

This edition of the SMICS Newsletter highlights progress with a range of projects related to the key priority areas: multidisciplinary care, supportive care, care coordination and quality monitoring and support.

We're pleased to report on the excellent progress that has been made in 2009 to achieve the SMICS strategic objective: *by 2010 there will be a coordinated multidisciplinary system of cancer care for patients and their families in southern Melbourne that patients regard as working well for them, that is measurable and consistent with international best practice.*

Implementation of *Victoria's Cancer Action Plan 2008-2011* is also well progressed as is the review of SMICS' strategic directions. To underpin this work, a revised Memorandum of Understanding for the SMICS member health services will be finalised by the end of 2009.

The Department of Health has released an information strategy to support clinical cancer care for Victoria. SMICS' Information Strategy will be finalised in early 2010, and a major focus will be the development of data collection methods.

In March 2009, the Research Advisory Group commissioned a scoping study of cancer related research in southern Melbourne and the final report has been received. SMICS is working closely with Monash University, member health services and research institutes to develop a cancer research strategy for southern Melbourne.

We're also pleased to advise that a number of new projects will be commencing shortly:

- strengthening lymphoedema services
- documentation / mapping of referral pathways in and out of southern Melbourne
- the Victorian and Tasmanian Gynaecological Cancers Workforce Project

As always, these projects and all of SMICS' work relies upon the involvement, advice and support of a broad range of health service staff.

The SMICS team appreciates your ongoing co-operation and assistance.



Seasons greetings

David Langton and Judith Congalton



REMINDER



The SMICS office will be closed from the 24 December 2009 and will re-open Monday 4 January 2010. The SMICS team would like to wish everyone a safe and festive season and we look forward to working with you in 2010.

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Cabrini Care Co-ordination Project

Ellen Heywood, Colorectal Nurse Coordinator, is continuing to develop a model of care for the colorectal cancer patients at Cabrini Health in consultation with clinicians.

The evaluation of the model of care will commence in the new year. The evaluation process will also involve collaboration with the Cabrini psycho-oncology team and a Monash University psychology research student.

For further details, contact Sara Andrews on 9928 8160.

SMICS Annual Forum

The SMICS Annual Forum was held on the 15th of October at Hemisphere Conference Centre.

Shelly Park, chair of the SMICS Governance Committee presided over the Forum which was attended by over 80 people. There were two keynote speakers:

Professor Philip Hogg

Director, University of NSW Cancer Research Centre

Professor Hogg presented his bench to bedside research. Professor Hogg is internationally recognised in cancer research for developing a dye that fastens onto dead or dying cancer cells and reveals whether cancer treatments are working within days. He also presented on the discovery of a protein that stops cancerous tumours growing by targeting blood cell production. This breakthrough discovery has the potential to extend the lives of patients.

Mr David Parkin

Former coach of Hawthorn and Carlton premiership team. David is also a lecturer in health and physical education at Deakin University.

David gave a very human and humorous insight into his personal journey with prostate cancer.

Other presenters on the night included:

Dr Heather St John

SMICS' Research Strategy

Mr Liang Low

Multidisciplinary Team Pilot Project

Ms Julie Cairns

Supportive Care - the next three years

SMICS' Annual Report 2008/09 was launched at the Forum and is now available on the SMICS website: www.smics.org.au



Professor Philip Hogg



David Parkin

Consumer Advisory Group update

The Consumer Advisory Group (the Group) was established in December 2008 to provide advice to SMICS regarding ongoing opportunities for improvement in the delivery of cancer care across the SMICS catchment.

In the last 12 months the group has provided input and advice on the following projects:

- development of the *SMICS Supportive Care Plan 2009 – 2012*
- *Supportive Care Plan -*

implementation development

- concept and development of the *After Chemotherapy Booklet*
- *Multidisciplinary care brochure*

SMICS is currently advertising for additional consumers to assist in addressing the VCAP priority: create better experiences for cancer patients and carers by increasing participation in cancer care policy development, service delivery and research.

For more details, contact Sue Liersch on 9928 8541.

Malignant Haematology - development of a care coordination model

Haematological cancer care is complex and poses specific challenges for health professionals. Malignant haematology services are provided by Alfred Health, Cabrini Health, Southern Health and Peninsula Health.

Through the development of comprehensive data collection tools and a robust evaluation framework, a *Model of Malignant Haematology Care Coordination* will subsequently be developed and piloted over an 18 month period.

Bianca Hopkins has recently been appointed by SMICS as the Malignant Haematology Nurse Coordinator. This role will be based at Alfred Health.

Bianca will be responsible for the design and implementation of the model across the SMICS catchment. In addition to this, the development of a survivorship program will commence in the new year to address the needs of this patient group.

For more information, contact Sara Andrews on 9928 8160.



Department of Health and



Staff from the CDU at MMC - Moorabbin (Southern Health)



Annual Forum attendees



Sharon Wood (Southern Health) and Nicky Powell (SMICS)

Supportive Care Conference

On Monday 19 October 2009, more than 300 people attended the Supportive Care Conference at RACV Club in the Melbourne CBD. The Victorian integrated cancer services coordinated the conference to align with work currently occurring across the state.

The central theme of the conference was *Integrating supportive care: a team approach*. Keynote speakers included Professor Phyllis Butow and Professor Sanchia Aranda, who informed the delegates about current supportive care activities and the future directions in Victoria.

Over three concurrent sessions, delegates learned about best practice and innovation, the enablers, barriers and examples of supportive care innovation which are occurring across the state. Feedback from the conference was very positive and all signs point towards some exciting advancements over the next few years. Keep an eye on the SMICS website to download the presentations from the day: www.smics.org.au.



Professional Development Scholarship Program - 2009

2009 saw SMICS establish the Professional Development Scholarship. The scholarship was designed to recognise the important role of change champions within the SMICS health services in helping drive local improvements in cancer services. The scholarship provided funds to support development activities that have been identified as areas of need, such as haematological nursing and lymphoedema courses. Successful applicants included:

**Anne Everts: Cancer Support Nurse, The Alfred Hospital
Head and Neck Cancer Course, 22 July 2009**

This one day course examined various management and treatments of head and neck cancers, including the role of speech pathology, surgical options, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. A panel discussed the management of treatment side effects, with input from dietetics, social work and nursing. Anne identified the following key learnings from the course:

1. the complexity and variety of surgery for head and neck cancer and how treatments vary depend on a range of individual factors
2. the importance of input and communication from each member of the MDT being essential if the best outcome for the patient is to be achieved

**Maxine Garman: RN1, MMC - Moorabbin
Cancer Care Emergencies / Radiotherapy Emergencies, 28 April & 13 August 2009**

Maxine attended two one-day courses to increase her knowledge and understanding of the wide and in depth processes involved in the care for cancer patients. Working in a palliative oncology ward, these courses addressed the emergency issues Maxine deals with.

**Samantha Kelly: Clinical Nurse Specialist, MMC - Moorabbin
Cancer Nurses Society of Australia - 12th Winter Congress, 18 - 20 June 2009**

The Congress theme *Heart Mind and Voice: a shared vision* provided an opportunity for cancer nurses to acknowledge the transformations that are changing the face of cancer care in Australia and around the globe. The mix of guest speakers and concurrent sessions covered research-based care that is occurring across Australia.

Sam also had the opportunity to present SMICS' *After Chemotherapy Booklet*.

ATTENTION!

The SMICS Professional Development and Sponsorship Programs will soon be available. Details will be on the SMICS website: www.smics.org.au and an email will also be sent out in coming weeks. SMICS consumers, tumour group members and health service staff are all encouraged to apply.

Home Oxygen - regional implementation of guideline

Following completion of the guideline pilot, the SMICS Governance Committee endorsed the implementation of the guideline throughout member health services. Patient information will be revised to reflect the comments and education sessions will be running throughout the catchment during December. For more information contact Sara Andrews on 9928 8160 or sara.andrews@southernhealth.org.au.



Cancer Service Plan

The development of the SMICS Cancer Service Plan involved extensive consultation with member health services and health professionals. Now completed, the Plan includes demographics, projected cancer incidence and forecast cancer activity. The project was extended to include health services across the Gippsland Integrated Cancer Service.

A series of successful dinner workshops were conducted with eight tumour groups to provide them with a progress report and to discuss projected population growth, cancer needs of the region, how services might be delivered in the future and relationships with the Gippsland region. The final plan, together with a data report to support the service plan, will be presented to the Governance Committee on 30 November 2009.

Farewell Catherine

Cancer Service Improvement Coordinator, Catherine Schafer, recently resigned from SMICS to take up a new role at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Catherine was a valued member of the SMICS team since late 2006 and contributed to a variety of projects both within tumour streams and across SMICS as a whole. We wish her all the very best in her new role.

A new role

Nikki Powell, previously a SMICS MDT Project Officer at Peninsula Health, has been appointed as a Cancer Service Improvement Coordinator.

Nikki continues to support the MDT meetings at Peninsula Health, in addition to revitalising the SMICS website, WebEx capabilities and commencing a major project over the coming months, looking at referral pathways.

Update - supportive care screening

SMICS is pleased to report that an agreed screening tool is currently being piloted at Alfred Health's Haematology Oncology Clinic and Southern Health's MMC - Moorabbin Chemotherapy Day Unit. Each site is testing the tool over the coming months, with an extensive evaluation of its sensitivity to addressing the needs of patients, and its usefulness for patients completing the tool.

There are plans to undertake similar pilots at Peninsula Health and Cabrini Health in the new year. Contact Anna Spain for more details.

Welcome Bianca

Bianca Hopkins has been appointed as Malignant Haematology Nurse Coordinator, based at Alfred Health. Bianca has a wide range of experience working with haematology patients both in Australia and the UK.

Bianca will be responsible for the design and implementation of a model of care coordination for this group receiving treatment across the SMICS catchment.



The first SMICS baby ...

It was with great excitement that we announced the arrival of the first 'SMICS baby'. Gary Cox and his wife Sarah welcomed baby Fletcher into the world on 7 October 2009.

We wish the Cox family all the very best with their newest arrival.

SMICS Contacts

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