

ACRRM abstract – RMA conference

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Title

caring@home resources support rural GPs to manage symptoms for palliative patients at home

Abstract

Rural General Practitioners (GPs) are the mainstay for delivery of quality community-based palliative care across regional, rural and remote environments. Most palliative patients say they would prefer to be cared for and, if possible, to die at home. This is rarely possible without a home-based carer who can help manage symptoms. Carers need training to allow them to fulfil this role.

caring@home is a national palliative care project funded by the Australian Government that has produced the necessary resources for organisations, GPs, pharmacists, nurses and carers to support carers to help manage breakthrough symptoms safely using subcutaneous medicines.

The resources, applicable to all jurisdictions in Australia include:

- Guidelines for the handling of palliative care medicines in community services (the Guidelines)
- A template example policy and procedure
- palliMEDS app
- Online education modules for nurses about how to use the *caring@home* resources
- A comprehensive *caring@home* package for carers that contains step-by-step guides, a diary, videos, a practice demonstration kit and a colour-coded labelling system

Two of the resources that are most important for GPs are the Guidelines and the palliMEDS app developed by the National Prescribing Service (NPS) in collaboration with jurisdictional bodies and palliative care experts. The Guidelines ensure that community services working with GPs can appropriately manage palliative care medicines. The free app ensures GPs have immediate access to relevant information concerning the use, prescription and availability of eight medications endorsed by Australian and New Zealand Society for Palliative Medicine for use in community palliative patients.