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Dementia Training Study Centres

November 2011

WA Dementia Training Study Centre Newsletter

Creating a career path for health professionals

The WA Dementia Training Study Centre (WA DTSC) is committed to developing a career path for health care professionals working with people with dementia in metropolitan, remote and rural Western Australia. The Centre aims to address the training needs of nurses, medical specialists, occupational therapists and diversional therapists, social workers, psychologists and other health disciplines at both an undergraduate and postgraduate level. It also provides for the training needs of health professionals at a staff development level.



Introducing the 'NEW' WA Dementia Training Study Centre (WA DTSC)

Since its establishment in 2006, the Dementia Training Study Centres program has responded to the learning and education needs of current and future health professionals and service providers throughout Australia. The Centres have established a good reputation as a respected source of advice, information and education. Within this second round of funding the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) is seeking a collaborative, integrated and national focus on knowledge translation and knowledge transfer activities between the five Dementia Training Study Centres across Australia (Queensland, New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory, South Australia/Northern Territory and Victoria/Tasmania).

Our new logo demonstrates the commitment to a national focus. Each petal represents one DTSC and each centre is identified by name within the logo.



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The Department of Health and Ageing has commissioned WA DTSC to extend its activities into three National Priority Areas (NPAs):

End of Life/Palliative Approach to Care

Dementia is a terminal illness however the terminal nature of the illness has not been communicated well to, or by, families, health professionals or organizations responsible for the provision of appropriate dementia care services.

It is not always clear when a person with dementia has arrived at the final stages of dying. A palliative approach to dementia care recognises the importance of supporting the person with dementia, their family and those providing care.

This initiative will focus on building the specialist knowledge and skills required by health professionals to provide the services and care that enables a comfortable and peaceful death.

During 2010 educational resources were developed as part of the 'Communities of Practice in Dementia Project', funded from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (Local Palliative care Grants, Round 5). These validated resources will be used to increase the knowledge and understanding of health professionals working in mainstream health facilities to better meet the needs of people living with dementia at the end of life.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities

In this NPA there are two areas of focus; firstly people with dementia from CaLD backgrounds and secondly health professionals from CaLD backgrounds caring for people living with dementia.

Approximately one in five older Australians were born overseas. When necessary most use formal aged or dementia care services. When they do service providers struggle to deliver culturally appropriate dementia care to these clients.

A second important concern is the increasing employment of care workers and health professionals who are from CaLD backgrounds in aged care and dementia specific services.



Facilitation of professional development in cultural competency and the provision of culturally competent services have the potential to meet the needs of clients, employees and aged care providers.

The core themes of the projects are to

- Explain how differing cultural and philosophical perspectives influence the recognition and treatment of elders with dementia.
- Develop principles to guide the provision of culturally sensitive and accessible dementia care in community, acute care and residential care contexts.
- Identify the benefits and challenges presented by a multicultural workforce caring for people with dementia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are diverse peoples with dynamic and evolving cultural and social histories. Contrary to popular belief 75% of Australian Indigenous people live in major cities, and other regional towns.

In close collaboration with Aboriginal communities and their leaders, WA DTSC will focus on meeting the needs

of the majority of Australian Indigenous people with dementia by addressing the professional and workforce development needs of health professionals working in mainstream health facilities in the following key areas:

- Recognise the influence of Indigenous cultural and philosophical perspectives on the recognition and treatment of elders with dementia.
- Develop principles to guide the provision of culturally sensitive and accessible dementia care in community, acute care and residential care contexts.

Go to our website to view the training products listed below

<http://cra.curtin.edu.au/wadtsc/index.cfm>

Dementia Networking Seminar Series are available on-line.

These popular free monthly seminars are conducted by knowledgeable and accomplished practitioners. Topics are varied and cover innovative programs, management strategies and practice, diagnosis and assessment. The information presented for health professionals is practical and applicable in a variety of health settings. All sessions are filmed and available free on our website at

http://cra.curtin.edu.au/wadtsc/wadtsc_networkingseries.html.

Topics for 2012 to include pharmacy, yarning - the art of working with Aboriginal people, palliative care, CaLD workforce issues, social and physical environments, managing apathy, using creative arts as a staff education medium. Check our website in January for our new program.

Dementia: Guide for Occupational Therapists in Clinical Practice.

This project is the culmination of an intensive 12 month evidence-based project conducted by a team of Occupational Therapists working at Osborne Park Hospital, keen to develop their knowledge and skills to provide better services for their clients with dementia. The evidence based resource identifies key evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies that Occupational Therapists can use to assist people with dementia and their families in the management of activities of daily living and related areas.

Chapters include: Occupational therapy roles and responsibilities; understanding dementia; occupational therapy and dementia care: standards, guidelines and evidence-based practice; evidence-based practice: occupational therapy strategies; caring role for planning and planning for the future. The guide also contains an extensive reference list.

You can download the guide at http://cra.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/wadtsc/OPH_Web.pdf.

Advanced Care Planning: What is it and why is it important?

Professor Colleen Cartwright came to Perth from New South Wales recently to run a one day workshop for us on Advanced Care Planning. For those of you that were unable to attend I can recommend that you view her presentation at http://cra.curtin.edu.au/wadtsc/wadtsc_networkingseries.html and consider who you know in your work and personal life that would benefit from completing an Advanced Health Directive. The Guide to Enduring Power of Guardianship can be found at http://www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au/E/enduring_power_of_guardianship.aspx and the Advanced Health Directive at http://www.health.wa.gov.au/docreg/education/population/HP11536_advance_health_directive_form.pdf.

Training and events scheduled for 2012

Train-the-trainer workshop: caring for the person with

dementia at the end of life. An extensive research project, in Western Australia (WA) and Tasmania, was undertaken in 2010/11 to enhance best practice and continuity of care for very frail or unwell people with dementia. Instigated by Alzheimer's Australia WA, Alzheimer's Australia Tasmania, Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute at Curtin University and the University of Tasmania with funding from the Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing education resources produced as part of the project have been released to WA DTSC for dissemination to the broader dementia care community. In 2012 a series of workshops for health professionals with an interest in the area of end of life care will be invited to participate in train-the-trainer workshops to assist in the sensitive use of the materials to support families and care staff at a challenging time.

Knowledge Translation workshop day coming in June 2012.

There is a problem: Research is taking too long to find its way into practice. The Dementia Training Study Centres (DTSC) and the Dementia Collaborative Research Centres (DCRC) are determined to speed up this process. The WA Dementia Training Study Centre is hosting a day of workshops and presentations that will update your knowledge of some key areas in the care of people with dementia. The workshops will provide an update on research, an exploration of its practical application and an opportunity to put forward your ideas on the direction future research should take. They will be led by the researchers from the Dementia Collaborative Research Centres who are actively researching in these areas so that the information provided will be the most up to date available.

Networking Seminar Series will continue in 2012. A flyer with topics will be emailed out and made available on our website soon.

The expansion of WA DTSC's activities continues to build on the foundations laid since we began in 2006. Workshops, seminars, guest lectures, resource distribution and consultations will continue. Collaboration with individuals, services and organisations will continue to focus our activities in the areas of greatest interest to you. We can be contacted on 08 9266 1831.