Aged Care News

~ keeping GPs & nursing homes informed ~

Issue 3, Sept 2005

Update on aged care pilot program

The first pilot program launched in May at Ballina Ex-Services aged care facility is due for evaluation with positive feedback from the GPs participating in the program, as well as the pharmacists involved in the facility. The GPs reported that they used Medical Director when making visits to residents and found the system most helpful in saving them time, that medication charts were easy to update and renew and that the printing of the electronic medication charts at the facility was most helpful.

The pharmacist found safer best practice outcomes for the residents, that Medical Director was valuable and easy to navigate and that the medication charts were easy for pharmacy staff to follow medication orders from the GP for dispensing of medications.

St Joseph's Aged Care Facility recently signed a memorandum of understanding with seven GPs to participate in the program when computer equipment arrives and has been installed.

Maranoa awaits direction from its IT department re participation in the program and presentations have been made about the aged care initiative and Medical Director program to staff of the facility.

Following distribution of the last edition of this newsletter, feedback came in from other aged care facilities wishing to be involved in the program. We have since visited the Maclean Mareeba nursing home, which expressed an interest in becoming involved.

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+ive changes to MD

Medical Director 2.84 was recently released and it has several changes specific to aged care.

The primary change is that nursing home medication charts now are open ended, in that you can set the duration of the chart rather than it being fixed at six weeks.

Several more templates are available, which may be used within an aged care facility or by a multi disciplinary care team in the area of care planning.

There have been several other minor template changes reacting to user feedback as well.

We are still in negotiation with several of the larger ACFs in the area, which is progressing, and it looks like Maclean is the next site that will be operational.

All in all, once the bureaucratic process is completed, we should have another two or three ACFs happily settled into the project.

~ David Cook, IMIT project officer

National aged care homes survey

The survey has just been completed to enable future evaluation of the effectiveness of the initiative in achieving its aims. 76% of respondents nationally were aware of the Aged Care GP Panels Initiative before receiving the survey.

In the period 2004-2005, results show a 4% increase in the number of GP services provided to residents of aged care homes in the Northern Rivers Division of General Practice, as well as 4% increase in the number of GP services provided to residents as a proportion of aged care beds. With the pilot programs in place we expect to see increases in GPs' attendance to residents of aged care facilities and increases in services provided for the coming year.

Aged care services and GPs: what is needed?

- Good relationships;
- Strong and effective partnerships - MOU;
- Access 24/7;
- Involvement in ACF quality improvement activities, CMA, RMMR case conferences and care plans;
- Effective communication with both review and supply pharmacists.

OPEN MEETING

ISSUES IN MANAGING DEMENTIA *with* Professor Edmond Chiu,

Retired Professor of Psychiatry of Old Age at the University of Melbourne & Director of Geriatric Psychiatry Services at St George's Hospital, Melb.

BALLINA BEACH RESORT
WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2.00-4.00PM
To register phone (02) 9261 9612

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For more information on any of the issues raised in this newsletter, please contact project officer Judy Sheldon at the division on 6622 4453 or email jsheldon@nrdgp.org.au.

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