

# Fill In

*A Research Update from the  
Department of Palliative Care*

MARCH 2016



## Welcome to 2016!

It is hoped that this year will be a beneficial year for recruitment, opening of new studies and completion of others.

February proved to be a busy month for the research team, with lots of screening of potential participants; meetings; and visits to a local aged care facility to begin discussions with residents and staff about research. We are also pleased to report that we consented 2 participants to the Sertraline Dyspnoea Study, our first participants for the year.

### Research in Aged Care Facilities

Recruitment within Groves House has commenced with the research team meeting both the Residents and staff at Groves House last month. The staff at Groves House has proved to be a very enthusiastic team and we look forward to working with them. We will be regularly attending Groves to make ourselves available to the residents to discuss research opportunities.

As part of our approach to the residents within aged care facilities we are initially introducing ourselves and the concept of research. This has been a learning curve for us, with the realisation that the words we commonly use with patients have different connotations to people who have not previously been exposed to palliative care or research. We will continue to learn and adapt to ensure the residents have the opportunity to be involved in the research that we do.

We are still in the process of discussing the logistics of recruitment within the Calvary Facilities, and met with the Facility Manager at St Martin De Porres recently to begin planning. We are hoping this process will be short and that we can start meeting with residents soon.



## Research Meetings

Research meetings are held in the Hospice Seminar Room, at 0930hrs, bimonthly on the second Monday of the month to discuss current and future research within palliative care.

Meetings are open to anyone with an interest in Palliative Care Research.

Please let the research team know if you wish to attend.

*Feel free to come along!*

### 2016 Meeting Dates:

15 February

11 April

20 June

8 August

10 October

12 December

# Research in Palliative Care

Our research unit runs a number of research projects and clinical trials aimed at improving symptom management. Most of our studies are designed so patients can remain at home while participating with visits by the study nurses arranged at times suitable to the participant.

## Clinical Trials

Most of the clinical trials conducted in our unit are funded by the Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCCSC) who were formed under the National Palliative Care Program. You can find out more information about PaCCSC at [www.caresearch.com.au/paccsc](http://www.caresearch.com.au/paccsc)

## Research Projects

Our research projects are usually aimed at gathering the evidence to inform development of larger studies; to review patient symptoms; or to review our care.

**Ultrasound Study:** This study is designed to investigate the feasibility of using 2D ultrasound to estimate gastric volumes and gastric emptying times in palliative care patients.

Suitable for patients with a life limiting illness.

Participants will be visited at home twice – the first to perform screening, the second to undertake ultrasound assessments.

### Health Related Quality of Life (HRQoL) Study:

This study aims to review the effect of bowel habits on quality of life.

Suitable for patients with cancer.

Participants are required to complete a daily diary for 7 days.

### Symptom: Breathlessness

**MILD Study:** Suitable for patients with breathlessness as a result of mesothelioma, asbestosis or other causes of interstitial lung disease. Study duration is 21 days.

**Sertraline Study:** Suitable for patients with breathlessness in any advanced disease.

Study duration is 28 days with an extension phase in people who have a symptomatic response.

### Symptom: Constipation

**Pyridostigmine Study:** Suitable for patients with a life limiting illness who are currently taking laxatives. Study duration is 1 week for screening (eligibility assessment), and 1 week for the main study (taking pyridostigmine if slow colon transit is diagnosed).

### Symptom: Pain

**Pain Study:** Suitable for patients who are experiencing moderate or severe pain related to their cancer or cancer treatment despite receiving opioids. Study duration is up to 10 weeks – up to 2 weeks for screening; then 1 month on treatment; and a further 1 month for follow up.



## Clinical Trial Recruitment

Study Name	Last Month		Site Totals		Whole Study Totals	
	Screened	Consents	Screened	Consents	Completed Participants	Completion Target
Sertraline Dyspnoea	8	2	128	13	117	150
MILD Dyspnoea	3	0	26	0	0	150
Pyridostigmine	2	0	31	7	1	10
Ultrasound	3	0	14	0	0	10
PAX1 Pain	8	2	128	13	117	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>20</b>		

### Project Recruitment

Project Name	Last Month	
	Offered	Completed
HRQOL	2	1
Ultrasound	3	0
RAPID Audit		0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

### Screening Activity

	Last Month	Totals
Hospice Inpatients	39	425
Clinic	225	1147
Research Nurse	6	65
Referrals Received	4	122
Research Register	2	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>1839</b>

*Improving management of symptoms  
Investing in the needs of palliative patients*

## Contact us

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Hospitality



Healing



Stewardship



Respect