

# Ms Prue WATTERS

P Watters and D Fildes.

Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong.

## **Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration – The Challenges of Developing a National Data Collection**

### **Abstract:**

*Background:* Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC) is a national voluntary quality initiative established to assist palliative care services across Australia improve practice and meet the *National Standards for the Provision of Palliative Care*.

*Methods:* With funding from the Australian Department of Health and Ageing, PCOC is supporting specialist palliative care services to collect an agreed set of data items to measure outcomes for palliative care and to establish national benchmarking activities that will contribute to improving the quality of care for palliative care patients.

Services collect three levels of routine data, patient demographic, episode of care and phase of illness. PCOC training sessions are used to explore how services will incorporate these three levels of data into their everyday practice.

*Results:* The analysis of the data collected to date has provided palliative care services with information about the clinical state and trajectory of patients. An individual service's data can be compared with other services to demonstrate how patients in one service score on agreed outcomes when compared to other similar services. Data have been provided to services with multiple sites enabling comparison of service provision and work practices that can be used to identify areas for improvement and to drive change.

PCOC is holding national workshops to explain the findings in the reports to services and participants at these gatherings have appreciated the opportunity to consider local issues in a broader forum. Report findings are being used for quality initiatives.

*Conclusion:* This presentation will explore the many challenges that have confronted PCOC as it works with services to demonstrate how they can use the data for quality improvement processes and forge links with similar services.