

Pain Management

Welcome

Issue 1 June 2008

Welcome to the EBPRAC Pain Management Project, an Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing funded project that aims to implement evidence-based practice into the routine clinical care practices for pain assessment and management in residential aged care facilities.

This project will be undertaken by a multi-disciplinary partnership led by the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI), Victoria who will work in collaboration with The Australian Centre for Evidence Based Care, Queensland Dementia Collaborative Research Centre, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Edith Cowan University, Curtin University and five Residential Aged Care facilities across Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland. The participating residential aged care facilities include a mix of

high and low care, small and large facilities, rural and metropolitan facilities.

All participating facilities will soon undergo an audit of their current pain management policies and procedures and an analysis of the current pain incidence within the facility. This will be followed by an intensive education and training program aimed at improving the knowledge base of all staff in assessment and management of pain as well as the appointment and professional development of an expert in house "pain champion" nurse at each participating facility. The final phase of the project will address the issue of practicability and sustainability of the newly developed implementation approach and strategies throughout the residential aged care sector.

Pain Management in Residential Aged Care

There is strong evidence that older people in residential aged-care facilities are under-treated for pain. The prevalence of pain in residential aged-care ranges from 27%-86% (Helme & Gibson 2001). In an Australian study of 917 residents with self-reported pain, 22% were receiving no analgesics and 16% had no treatment at all (McLean 2002). International studies show only 64% of cognitively intact older residents and just 33% of residents with dementia receive appropriate analgesic treatment (Scherder, 1997) and only 13% of prescribed analgesics were actually administered (Horgas 1998). Moreover, even after matching residents for type and severity of condition, physicians prescribed fewer analgesics for residents with dementia. Finally, in a recent study across 11 nursing-homes in

Europe (Pickering et al. 2006), there was no significant difference in analgesic use for the management of acute pain in those with and without dementia, but a 50% reduction in analgesic dose for those with chronic pain and dementia. This study highlights the apparently greater deficit in the management of chronic pain problems in residential aged-care when compared to acute pain management. The accumulating evidence shows a consistent and pervasive under-treatment of pain in residential aged-care settings, particularly for those with dementia and there is now growing international concern over the apparent inadequacy of pain-assessment and management procedures for this vulnerable population.

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Newsletter

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Residential Aged Care Partners

QLD

ST PAUL DE CHARTRES RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

St Paul De Chartres is a 98 bed facility providing residential care to the frail elderly, including those from China and other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The facility has 60 low care beds with "aging in place", and 38 high care beds that incorporates an 18 bed dementia secure unit.

WA

GERMANUS KENT HOSTEL

Germanus Kent Hostel (GKH) is a 19 bed hostel which is located in the heart of Broome, the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The hostel has 17 permanent beds and 2 respite beds and the hostel operates at 99.9% occupancy for all beds.

UNITING CHURCHES HOMES, ST ANDREWS

St Andrew's is a 75 bed cluster style residential care facility comprising of 5 main areas of accommodation, each area is joined by corridors with the Club House in the most central position. Each house is home for 15 people, they include low care band and high care band units.

VIC

ROYAL FREEMASONS' HOMES OF VICTORIA

Coppin Community Hostel in Melbourne has been operating as a 165 bed low level residential aged care facility for more than 40 years and now also provides a 15 bed Transition Care Program.

Colbran Lodge has been operating for 10 years on the same site as Coppin Community Hostel, as a separate 30 bed dementia specific high care facility.

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Academic Project Team

The National Ageing Research Institute (Lead Agency), VIC. A/Prof Stephen Gibson
 Australian Centre for Evidence Based Aged Care, La Trobe University, VIC. Prof Rhonda Nay
 Queensland Dementia Collaborative Research Centre, QLD. Prof Jenny Abbey
 Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Department of Pain Management, WA. Dr Roger Goucke
 Edith Cowan University, School of Nursing, Midwifery, WA. A/Prof Chris Toye
 Curtin University, WA. Prof Linda Kristjanson
 Royal Freemasons Homes of Victoria, VIC. Dr Sam Scherer

Team Member Profile:

Associate Professor Stephen Gibson is the principal researcher of the EBPRAC Pain Management project. Stephen will be responsible for overseeing all evaluation activities and analysis of pre-implementation and post-implementation data, he will also provide local supervision of project activities within Victoria.

Stephen is currently Deputy Director of the National Ageing Research Institute, Australia (NARI), a registered psychologist and he holds the position of Associate Professor within the department of Medicine, University of Melbourne as well as honorary appointments with the Departments of Psychology at the Uni-

versity of Melbourne, Monash University and La Trobe University.

Stephen has been involved in ageing and pain research for almost 20 years. He has contributed to more than 100 publications on pain and its management including the development of the APS pain management guidelines in residential aged care and he is recognized internationally as a leading researcher in the field. Stephen was awarded the 2006 Pfizer visiting professorship in pain medicine and he remains active in clinical practice via his involvement with multidisciplinary pain management centres.



**Principal Researcher:
A/Prof Stephen Gibson**