will have a hospital stay.

Providing quality health care for people living with dementia is already core business for NSW Health and given demographic trends it will only become even more significant for us over the coming years. The Dementia Services Framework 2010-2015 developed with our partners Ageing Disability and Homecare provides a strong framework for NSW Health to respond to these growing demands.

While the implementation plan for the Dementia Services Framework is being finalised, progress is already underway in a number of different areas including dementia awareness, diagnosis and management of dementia, improvement of hospital care for patients living with dementia and the cultivation of enabling systems and staff within the health system.

This newsletter contains examples of some of the innovative work currently being carried out within the NSW Health care system to improve the services provided for people living with dementia and their carers. I trust you’ll enjoy this second edition.

DR MARY FOLEY
Director General
 NSW Health

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, FEEDBACK AND IDEAS, PLEASE CONTACT:
 NSW DEMENTIA POLICY TEAM:
 Anne Cumming anne.cumming@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au 02 9385 2688
 NSW HEALTH | NSW DEMENTIA SERVICES FRAMEWORK 2010 – 2015
 SHPN: (IC) 130015 ISSN: 2200-3975
On 16 and 17 April 2012, NSW Health and Ageing, Disability and Home Care hosted the NSW Dementia Expert Forum, Leadership in dementia care: Setting the direction for NSW, at the Mercure Hotel in Sydney. The forum brought together over 150 leaders of dementia and delirium care from across NSW in both community and hospital settings. It provided an opportunity for participants to consider health and ageing reforms along with initiatives and programs being implemented in NSW. It also encouraged communication, coordination and collaboration among the dementia workforce, supporting the integration of dementia expertise into mainstream services.

Overall the feedback from the forum was very positive, with participants appreciating the opportunity to network, be informed and confirm our direction for dementia care in NSW. There are some aspects to improve next time such as more time for participation in workshops and, for rural colleagues, better sound quality and viewing the speaker for web conferencing.

A highlight of the Forum was the launch of the Northern NSW Local Health District’s (NNSWLHD) refurbished online resource and training initiative aimed at improving dementia care service provision. Originally trialled and evaluated within NNSWLHD, the program has been extended state-wide to provide sustainable dementia education relevant to staff working in hospital and community settings. The new program and presentations from the forum are available at http://dementiacare.health.nsw.gov.au/

Department of Family and Community Services NSW, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) with Alzheimer’s Australia NSW held a forum on the 18 April 2012 at the Sydney Mercure Hotel to look at the unique issues for people diagnosed with younger onset Dementia (YOD) and how services can be improved for them and their families. Over 140 people attended from across NSW, many who were working in the Home and Community Care program, and with participation from people who were either living with YOD or caring for someone with the condition.

The forum provided participants with an overview of YOD and current research activity into YOD and associated care needs. Consumer participants provided valuable personal perspectives to provide insights into what is needed for effective service development and delivery for people with YOD and their families. The forum provided opportunity for participants to discuss and share ideas on service planning and service and sector development strategies to better address the needs of people with YOD and their family and carers. Information gained from the participatory sessions will be used to inform service planning and sector development.

Presentations from the forum are available to view on the Alzheimer’s Australia NSW website: http://www.fightdementia.org.au/services/nsw—young-onset-dementia.aspx
The Dementia Services Evaluation Grants (DSEG) Program

An exciting new pilot research program, the DSEG Program, is being implemented by the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre – Assessment and Better Care (DCrC-ABC).

The Program, funded by the Home and Community Care Program, has provided 11 diverse community dementia care services from across NSW with small grants to support short-term, outcome-driven service evaluation projects.

The DSEG Program represents a key direction in the NSW Dementia Services Framework 2010 – 2015 with primary objectives of developing evidence around best practice in community-based dementia care as well as building research capacity within frontline staff and community service providers.

Successful groups have participated in a two-day workshop in June 2012 run by the DCrC-ABC which provided them with essential information to support establishment of the evaluation projects, as well as promoting networking and the sharing of ideas. This workshop was followed by the development of research proposals and submissions of ethics approval for projects.

A second one day workshop held in November 2012 provided one-on-one time with DCRC researchers and an introduction to statistics and qualitative analysis.

The third and final workshop on writing up results and publishing will be held on 30 May 2013.

We look forward to the opportunity to share project results over the coming months. For more information about the project contact Tiffany Jessop, Project Officer at t.holmes@unsw.edu.au.

Photo: Tiffany Jessop, Project Officer (far left) and DSEG Project workshop participants

Diagnosis and Management

GP Dementia Risk Reduction Education Project

In March 2012, Illawarra Shoalhaven Medicare Local completed an 18 month GP Dementia Risk Reduction Education pilot project. The project, funded by NSW Health was designed to educate GPs and Practice Nurses-Managers in the Wollongong area on the link between hypertension and dementia in patients 45 years and over and on instituting effective strategies to reduce high blood pressure. This project was accompanied by a parallel dementia awareness project, Healthy Hearts Healthy Minds, conducted over a six month period to April 2011, also funded by NSW Health.

Project Strategies included formative research; GP and practice nurse formal lecture education; within-practice education and up-skilling, and general practice support; and support to encourage patient self management strategies. BP results for up to 9,000 patients were extracted.

The project has improved GP recording of patient blood pressure, improved the use of practice software for quality improvement purposes and increased knowledge on the link between hypertension and dementia among GPs and practice nurses.

For more information about the project contact Linda Blackmore, Primary Care Support Manager at lblackmore@isml.org.au.
International Dementia Excellence Awards (IDEA) 2012 Employee of the Year

This 2012 IDEAs included three Australian-specific awards, covering team of the year, employee of the year and volunteer of the year. Employee of the Year was awarded to Libby Palmer, Dementia Advisor, Community Care Northern Beaches (CCNB). The Director of Strategy at CCNB, Eliza Pross, had this to say about Libby:

‘When I started working in the Community Care sector, young and straight out of university, aged care was the last place I wanted to be. I started as a student at CCNB, and soon gravitated towards one member of the team, who was so passionate about the work. She was enthusiastic, creative, and so ‘contagious’ in her energy and genuine enjoyment in the provision of dementia care and support. She had an amazing capacity to engage with people with really significant cognitive impairment, and treat them with genuine respect. She pushed the boundaries of ‘traditional’ service systems, and supported individuals to live dignified lives. Carers wanted her advice, other service providers looked to her for expertise. She was fun, somewhat unpredictable, innovative and expert. She was someone who excited me about aged care, and particularly dementia care. That person was Libby Palmer, and that was 10 years ago. Now, as a Director at CCNB, I still watch Libby in awe as she typifies for me what excellence is about in community care, and someone we are all proud to call one of our colleagues.’

Photo: Libby Palmer, Dementia Advisor, Community Care Northern Beaches

Hospital Care

Care of the Confused Hospitalised Older Person Study (CHOPS)

This study aims to improve care and reduce harm for confused hospitalised older adults. Five pilot sites (Armidale, Bateman Bay, Campbelltown, Pambula and Ryde) worked at clinical and executive levels with experts in delirium, dementia and aged health to define a model of care and education for this vulnerable group within our acute hospitals.

The elements underpinning the model include:

- Understanding cognitive assessment
- Delirium risk and prevention
- Identification and management
- Communication including a referral pathway, increasing awareness, carer inclusion/participation and discharge
- Environment

CHOPS has promoted sites to build on existing strengths identified through pre-pilot auditing and identify site specific target areas. With a focus on carer participation and person centred care the study also adopts a practical approach to the care of the confused older person. Results of the study have included increase awareness of the confused older person and challenges for those with dementia, increase screening of cognition, future planning for sustainability and further promotion of care of the confused hospitalised older person and creating more educational opportunities for staff.

For more information about the project and resources contact Anthea Temple, ACI Aged Health Project Officer at Anthea.temple@aci.health.nsw.gov.au.

Photo: Anthea Temple, Aged Health Project Officer, Agency for Clinical Innovation, Vaulina Vueti, ASET CNC, Fairfield Hospital, Rozina Shekar, Dementia Delirium CNC, SSWLHD, Gai McPherson, Dementia Delirium CNC, MNCLHD
Dementia Care Competency Framework Project

Competency frameworks are commonly used as a way to structure the education provision for workforce groups. The School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health, University of Wollongong (UOW) is undertaking a research project funded by the Home and Community Care Program through the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre to develop a set of dementia care competencies for a competency framework.

The dementia competencies will be developed in consultation with expert practitioners, researchers, managers and policy from across NSW and through the review of existing dementia, community and hospital workforce resources.

The competency framework due for completion in May 2013 will be used to inform the training and education of managers and practitioners working in Home and Community Care (HACC) and the NSW Health care settings providing services to individuals living with dementia and their families/informal carers. The Nursing and Midwifery Office has provided additional funding to extend the project to include enrolled nurses.

For more information please contact Anne Cumming, Principal Policy Officer, NSW Dementia Policy Team at anne.cumming@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au

The 2011 Quality System Assessment (QSA) focuses on Delirium

The Clinical Excellence Commission’s QSA is a clinical risk management program providing clinicians and managers a means for determining compliance with policy and standards and identifying risks that relate to clinical quality and patient safety through self assessment. NSW is the only state in Australia that has a self assessment survey of quality and safety systems completed at multiple levels of health organisations.

One of the main themes assessed in 2011 was Delirium; we had over 1500 respondents, 1200 of those at clinical unit level. Results demonstrated:

- 75% of respondents manage patients at risk of delirium; 16% agree it is managed optimally
- 57% of clinical units have guidelines for management of delirium
- 30% of clinical units have all/most staff trained in use of cognitive risk screening tools

Verification of the results demonstrated 97.6% accuracy.

These results provide a focus for the development of a state wide program for management of patients at risk of delirium which is being led by the Agency for Clinical Innovation.

Dementia Awareness

Looking After Your Brain: A guide to dementia for Aboriginal people

In July 2012, the Hon. Andrew Constance MP Minister for Ageing and Disability Services, launched Look after your brain: a guide to dementia for Aboriginal people. It was funded through the HACC program.

Important messages in the Guide for people with dementia, family, carers and service providers are: dementia is no one’s fault and ask for help. Help is available. You don't have to care for someone by yourself. The Guide identifies signs and effects of dementia, outlines risk reduction through lifestyle changes and chronic disease management and discusses caring for someone with dementia. The Guide, poster and related resources are now available at http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/publications/aboriginal.

WEBSITE LINKS

Department of Health and Ageing - Living Longer, Living Better
http://www.livinglongerlivingbetter.gov.au

DBMAS – Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service
http://dbmas.org.au/

DCRC/DBMAS Behaviour Management
– A Good Practice Guide (Managing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia)

Dementia Collaborative Research Centres
http://www.dementia.unsw.edu.au/

Dementia Training Study Centres