

Title (12 words max; currently 13)

Impact of training and *caring@home* resources on carers' capacity to manage subcutaneous medicines

Authors

L Reymond

S Ivynian

K Cooper

D Parker

Biography

Prof Liz Reymond MBBS(Hons), PhD, FRACGP, FACHPM

50 words

Prof Reymond is Deputy Director, MetroSouth Palliative Care Service and Director, Brisbane South Palliative Care Collaborative. Her research interests include palliative care symptom management, service delivery and development, and advance care planning. Liz is directing multiple palliative care projects, including the national *caring@home* Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Families project.

S Ivynian, Research Fellow, IMPACCT, Faculty of Health, University of Technology Sydney.

Dr Ivynian is a mixed-methods researcher working on national evaluation projects to help improve palliative care service delivery across Australia.

K Cooper, Project Manager, BSPCC.

Karen works for Brisbane South Palliative Care Collaborative as the Project Manager of the Australian Government funded *caring@home* for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families project and has previously managed many national projects in the area of health education, primarily in palliative care and aged care.

D Parker

Professor Deborah Parker, RN, BA, MSocSc, Phd, MACN

Deborah is the Professor of Nursing Aged Care (Dementia) in the Faculty of Health at UTS and throughout a career spanning over two decades, has managed over \$35M in research funding, with primary research areas including palliative care for older people, dementia and health services evaluation in aged care.

Presentation format

Oral

Theme

Clinical care and practice

Abstract (299 words)

Background

Australians with a terminal illness, who wish to be cared for and to die at home, require a carer to assist with ongoing practical care and symptom management. This can include managing breakthrough symptoms using subcutaneous medicines to avoid unnecessary suffering and unwanted transfers to inpatient units.

Many carers report feeling motivated, but unprepared, for the task of preparation and/or administration of subcutaneous medicines.

Aim

The aim of this national study, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, was to assess the impact of an education and resource package, *caring@home*, on carers' knowledge confidence and skills in managing breakthrough symptoms using subcutaneous medicines for home-based palliative care patients. Carers' experiences of using the resources to manage breakthrough symptoms were also examined.

Methods

Nurses trained volunteer carers to help manage breakthrough symptoms for the person they were caring for at home using the *caring@home* resources. Carers were later invited to complete a short survey about the training and the resources and to consent to a telephone interview to further elucidate how the *caring@home* training and resources impacted their caring experience.

Findings

Fifty carers completed the survey and 12 were interviewed.

Most carers reported that the nurse-led training and *caring@home* resources provided them with the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to safely and confidently manage breakthrough symptoms using subcutaneous medicines and would recommend the package to others. Qualitative interview analysis revealed seven main themes of importance covering being a carer with medicine responsibility, impact of medicine experience on confidence, training and resource feedback, medicine preparation, symptom management and unmet carer needs.

The *caring@home* resources can be used by clinical services to empower carers to help enable a person to be cared for, and to die at home, if that is their wish; carers become part of the healthcare team.