

THE HOSPITAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAM

IMPROVING THE ACCESS TO AND DELIVERY OF PALLIATIVE CARE FOR UNDER-SERVED POPULATIONS

Acute Care Study: Case-note Audit and Patient Survey

Overview: This study will involve a cross-sectional case-note audit of in-patients aged 55 years and above, within major South Australian urban and rural public hospitals, in partnership with Local Health Networks (LHNs). With consent, the audit will identify patients with deteriorating health and increasing care needs, documenting presenting issues, admissions in the preceding 12 months, treatment details, and evidence of need for and conversations about end-of life care. The administered survey will document the prevalence of unmet need and awareness of palliative care within the target population, further capturing admission and mortality outcomes at 12 months later.

What: This study will answer the following research questions:

- What are the unmet needs of the acute care populations aged 55 and over years in South Australia who are assessed as having increased symptom burden and care needs?;
- Do those needs differ according to sociodemographic and disease-related factors?

Where: All major SA urban and selected SA rural hospitals: [Royal Adelaide Hospital, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Lyell McEwin Hospital, Modbury Hospital, Flinders Medical Centre, Noarlunga Hospital, Whyalla Hospital, Port Lincoln Hospital, Mt Gambier Hospital, and Victor Harbor Hospital]

When: Between **April and August 2024** across one-two consecutive days per hospital

Who:

Inclusion criteria: 55+ years and in-patient

Exclusion criteria: Paediatrics, maternity, ICU, emergency, or emotionally/cognitively compromised

How: A research team comprising Chief and Associate Investigators from the Palliative Care Research Collaboration project team, Research Associates, a Project Manager and trained Healthcare Professionals (on-site clinical researchers) will work together to administer the patient case-note audit and survey within the hospital setting, across one-two consecutive days.

Process:

- Engagement and support from SA hospital sites
- Site-specific assessments (SSAs) required per hospital site with endorsement from Clinical Leads
- Co-ordinate a mutually suitable timeframe between April and August 2024 per hospital
- Recruitment and training of on-site clinical researchers to support consent and case-note audit
- Identify and connect with principal contacts from SA hospital sites for ongoing communication

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