

ANZSPM

E-Update

February 2008

Welcome to the first E-Update for ANZSPM members in 2008. This regular E-Update aims to disseminate information received by ANZSPM to members in a timely manner.

The E-Update will be published monthly except in April, August and December when the ANZSPM newsletter will be published as usual.

I would be interested to hear if this is a useful publication for you – I do not want to overwhelm your already overflowing inboxes with information that is not relevant.

If you would like to submit an item in the E-Update or provide feedback please email Karen Cooper at karen@anzspm.org.au.

Odette Spruyt
President

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RACP's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainee scholarship

The RACP has established a new fund to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees. The trainee will receive \$6,000 a year, per year of training and must be working in an accredited hospital or alternate training facility, or within another approved training program. Applications will close on 30 April, 2008.

Information about the scholarship and application process is available through the Foundation office at foundation@racp.edu.au or call 02 9256 9620. An application cover sheet with information can be downloaded from the RACP website:

<http://www.racp.edu.au/index.cfm?objectid=7F730E7D-AF9A-5A16-BB3CC1180DA9E7B>

Palliative Care Foundation- opportunities for funding

The Palliative Care Foundation (PC Foundation) was established in 2007 to primarily fund research and education programs in palliative care. Information about the types of scholarships and research grants available and how to apply for them is available on the website <http://foundation.palliativecare.org.au/>.

Hospice Africa Uganda

Dr Peter Coleman, a member of ANZSPM, has been working in palliative care since 1993. He is a general practitioner in NSW and also works at the Mater Hospice in Newcastle. He has an interest in supporting the work being undertaken by Hospice Africa Uganda (HAU) where he has worked on two occasions. As the hospice is in desperate need of funds, Peter is aiming to raise funds for HAU. His first step will be to apply to have HAU registered as a charity in Australia. ANZSPM is supporting Peter by writing a letter of support for the application.

For more information please contact Peter on pc@brgp.com.au.

Palliative Care Australia forum: A matter of life and death

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) invites interested people to attend a one day forum entitled A Matter of Life and Death: Confronting the New Reality. It is an opportunity for participants to help shape the health policy agenda and promote the broader applications of the principles of palliative care within the health care system.

Guest speakers include renowned international author and geriatrician, Professor Joanne Lynn. The forum will be held on Thursday 13 March in Canberra.

For more information see the PCA website www.pallcare.org.au.

Online education for rural Australia

The Medical Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) has developed a new elearning program called “Enhancing Palliation in Patients with Advanced Cancer in Rural Areas of Australia”. The program consists of six hours of web based learning modules with voice over PowerPoint presentations and didactic modules relating to four major areas: palliative cancer treatment modalities, making decisions about palliative cancer treatments, multidisciplinary care and pain management.

The program is available to general practitioners and health care providers at no cost. To register and view the program visit www.primed.com.au/mogacancerpal.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care – new appointment

Margaret Duguid has recently been appointed to the position of Pharmaceutical Advisor at the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. This is a new position which will provide pharmaceutical advice on the Commission’s work, in particular its Medication Safety Program, one of the nine Priority Programs in the Commission’s five year work plan. The Commission recognises that effective and safe use of medicines is one of the key areas where improvements in the safety and quality of health care can be made.

Organisations or individuals interested in contributing to this project, or wishing to discuss the Commission’s Medication Safety Program, should contact Margaret on (02) 92633695 (ph) or by email margaret.duguid@safetyandquality.gov.au.

Superannuation changes for people with terminal illness

The Australian Government has announced that it will legislate to make superannuation lump sum payments tax free where paid to persons suffering from terminal medical conditions. Its media release states that:

- “Currently, superannuation lump sum payments that are paid from taxed funds to individuals under the age of 55 are taxed at a maximum rate of 21.5 per cent (including the Medicare levy). Higher tax rates apply to lump sums paid from untaxed funds.
- The tax free treatment will apply to lump sums from both taxed and untaxed funds paid to persons with terminal medical conditions.
- The Government will also introduce a new condition of release to give persons with terminal medical conditions unrestricted access to their superannuation benefits. Details of this are expected to be released shortly.” (Media Releases: 003 - Australians With Terminal Medical Conditions To Receive Superannuation Lump Sums Tax Free - 13/02/2008 <http://ministers.treasury.gov.au/DisplayDocs.aspx?doc=pressreleases/2008/003.htm&pageID=003&min=njs&Year=&DocType=>)

Palliative Care Australia provided a submission on this matter in September 2007 and believes that the following suggestions have been accepted by the Government.

- ‘People so diagnosed with a terminal condition should be able to access their superannuation entitlements regardless of their age.
- People diagnosed with a terminal condition should be able to access their superannuation entitlements regardless of their age without any penalty associated with the express provision for retirement age criteria.
- People so diagnosed with a terminal condition who live longer than 12 months should suffer no financial penalties.
- At least 1 of the 2 medical practitioners required to certify that the person is suffering from an illness which, in the normal course, would result in death within 12 months, should be recognised as a Palliative Care Specialist.
- The administrative arrangements to enable people so diagnosed to access their superannuation should be designed and implemented so as to:
 - make the process as simple as possible, and
 - facilitate the fastest possible access to their entitlements.
- There be a targeted communication strategy to ensure that superannuation policy holders, families, carers, health professionals, social workers, and other relevant stakeholders are aware of these new rights’ (PCA 2007)’

MABEL survey –doctors balancing life and employment

The University of Melbourne and Monash University are conducting a NHMRC Council funded national longitudinal survey of doctors called Medicine in Australia: Balancing Employment and Life (MABEL).

The aim of the survey is to collect information on attitudes to work, job satisfaction, working hours and patterns, family circumstances, and preferences for different types of jobs. Trainees, specialists and general practitioners will be invited to participate with an invite letter being sent to 30,000 doctors in May 2008.

For further information see the MABEL website: www.mabel.org.au.

Grief and bereavement workshops

The Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement has released its Education Program for 2008. Seminars and workshops will be conducted across Australia (except WA and NT).

Topics include: Supporting the grieving child, Strategies for working with grief and loss in children, and Providing support to those experiencing complicated and prolonged bereavement.

For more information see the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement website www.grief.org.au.

New Medicare compliance program

Medicare Australia's National Compliance Program for 2007-08 was launched in late 2007. The program outlines Medicare Australia's approach to managing compliance risk and the focus on education and supporting people to get it right.

Copies are available online from Medicare Australia's website at: www.medicareaustralia.gov.au.

Medicare Australia has invited key stakeholders such as ANZSPM to provide feedback on the compliance framework. If you have any comments please send them to Karen Cooper at karen@anzspm.org.au.

RCP report on palliative care

A new report published by the Royal College of Physicians focuses on the philosophy of palliative care; the issues facing palliative care; oncological experience and its application to other diseases; mental health problems in palliative care and the organisation of palliative care and workforce provision.

The report is relevant to all doctors and allied healthcare professionals and maybe useful reading for healthcare planners and commissioners of palliative care services.

For more information see RCP website: <http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/pubs/brochure.aspx?e=240>

Project officer required at MOGA

MOGA has announced a new Project Officer is required to develop a Diploma in Oncology.

For more information visit MOGA website <http://www.moga.org.au/>.

ANZSPM conference update

ANZSPM Conference
Themes: 'Innovations & aspirations'
24-27 September 2008
Darwin, NT AUSTRALIA

Call for abstracts will be sent out in mid March.

To register your interest in attending the conference see the conference website <http://www.willorganise.com.au/anzspm08>.

ANZSPM(NZ)/HPCNZ combined meeting

May 16th-18th
Brentwood Hotel
Wellington, NZ

This is the Annual meeting for ANZSPM NZ members. All ANZSPM members NZ and Australian are welcome. The meeting is combined with the HPCNZ (Hospital Palliative Care NZ group) representing all medical, nursing and allied health professionals who are working predominantly in hospital teams.

Program:

Friday May 16th HPCNZ education and business meeting

Saturday May 17th ANZSPM NZ education meeting

Sunday May 18th ANZSPM NZ Business meeting

If members are interested in receiving further information on the program and registration details, please contact Joy Percy, ANZSPM NZ Branch Chair, at joy.percy@midcentraldhb.co.nz.

Newly announced conferences

16th International Conference of the Indian Association of Palliative Care (IAPCON)
Theme 'Freedom from pain'

13-15 February 2009
New Delhi INDIA

The Singapore Disease Management Conference 2008

1st International Conference on Healthcare Transformation: Primary Care Focus
May 8-10 2008
SINGAPORE
Email: conferenceinfo@nhp.com.sg
www.pca.sg

4th World Summit World Wide Palliative Care Alliance (WWPCA)

11-12 February 2009
New Delhi INDIA

XVII International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2008)

Universal Action Now
3-8 August 2008.
México City, MEXICO

Pain Management Technique

12 February 2009
New Delhi INDIA

World Congress of Internal medicine

20-25 March 2010
Melbourne, Victoria AUSTRALIA

RACP Conference

May 11-15 2008
Adelaide, SA AUSTRALIA