

Child & Youth news

Statewide Clinical Networks

The Child Health Clinical Network have progressed a number of initiatives since the last Newsletter in December 2008. Avenues through which children's interests are represented within SA Health have been clarified and the Network has subsequently provided comment on the Palliative Care, Rehabilitation and Chronic Disease Plans along with the COAG Indigenous Health Implementation Plan. A number of Steering Committee members received an update on the roll out of the new five-year, \$22.3m Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle (OPAL) program. The Network maintains a strong interest in this whole-of-community approach to tackling childhood obesity.

Steering Committee update

There have been some changes to the Steering Committee membership in recent months. Our consumer members Ed Pikusa and Skye Oldfield have retired and Alex Centofanti has been appointed as a new consumer member. Alex is President of the Barmera Friends of Child and Youth Health. Dr Deepa Jeyaseelan, a Community Paediatrician based at the Flinders Medical Centre and Trish Strachan, Executive Director Population and Primary Health, CYWHS have also joined the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee has been overseeing the development of a Statewide Child Health Service Plan. The plan will incorporate a service framework for children and young people's health and key recommendations from the Network's five working groups. The Steering Committee is continuing to build links with the Maternal and Neonatal Clinical Network. Issues of mutual interest have been identified and a paper is being prepared for consideration by a joint Steering Committee.

The Network have also organised to meet regularly with the Chief Executive, SA Health, Deputy Executive Director, Statewide Service Strategy, SA Health and Regional Chief Executives.

Working Group Update

Services in the Community and Data working groups have been established. While the first three working groups concerned with clinical guidelines, early childhood and mental health have made significant progress.

Services in the Community

The Services in the Community working group Chaired by Dr Deepa Jeyaseelan is focussing its initial attention on paediatric oral health. Population oral health and specialist paediatric dentistry issues are being considered for possible Network involvement.

Data

The Data working group Chaired by Dr Peter Baghurst is supporting the development of a SA child health information system and is currently establishing a register of existing data collections. Additional information required to fully characterise child health outcomes and services will be identified subsequently. This initial work will support an early childhood development data linkage project being coordinated by John Lynch, Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health, School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia.



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Mental Health

The direction of the Mental Health working group chaired by Dr Phil Brock has evolved from its initial focus on establishing a directory of mental health services, to supporting GP's to manage children and young people's mental health. This will include raising their awareness of potential problems, improving access to services via clearly defined referral pathways and the provision of professional supports to GPs managing child and young people's mental health in the primary health setting. This will build their service capacity and enable early identification and treatment of issues as they arise, often within the family context in a familiar setting. The group is considering the feasibility of developing a set of questions with GPs which can be used as a mental health check list.

Clinical Guidelines

The Clinical Guidelines working group chaired by Dr Gavin Wheaton finalised its recommendations, concerned with setting up a formal approach to the development and governance of state-wide clinical guidelines for paediatric care across South Australia.

Costing is being finalised prior to the paper's submission to the Strategic and Operations Group, SA Health for consideration and endorsement.

Early Childhood

The Early Childhood working group chaired by Dr David Everett reconvened to identify health services that would be provided in an ideal Children's Centre. A paper has been completed. Feedback from the Department of Education and Children's Services is being sought prior to its submission to the Strategic and Operations Group, SA Health for endorsement.

The Child Health Clinical Network endeavours to keep in touch with clinicians and consumers with an interest in the development of statewide child and youth health services. To be included on distribution lists please contact:

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