

ANZSPM Member eNews – 17 April 2020

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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.

ACPCWG-related updates and resources are below:

- Latest [ACPCWG Newsletter](#) (15 April 2020)
- Opinion Statement (circulated separately to members on 14 April)
- An online hub of resources can be found on the [CareSearch](#) website.

ANZSPM COVID-19 Special Interest Group (COVID-19 SIG)

The COVID-19 SIG members led by Michael Chapman as SIG Chair, have been working hard on producing guidance in the following areas:

- Essential palliative & end-of-life care in the COVID-19 pandemic
- Palliative Care Communication in the COVID-19 context
- Palliative Care in the COVID-19 context
- Supply and access issues for palliative care medications during COVID-19
- Pandemic-context palliative care triage: a response to COVID-19
- Peri- and post-death COVID-19 care in the community

It is hoped the guidance documents will be ready for release shortly and members will be notified accordingly. Thanks not only to the SIG members who have volunteered significant time to this work but also to all members who submitted local resources to help inform the SIG in producing guidance materials.

NZ Taskforce on COVID-19



The NZ COVID-19 Taskforce continues to work on developing a range of resources to support all clinicians during the COVID-19 situation. The resources for health care professionals can be found hosted on the Hospice NZ website [here](#). ANZSPM's Aotearoa Committee is providing regular updates shared with NZ members on the work of the collaboration.

ANZSPM COVID-19 resources page



A collection of national and international resources relevant to palliative care in the COVID-19 environment are available from the ANZSPM website here and are being updated regularly.

Update: ANZSPM events and COVID-19

We are continuing to monitor government advice as efforts to reduce the impact of COVID-19 are assessed and considering how our events may be impacted. We will update members on plans for the Conference and for Trainee Study Days when firm decisions have been made.

As previously advised, all ANZSPM staff are working from home following government advice. We will continue to provide our regular administrative support, potentially with some more flexible hours in the interim period and the office phone will divert to our info@anzspm.org.au email address so please leave a message and we will endeavour to get back to you as quickly as possible. We appreciate members' understanding over this period.

Free Physician Training for COVID-19 via WCEA

We have been contacted by the World Continuing Education Alliance (WCEA) who are official collaboration partners of the World Medical Association. Access to COVID-19 multidisciplinary courses are now available to you by downloading the WCEA learning app to your phone. The initial content is being provided by the NHS and Health Education England with additional resources to be added from other education providers on an ongoing basis.

To get access:

1. Register at: <https://wcea.education/covid/>
2. You will then receive the link to the App and your username and password.

Government News

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](#).

AUS: Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety extends deadline for submissions

The deadline for submissions to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has been extended by two months to **30 June 2020**. For more information, please [click here](#).

AUS: Palliative Care Prognostic Tools Survey closes Friday

The Department of Health's National Palliative Care Strategy 2018 prioritises the need for early planning and referral to palliative care for people affected by life-limiting illnesses. This survey aims to determine:

- the tools used by healthcare workers to identify patients nearing the end of life
- the extent to which these tools are used within different settings
- the facilitators and barriers for using the tools.

To complete the survey please click here. The survey closes at 5pm on **Friday 17 April 2020**.

NZ: Commencement of the Medicinal Cannabis Scheme

The Medicinal Cannabis Scheme has now come into effect following the commencement of the Misuse of Drugs (Medicinal Cannabis) Regulations 2019. The purpose of the Scheme is to improve access to quality medicinal cannabis products for patients. *New Zealand Gazette* notices in relation to Sativex™ and medical vaporisers have also come into force. Visit the Medicinal Cannabis Agency's website for a range of further information including background on the Scheme, guidance documents and licence application forms. Alternatively, you can email any queries to medicinalcannabis@health.govt.nz.

NZ: PHARMAC notifications

PHARMAC has announced to list the following items:

- Decision to list surgical drapes, gowns and procedure packs supplied by ConvaTec
- Decision to list medical devices supplied by Paragon Care Group New Zealand Limited

For more information please visit: <https://www.pharmac.govt.nz/hospital-devices/>

Other updates

ANZSPM Rural & Remote Special Interest Group

The Rural & Remote SIG is looking for more members interested in joining the group to network and share ideas on issues relevant to rural and remote practice. If you are working in or interested in rural and remote practice and would like to join this group, please email submission@anzspm.org.au with "Join Rural & Remote SIG" in the subject line.

Reminder: Clinicians' Practices in Depression Assessment & Management in Patients with Very Poor Prognoses Survey

A reminder to members of a request previously circulated for voluntary member participation in an online survey (approximately 8 mins to complete) from Dr Wei Lee, a palliative care physician at the Sacred Heart Hospital, Darlinghurst and PhD scholar at University of Technology, Sydney.

Depression is a distressing condition for people facing advanced life-limiting illnesses. Within this patient group, there is a sub-group of patients with very poor prognosis, estimated to be measured in weeks at most, to whom depression assessment and management can be very challenging due to their frailty. Currently, little is known about how depression is assessed and managed by clinicians in this setting. This online survey aims to characterise the Australasian palliative care physicians' and psychiatrists' approaches to depression assessment and management in patients with very poor prognosis, find out their perceived challenges to generate potential improvement strategies.

To participate in this anonymous survey, please click here:
<https://redcap.research.uts.edu.au/surveys/?s=D3MEEFDYWL>

After the survey, if you would consider participating in a subsequent 1-hr focus group hosted alongside the ANZSPM conference or webinar at a different time to discuss this further, please fill in your contact details in this separate online link so necessary arrangements can be made:

<https://redcap.research.uts.edu.au/surveys/?s=YCT94MMLY9>

If you have any questions about this research and survey, please feel free to contact Dr Wei Lee on +61 2 8382 1111 or Wei.Lee@student.uts.edu.au

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): CPD requirements during COVID19 pandemic

The RACP has advised the following regarding CPD obligations and requirements during COVID19:

Aotearoa New Zealand Fellows

The Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) decided to exempt all general and vocationally registered doctors from recertification programme requirements until 28 February 2021. MCNZ staff will not be auditing doctors for compliance with CPD over the coming 11 months, but they do expect doctors to be enrolled and actively participating in their required programmes from 1 March 2021. The RACP is very supportive of this approach.

Australian Fellows

2019 requirements

Fellows with incomplete 2019 CPD records will have automatic extensions until midnight (AWST) Friday 31 July 2020. There's no fee for this extension. The situation is being monitored closely to determine if further extensions are necessary.

2020 requirements

The RACP is currently seeking clarification from the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) on CPD requirements for medical practitioners and will update members as soon as possible.

For more information, please visit RACP's website or contact the RACP directly at MyCPD@racp.edu.au or MyCPD@racp.org.nz.

Upcoming ANZSPM Events



ANZSPM Conference 2020, 17-20 September 2020 | Auckland, NZ

The conference theme for 2020 is *Palliative Care in an Uncertain World*. Please visit the website for updates: www.anzspm.org.au/anzspm20.

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 strongly advises members to check this with the event organiser directly.

National Palliative Care Week, 24-30 May 2020

National Palliative Care Week is an annual event organised by Palliative Care Australia and supported by the Department of Health to raise awareness and understanding about palliative care in the Australian community. PCA has announced that they are looking at creative ways to interact with audiences during the week without holding physical events. PCA will provide updates via their eNews and website.

The International Society of Geriatric Oncology (SIOG) 2020 Annual Conference | 1-3 October 2020 | Geneva, Switzerland

For more information please visit: <https://siog.org/content/siog-2020-annual-conference-0>

EUROPALL2020: European Conference on Controversies in Palliative Care | 29-30 Oct 2020 | Munich, Germany More information is at <https://europall2020.com>

Palliative Care Nurses Australia Conference | 22-23 Nov 2020 | Pullman Albert Park, Melbourne VIC
More information at <https://www.pcna2020.org/>

Careers

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

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

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