Welcome to the first edition of Home Dialysis Update, our redesigned and re-imagined newsletter from the HOME Network.

We are very excited to be spreading the news about who we are, the projects we are currently undertaking and future projects in planning as we speak.

Our team of experts in the area of home dialysis have been working hard on some amazing initiatives, which we will share with you in this edition. You will meet one of our long-standing members and hear back from others who recently presented at the RSA Conference in Sydney in June 2017. We will test your knowledge about important issues that impact on our home dialysis population. Take our quiz if you dare!

We hope you will get inspired to share your ideas and suggestions with us on our new website and spread the word to your colleagues to do the same. We, the editors, will strive to keep you engaged and we hope you, the readers, will engage with us and tell us what you want from our future newsletters. Happy reading!!

The HOME Network: who are we?
By Josephine Chow, Chairperson

The HOME Network is a national initiative that brings together a solution-focused group of home dialysis healthcare professionals from across Australia. The group draws upon all levels of evidence to provide insights and practical options for colleagues throughout Australia to facilitate a positive change towards increased use of home dialysis.

Since its establishment in 2009, the HOME Network has had considerable successes in developing resources for patients and healthcare professionals in line with its objectives and making optimal use of members’ time available to commit to projects.

Through a directed process of reflection and analysis of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, the HOME Network has refined its vision and mission to identify solutions and strategies to promote and enhance home dialysis.

Today, members are committed to driving outcomes aligned with the group’s renewed strategy and working towards achieving our overall mission statement “Through research, education and advocacy, the HOME Network aims to enable healthcare professionals with knowledge and resources to empower more people with chronic kidney disease to embrace the freedom of home dialysis”.

The HOME Network has been working within three focus areas:

- **Healthcare Professional Education**: Improved awareness, knowledge and training about home dialysis for healthcare professionals.
- **Patient Factors**: Targeted action that enables healthcare professionals to address factors impacting on the ability of Australians with CKD to embrace the freedom of home dialysis.
- **Technology and other new initiatives**: Support for new initiatives and technologies that strengthen home dialysis utilisation as part of establishing flexible and innovative models of care that strengthen support for people on home dialysis including their carers.

Working in these three focus areas is part of our continuing campaign to drive increased uptake of home dialysis across Australia. We hope you will lend your support as we work together to keep pushing for world class home dialysis care for our patients.
Member Profile
Name: Melinda Tomlins, NSW
Role: Long-standing member, HCP Education focus area lead
What is your role and where are you from?
I am the Nephrology Nurse Practitioner for satellite and home dialysis within the Newcastle area. I am based at the Wansey Dialysis Centre.

How long have you been with The HOME Network?
I have been with THN since it was commenced in 2009.

What prompted you to join The HOME Network?
Funnily, my manager at the time had been invited to attend however was unable to do. She put me forward in her place as I was working as the team leader in the home dialysis unit.

What projects have you been involved with?
I am lead for the HCP Education focus area and a member of the Steering Committee for the HOME Network.

A comprehensive PD training curriculum has been developed which includes modules for training PD staff, in an interactive ele

How do you think the HOME Network is assisting PD in Australia?
The HOME Network has significantly improved PD education delivery in Australia. They have been instrumental in developing interactive digital media modules that are now used across the nation.

Future plans with The HOME Network?
Like all of our members, I have a passion for home dialysis. I am extremely excited about the pilot and future clinical trial of the TEACH-PD train-the-trainer modules, and the impact these will have by helping nurses to become great trainers. I am taking a back seat for 12 months whilst I have my second baby – but I’ll be back!

The HOME Network at the RSA
The HOME Network members were actively involved in the agenda for the RSA Conference held in Sydney in June 2017. Here we share two of the papers presented by Melinda Tomlins and list the other presentations given by members.

“My Condition makes everything so complicated”: Home dialysis in adulthood
Presented by Melinda Tomlins
This study sought to understand how employment and home dialysis were experienced by working age adults with experience of home dialysis. A qualitative observational investigation was conducted with 11 semi-structured interviews of home dialysis patients. Three cases are presented in summarised form with comments and interpretation of each case. These cases analysed in depth illustrate that financial housing, employment and health are considerations that may explain the widely accepted notion that financial constraints contribute to the low uptake of home dialysis.

Multiple factors interact with age to determine if home dialysis can be successfully maintained. Housing, employment and supportive services all combine to influence how home dialysis is sustained, with complex interactions, in particular in working age adults. To reverse the trend observed in many countries of declining numbers of patients taking up home dialysis, attention may need to be drawn to the complexity that affects treatment decisions in individual cases so that appropriate and tailored support structures can be implemented. In particular, financial considerations and support should extend to practical aspects of housing and employment considerations.

A Train-the-Trainer Initiative: supporting skills development for peritoneal dialysis trainers
Presented by Melinda Tomlins
There has been no published randomised controlled trial (RCT) data to demonstrate superiority of a specific protocol for training nurse Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) trainers. However, a formalised PD education program has been shown to significantly reduce peritonitis rates in Uruguay. The optimal education package is however yet to be established and hence it is highly likely that there are unrealised gains to be made for PD clinical outcomes.

A comprehensive PD training curriculum has been developed which includes modules for training PD staff, in an interactive electronic format. Assessment and re-training requirements are also addressed within the training package. The package includes two introductory modules and two clinical case modules. These educational modules will be delivered using interactive digital media, as well as traditional paper-based versions with practical demonstration deliveries.

Other presentations by members of the HOME Network
- Teaching PD in Australia: An opportunity for improvement
  Presented by Josephine Chow
- Home Dialysis Uptake Factors – A Multi-centre Observational Study
  Presented by Josephine Chow
- “In the running” – Promoting Home Dialysis
  Presented by Anna Lee.
- Overcoming financial barriers for home dialysis patients - the first step
  Presented by Kim Grinley
- Kidney Disease Education Pathway Guideline
  Presented by Tanya Smolonogov
Journal Watch

Prevalence constipation in patients with advanced renal disease

Article by Anna Lee

Constipation can be a major problem for patients with CKD both on Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) and Haemodialysis (HD) due to diet and fluid restrictions, physical inactivity and the need for certain medications such as phosphate binders or ion exchange resins.

For people on PD, constipation is associated with peritoneal catheter malfunction and peritonitis which may lead to modality failure. For people on HD constipation is related to a reduction in quality of life, and while constipation will not directly interfere with the dialysis procedure it may be poorly reported by the patients themselves.

In a study by Lee et al (Prevalence of constipation in patients with advanced renal disease, *Ren. Care* 2016;42(3):144-149), participants completed a survey aiming to identify the prevalence of functional constipation based on two validated tools (ROME criteria and Bristol Stool Form Scale). Often, managing constipation can be a problem because of the reliance on self reporting. The authors then have proposed a tool to assess constipation which may assist in management the condition.

The HOME Network are now looking at expanding on this research and possibly testing the management tool.

Quick Quiz

Take the HOME Network Quick Quiz - test your knowledge about important issues that impact on our home dialysis population.

[Click here to complete the HOME Network Quick Quiz!](#)

Check out the next THN newsletter to see the answers and how others responded.

Update on Focus Areas

HCP Education

By Melinda Tomlins and Paula Woodward

The TEACH-PD modules are about to go to pilot. As presented at the RSA Conference this year, TEACH-PD is a comprehensive PD training curriculum for PD staff, presented in an interactive electronic format. It’s been a long-term project for the HOME Network, and we’ve been pleased to partner with the Australasian Kidney Trials Network and the University of Sydney to help make it happen.

The TEACH-PD modules are in the final stages of completion. Currently ethics approval is being sort to commence the pilot of the modules within two home dialysis units in Australia. This will be followed by a randomised clinical trial that will eventually see TEACH-PD rolled out to all home dialysis units in Australia.

Trainers working in the area of home haemodialysis (HHD) haven’t been forgotten. The TEACH-PD programme is going to pilot trial, so we are also turning our attention to adapting the modules to support HHD trainers and units.

Finally, we’ve kicking off a new project that will see the development of a series of useful presentations and resources to help address awareness and understanding about home dialysis amongst more healthcare professional audiences. Stay tuned for more information... coming soon!

Patient factors: financial report update

By Kim Grimley

The HOME Network Workshop on the 29th June at Qantas Meeting Rooms Sydney, provided a very productive day for planning future activities for the Patient factors focus area. Not all members were in attendance on the day but Anna Lee, Caroline McNaught, Tanya Smolonomog and myself, helped by the ever enthusiastic Paula Woodward, went about setting the scene for the next progression of the Financial support project group.

It was decided that the Financial Fact Sheets were very relevant and essential to keep updated and circulated to as many units as possible. 2013 was the last update and the group have undertaken to get these updated again for 2017. Rosi Simmonds has already completed most of this work in preparation for our talk at the recent Renal Society Conference in Sydney. These will then be circulated to all HOME Network members to confirm for accuracy for their state and then published to the HOME network website. It is envisaged these will be reviewed annually with the goal of updating them at least every 2 years.

As part of the preparation for the RSA conference, the Financial support project group sent around a survey to get feedback on how many people used the fact sheets, were they even aware they existed and how units used the information. The results we got back were very interesting and it was thought that this may provide an opportunity to further gather information in another expanded survey and use this to put together a paper for publication. At present the expanded questions for the survey are being collated and will be sent out to all HOME Network members to pass on to 5 further colleagues and so on. We are hoping to get this expanded survey out for distribution over the coming weeks and aiming for analysis and submission for publication over the next few months.
Update on Focus Areas contd.

Technology and new initiatives

By Josephine Chow

At the HOME Network Workshop on the 29th June 2017 at Sydney Qantas Meeting Room, together with Joanne Moodie, Janine Jeffries, a senior representative from a telemonitoring company and myself we had a very productive planning session. In 2017, we will commence a new project to develop a telehealth project tool kit. This will be specifically designed to support implementation of telehealth programmes to provide renal support e.g. for home dialysis patients and for remote area dialysis support programmes for patients with kidney or related diseases. While telehealth programmes can be daunting, this tool kit is designed to provide assistance to renal healthcare professionals looking to undertake a telehealth programme or project to improve support for their patients. The Technology & New Initiatives Working Group will commence meeting early August 2017 to start the tool kit development. We have also included other HOME Network members, e.g. Rosie Simmonds and experts in this field (Names to announce after our first meeting).

News & Resources

The HOME Network’s annual workshop was held on 29th June 2017 at the Qantas meeting rooms in Sydney. Members from around the country got together to kick off our new projects for 2017-2018. Through these and our other projects that are either underway or in the planning stages, we continue to aim to enable healthcare professionals with knowledge and resources to empower more people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) to embrace the freedom of home dialysis. Look out for more information about our new projects, coming soon!

Our new website link and email addresses are active! The HOME Network’s website at www.homenetwork.net.au is a great place to go find out about our past and current projects underway in this exciting area. Or you can email Josephine Chow (the HOME Network Chairperson) at contact@homenetwork.net.au for more information about the HOME Network and the group’s activities. Finally, if you have any news relevant to home dialysis to share, please email the editor at news@homenetwork.net.au.

Share your big idea!

At the HOME Network, we aim to increase HCP networking and to share some of the novel ways in which we as healthcare professionals are making a difference for our CKD patients. Often, there are fantastic projects underway locally that we believe deserve a national platform for sharing. Help us by sharing your ideas and ways in which you are supporting your CKD patients to choose the home dialysis option! Please email the editor at news@homenetwork.net.au to share your big idea. We will publish a selection of great ideas in each newsletter. Please include your contact details so that colleagues may get in contact to learn more.

Join the HOME Network as an associate member!

We hope you enjoyed reading this edition of the HOME Network newsletter, Home Dialysis Update.

As an associate member, you will receive our newsletters containing articles, information and advances in the field of home dialysis as well as information about upcoming events. This is also the first place you will hear about our new projects starting – your chance to get involved in a project that you feel passionate about.

To join as an associate member, use this link to enter your details: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/35DWRVY

Please share this link with any healthcare professional who you think would be interested in joining as well.

Acknowledgements

The HOME Network would like to thank the following past and present members for their time and input into the development of the Home Dialysis Update newsletter: <<insert names>>.

References

Space for references if needed