

# Professor Beverly O'CONNELL

B. O'Connell<sup>1</sup>, J. Ostaszkiwicz<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Deakin – Southern Health Nursing Research Centre, Monash Medical Centre.

## **Developing Evidence-Based Practice for Screening, Assessing and Managing Continence in Residential Aged Care**

### **Abstract:**

*Background:* The development and integration of the best available evidence for the delivery of safe health care is a global imperative. There is increasing pressure for the delivery of evidence-based practice in all care settings; including the residential aged care sector. Although evidence-based practice is highly desirable, it is a complex undertaking that requires a systematic approach. The aim of this project was 1) to evaluate currently used resources for the assessment and management of incontinence in residential aged care settings; and 2) to develop an evidence-based suite of tools used to screen, assess and manage incontinence in residential aged care settings.

*Results:* Stage 1 findings revealed that the majority of the resources used for the promotion of continence in residential aged care facilities in Australia did not meet all of the standards for the assessment and management of incontinence in the frail elderly from The International Continence Society. In order to address this gap in available resources, Stage 2 of the project involved the development of a suite of user-friendly and evidence-based tools. These comprised the following forms: a) Initial Standard Continence Screening Form for Residential Aged Care; b) Standard Bladder Chart for Residential Aged Care; c) Standard Bowel Chart for Residential Aged Care; d) Standard Continence Assessment and Care Plan Form for Residential Aged Care and e) a Continence Care Flow Chart for Residential Aged Care to assist in providing directions for the use of these standard tools.

*Conclusion:* This paper will provide an overview of the findings of Stage 1 and describe the suite of tools, the development of educational resources and the process for implementation and evaluation.