

REPORT SYNOPSIS

Project period 1 November 2013 – 30 April 2014

Aims

The PCC4U project aims to:

- encourage the integration of palliative care training within all health undergraduate and relevant post-graduate curricula; and
- further improve the skill and confidence of the generalist workforce to work with people with palliative care needs.

Key achievements

Project activities from 1 November 2013 until 30 April 2014 have resulted in:

- sustained improvement in university engagement with the PCC4U project with 90 courses nationally currently implementing the PCC4U learning resources in their curriculum
- an increase in key allied health courses implementing palliative care in their curriculum from 22% in May 2011 to 38% in April 2014
- 89% of all nursing and medicine courses actively engaged with the project in either implementing or reviewing the learning resources
- development of a new focus topic *Caring for people from diverse backgrounds with life-limiting illnesses*, to be released in June 2014
- updating of three modules and one focus topic to ensure currency, with expansion of aligned support materials (implementation guide, curriculum blueprint and fact sheet)
- implementation of a graduate survey evaluation activity, with four course cohorts completed and three underway
- invitation to all implementing courses to participate in academic interviews to document exemplars of inclusion of palliative care, with 15 interviews scheduled for May 2014
- planning for a palliative care education pathway workshop to be held in Brisbane on 19 May 2014, as part of Deliverable 5. A framework to guide the development of the workforce pathway has been finalised, with the workshop planned for May 2014 to provide additional inputs to finalise the pathway.
- planning for a series of jurisdictional-based seminars *Building our workforce: a palliative care curriculum for the future*, to be delivered in May and June 2014 as part of deliverables 5 & 6.

Implementation status

Table 1 Course implementation rates at May 2014 (n=197)

	Implementing	Reviewing	Other courses
Total number of courses	90	48	59
% of total courses	46	24	30

Table 2 Course implementation rates at May 2014 – nursing and medicine only (n=54)

	Implementing	Reviewing	Other courses
Total number of medical and nursing courses	37	11	6
% of nursing and medicine courses	68	21	11

Graph 1 Comparison of course implementation rates: May 2011 and May 2014

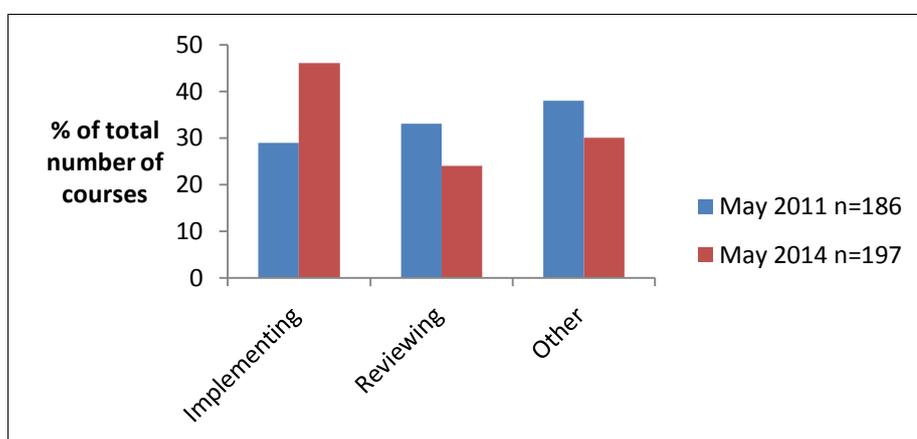


Table 3 Course implementation rates by discipline

Course	Implementing	Reviewing	Other courses	Total
Speech pathology	4	6	5	15
Medical radiation	4	1	4	9
Nutrition and dietetics	6	5	5	16
Chiropractic	0	0	3	3
Pharmacy	10	3	5	18
Social work	3	7	17	27
OT	11	6	2	19
Medicine	10	5	4	19
Natural / Chinese medicine	0	0	3	3
Nursing	27	6	2	35
Physiotherapy	11	5	3	19
Paramedic	4	4	6	14
TOTAL	90	48	59	197

Table 4 Implementation rates at May 2011 and May 2014 – key allied health disciplines (natural/Chinese medicine and chiropractic excluded)

	Implementing	Reviewing	Other courses
2011 n=122	27	44	51
% of total courses	22	36	41
2014 n=137	53	37	47
% of total courses	38	27	34

Key activities in this reporting period to introduce the resources and to support new and ongoing implementation has included:

- 470 personal emails (up from 273 at May 2013)
- 130 resource packs sent out containing updated implementation guide and 44 distributed at meetings/site visits
- 44 meetings/site visits (up from 32 previous reporting period).

Diversity focus topic and vignette

Development of the diversity online topic and vignettes is complete with uploading of the materials scheduled for June 2014.



Updated learning resources

The video components of Module 1 Principles of palliative care, Module 3 Assessment, Module 4 Optimisation and Topic 1 Multidisciplinary care have been updated to ensure they are current, contemporary and reflect best practice. Packs containing the full suite of updated resources will be systematically disseminated to all course contacts, stakeholders, discipline bodies, and specialist palliative care services in June 2014 to align with semester timings .



Evaluation activities – graduate survey

This evaluation activity aims to assess the capacity of recent graduates to adopt a palliative approach to care. To date, data has been collected at one university, data collection was commencing at another site, a further site was likely to obtain ethical approval and commence collection in the near future, and a further five universities have expressed an interest in

collaborating and are at various stages of progressing their collaboration. Partner sites include courses in nursing, medicine, and allied health.

Preliminary findings indicate university training including PCC4U materials provides graduates with confidence to care for people who have life-limiting conditions with the vast majority of respondents reporting caring for people who have life-limiting conditions in the two years immediately following their graduation. Thematic analysis of quantitative data identified two prevailing opinions about preparing for palliative care practice during university training:

- The majority of responses (n = 92) oriented to an understanding that university training could equip graduates to care for people who have life-limiting conditions. *“Everything we were taught was preparation for real life jobs. Working in practice allows you to develop those skills.”*
- A notable minority of respondents (n = 14) argued that university training cannot prepare graduates for professional practice in this area. *“No amount of training really prepares anyone to care for people who have [a] life-limiting illness. Only real-life experience and reflection [can do this].”*

Evaluation activities – annual online academic survey

Responses to the question *Overall, to what degree is palliative care covered in your course/program?* indicates similar levels of inclusion of palliative care at moderate/large levels since 2011.

Responses to the question *To what extent have the following factors impacted on your inclusion of palliative care?* indicated the following impact levels about previously identified barriers to including palliative care :

- crowded curricula - 70% reported moderate - large impact
- insufficient academic staff with knowledge and skills - 44% reported moderate – large impact
- lack of quality clinical placements - 50% reported moderate – large impact.

Workforce pathway consultative workshop

Work to inform an education pathway has progressed in this reporting period. A consultative workshop will be held on 19 May in Brisbane to progress the capability based framework. Professor Patsy Yates will facilitate this workshop with invited attendees or representatives from key stakeholder organisations and project partners.

PCC4U seminar series

A series of culminating activities in the key jurisdictions will be delivered in May/June 2014. Titled *Building our workforce: a palliative care curriculum for the future* the seminars aim to provide an opportunity to showcase palliative care curriculum innovation and to facilitate discussion about future priorities and approaches.