We are only two weeks away from the 13th Australian Palliative Care Conference in Melbourne. In addition to an exciting main program, there are pre-conference workshops being held on Tuesday 1 September. This week PCA met with Donna Murray, CEO Indigenous Allied Health Australia the co-facilitator of the pre-conference session on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) palliative care. Conference delegates are encouraged to attend this workshop as it will be exploring issues of cultural safety, organisational assessment and centrality of culture. To register for this or any of the other pre-conference workshops click here.

Conference international keynote speaker Dr Gail Eva is looking forward to speaking on important doctor/patient relationship challenges. PCA media release ‘Yes I am dying, but I am a person, not a disease’ is available on the PCA website.

Yesterday PCA CEO Liz Callaghan travelled to Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga to attend the inaugural Listen, Acknowledge Respond project governance advisory committee meeting. The project brings together a consortium of groups willing to improve palliative care education and training of health and aged care workforce.

National Policy Manager Philippa Kirkpatrick attended the Close the Gap steering committee. PCA will support the Close the Gap initiatives leading up to and during 2016, which is the 10th anniversary of the Close the Gap Campaign.

Representatives of PCA attended the Consumers Health Forum of Australian Members and Stakeholders Forum held in Parliament House yesterday. This provided an opportunity to contribute to the leaders of key government reforms including Dr Steven Hambleton, who presented on the Primary Health Care Advisory Group (PHCAG) and Professor Bruce Robinson, Chair of the MBS Review Taskforce. The keynote address was delivered by Minister for Health, the Honourable Sussan Ley.

Carers Australia launched a Deloitte Access Economics report on the economic value of informal care in Australia in 2015. The report revealed how the replacement value of the care provided by Australia’s unpaid carers has increased to $60.3 billion per year - over $1 billion every week. This morning PCA Board member Professor Peter Husdon and PCA CEO Liz Callaghan met with CEO of Carers Australia to discuss the report, the National Carer Gateway and opportunities for future collaboration.

Continuing on the issue of support for carers, a reminder there are free palliative care workshops - hosted by Carer’s Australia and supported by PCA. These workshops are scheduled for:

- Victoria — 8 and 9 September 2015
  RSVP: Phone 1800 242 636
- Tasmania — 22 and 23 September 2015
  RSVP: Email amy@carerstasmania.org
PCA Conference Update

Dr Gail Eva, from London’s Brunel University says that health professionals who encourage people with a life-limiting illness not to return to work may not be doing the best by their patients.

Dr Eva said that work has many psychological and social benefits that can have a significant impact on patients’ sense of wellbeing and there were dangers in making assumptions about the role it plays in terminally ill patients’ lives.

Dr Eva, who has completed research into work support for people with cancer, added that work can give people a sense of competence and status and it plays an important role in giving structure to our day.

“You can replace work with internally driven and motivated activities, but it is much harder for people to sustain this,” she said.

Dr Gail Eva will be speaking at the largest gathering of palliative care professionals in Australia - the upcoming 13th Australian Palliative Care Conference.

Workshops/Events

SURVEY—National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care
The survey will be open from 4 August to 11 September and participation from anyone involved in aged care is encouraged including older people. This survey is important in understanding the views and perceptions of how spiritual care can most effectively be provided to older people living in residential aged care or, receiving care and support at home.

To take the survey click here

COLLOQUIUM—3rd Australian Palliative Care Research Colloquium
What: To foster the evolution of empirical inquiry into palliative care, it is important that we continue to collaborate and have an opportunity to discuss key issues and learn new approaches.
When: 22—23 October 2015
Where: Melbourne, Victoria
For more information click here

LECTURE—2015 Elizabeth MacKinlay
What: Professor Bruce Stevens will be speaking on Self Compassion for Chaplains and Aged Care Workers. Light refreshments will be provided and no cost and no reservation required.
When: 7:30pm Wednesday 26 August 2015
Where: Wesley Conference Centre Sydney, NSW

Decision Assist

A survey recently conducted by New South Wales aged care provider the Whiddon Group, has found access to primary health providers, including specialist palliative care, a significant barrier for its rural and remote clients. The Whiddon Group is a not-for-profit aged care provider and one of the recipients of a Decision Assist Linkages grant. As a result of the survey, the project team is now working with each site to promote the use of available palliative care resources. This will include Decision Assist, PEPA, Care Search and PalliAged, as well as developing communication pathways and tools that reflect the individual needs of clients, staff and available resources within each community.

News Briefs

Advance Care Planning: What No One Wants to Think About But Everyone Should Do—An insight as to why people need an advance care plan in an age of technology. To read the full article click here

Push for palliative — More than 100 met in Taree to advocate for increased funding to palliative care services. To read the full article click here

Doctors Fail to Address Patients’ Spiritual Needs — A doctor’s experience on addressing the religious and spiritual needs of his patient. To read the full article click here

Choosing a good death: Bendigo hearings for state inquiry into end of life choices—A Victorian parliamentary committee have heard from Bendigo health specialists about end of life choices. To read the full article click here

Annual Cicely Saunders Institute Lecture—Videos from the lecture on palliative care and public health, chronic illness and the expectation of healing can be found here

Patient needs paramount to the end—Nurses and clinicians are in a position to provide great care. Nurses need to be able to screen for delirium and to get physicians involved when it’s present. To read the full article click here

eHospice Australia:

Featured in eHospice this week:

- Wanting every nurse to be a palliative care nurse
- Buried Under Paperwork – and struggling
- Needing to stay on the job – even toward the end of life
- Private lives played out in public
- Grants for pets in aged care
- Tailoring aged care to cultural background
- Palliative care - an easy career choice