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Message from Patsy Yates

Chair of the Cancer Care Coordination Executive

In August the Executive sat down for the day to discuss the strategic priorities of the Cancer Care Coordination Interest Group. The feedback received from the Cancer Care Coordination Conference formed much of the basis for discussion.

Much discussion was centred on the need to clarify the scope and role of the Cancer Care Coordinator, as well as the models and the tools to support this role. Another strong area emerging from the Conference feedback was the need for Performance Indicators, and the need to better understand coordination issues across an individual's cancer experience.

The Executive identified potential priority activities as being the development of a **Position Paper** to address the need for a consistency in the principles and scope of practice for Cancer Care Coordinators. Such work would guide future projects, which may include development of **Clinical Practice Guidelines**, and **Communication Strategies**.

It was agreed that the **Cancer Care Coordination Conference** will be held every second year with the next scheduled for 2014. A **Professional Development Day** will be held in each off year of to the Conference to provide practical workshops for delegates. Plans are currently underway for the 2013 Professional Development Day – keep an eye out for announcements soon.

The Professional development and educational group will also explore opportunities for hosting webinars and collaborative links with EdCaN and Cancer Learning.

The Communication and Networking group will continue to produce **The Coordinator** newsletter biannually and manage the **National Contacts Database**.

The next step is to receive feedback and support from COSA Council on our future initiatives. I hope to be able to approach members of the Interest Group to participate in these projects.

Message from Jacinta Elks

Chair of the Communication and Networking Group

In 2012, the Working Group continues to communicate the Cancer Care Coordination Interest Group's work to the membership and increase the avenues for engaging with fellow Cancer Care Coordinators.

The Coordinator is proving to be a dynamic and valuable communication tool. This year the Working Group published three issues (including this one!) and was able to reach the membership plus our network on the National Contacts Database. In 2013, the group plans to publish at least two issues and improve the visual content.

The National Contacts Database contains the contact details of Cancer Care Coordinators across Australia. Recently we asked you to either update, confirm current details or provide us with your details for the list. This allows us to maintain a database to use efficiently for networking, referral and information sharing by COSA members to have access to Australian Cancer Care Coordinators and related professionals.

Are you listed, or are your professional details up to date? If not, please contact [Kate Whittaker](#), COSA Project Coordinator

Message from Douglas Bellamy
Chair of the Professional Development Group

The Education Group has changed its name to the Professional Development Group, but remains a working group of the Cancer Care Coordination Interest Group. The group will continue to provide opportunities for Cancer Care Coordinators to further their professional development through topical educational activities and workshops, and is exploring the use of webinars to provide accessible education sessions for members interested in Care Coordination. It is hoped that this initiative will better support our busy members, particularly those rural and remote Care Coordinators who may be unable to attend face to face workshops. The group will continue to be in contact with Cancer Australia regarding Cancer Learning and EdCaN to participate in collaborative opportunities.

The group's immediate focus is planning for the proposed Professional Development Day to be held in 2013. This day will aim to provide practical sessions to delegates, with such workshops and oral presentations. If you would like to express any ideas regarding themes or topics to be covered at the Professional Development Day in 2013, or the next Cancer Care Coordination Conference in 2014 please email [Kate Whittaker](mailto:kate.whittaker@cancc.org.au)

Service Improvements & Resource Development

Please click on the links below to read about projects your colleagues have undertaken.

[The Indigenous Cancer Care Coordinator \(ICCC\) project by Janiece Coats \(pdf, 15KB\)](#)

HOT TOPIC:

The Oncology Nurse Community www.theonc.org

'A gated community for oncology nurses and cancer care teams'

This website provides cancer nurses and related health professionals with a true community for facilitating conversation and idea sharing. The goal of the site is to support and connect oncology nurses and care teams by allowing participation through blogging or commenting on posts within the following forums:

- By cancer type
- Palliative care
- Pain
- Symptom management
- Paediatrics and geriatrics
- Side effects
- Survivorship

The website is open for all to browse, however by registering you are able to share blogs and contribute to discussions. Registration is strictly for oncology nurses and related professionals, and all posts are reviewed by content editors. This allows the website to stay true to its aim of building a reputable well of shared clinical knowledge and experience.

Conference and Educational Activities:

The COSA Geriatric Oncology Interest Group welcomes expressions of interest for participation in a Concept Development Day on **Friday 22nd March 2013** to be held at COSA's Head Office in Sydney. Workshop aims and objectives: The Concept Development Day is a chance for interested clinicians and researchers to present a synopsis of a geriatric oncology clinical study they would like to develop. COSA members interested in undertaking a clinical study in geriatric oncology are encouraged to attend. Clinical and scientific investigators who have an idea or concept on which they'd like to develop. Experts in study design, bio-statistics, health economics and health service research will be available to provide input to help refine each concept into a feasible research proposal.

For more information or an expression of interest form please contact [Kate Whittaker](#), COSA Project Coordinator

Recruitment

The Cancer Care Coordination Executive will be calling for expressions of interest from COSA Cancer Care Coordination members to form a project team to develop a position paper on the role of care coordination. The Executive, along with the Professional Development Group, will be calling for expressions of interest for a co-convenor for the Professional Development Day and Cancer Care Coordination Conference who will work closely with Douglas Bellamy, Chair and the Professional Development Group. More information will be sent via email in the near future about the positions and interested members are encouraged to apply.

Connect with your Cancer Care Coordination Colleagues!

Michelle McKimmie

Member of the COSA Cancer Care Coordination Communication & Networking Group

Workplace: Gippsland Regional Integrated Cancer Service (GRICS)

Position: Cancer Service Improvement Coordinator



Most rewarding aspect of your job?

1. Keeping patients and health care providers informed about what is available to support the cancer patient
2. Working with really passionate, caring, innovative health professionals
3. Linking practitioners together to improve care coordination across our region
4. Empowering patients to self manage
5. A great outcome for a patient e.g. when I can advocate that a patient is treated closer to home

Most challenging aspect of your job?

Poor or non-existent discharge planning. Many patients, particularly when discharged from Metropolitan health services, have no services put in place even if there is an obvious need. If nothing else, a referral to a district nursing or post-acute care in their local communities will ensure that someone touches base with that person when they arrive home to see how they are managing.

Many regional health services have cancer care professionals, such as Cancer Care Nurse's or Breast Care Nurse's, working limited Full Time Equivalent hours and sick leave, holidays and long service leave aren't replaced which leaves a huge hole in service delivery for patients.

Advice/ideas to share with fellow colleagues new to the cancer care coordination role:

A consistent approach to identify the needs of your clients and then understand what services are available within or outside of your area that can be accessed to address these issues. Remember that solutions may have to be a compromise, particularly in the regional setting, but you have to have a reliable, workable strategy to address the problem e.g. psycho-oncology may not be available so think about getting a mental health treatment plan through the general practitioner.

Take care of yourself. It is too easy to get burnt out trying to be "all things, to all people."

Network, network, network – you can't know everything but you need to know who might have the answers/solutions.

We encourage you to join COSA and be part of a dynamic network!

[CLICK HERE](#) to join today

COSA Cancer Care Coordination interest group members are active in the formation of structures that will support key areas in:

- the development of a common 'tool kit' of data items and validated tools
- formation of networks for information sharing by Cancer Care Coordinators across the country as well as web-based approaches to sharing resources and experiences
- promoting the benefits of the Cancer Care Coordination role within the multidisciplinary team and more broadly to the healthcare community
- developing an educational strategy to identify and encourage training in the core skills that underpin the cancer care coordination, regardless of who is undertaking the role
- collaborative research initiatives to develop and implement a national evaluation strategy that will

Service Announcements

The Warwick Foundation www.thewarwickfoundation.org.au is Australia's first and largest charitable foundation supporting young adults with cancer aged 18 to 40. Their mission is 'to bring hope, inspiration and support to young adults with cancer through advocacy, awareness and programs.'



They provide relevant and age specific information and resources, as well as a referral system to professionals and support groups.

The support program offered are based on the concept of wellbeing and whole person and include; 'wellness escapes', and also mates in my shoes' which connects young adults who have cancer or survived it with another young person with cancer. Their work is underpinned by principles of Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Psychosocial care of adults with cancer (NHMRC). They encourage health professionals with an interest in young adult cancer health to get involved in their website and to refer any patients to their programs and resources.

The Foundation has nominated local ambassadors from each state and for further information you can contact info@thewarwickfoundation.org.au.

We value your feedback. Please email kate.whittaker@cancer.org.au with suggestions of what you would like to see in our newsletter.

Thank you

Louise Underhill , Editor.