

Gerontological Demonstration Project



a national project to promote the care of older people through the development of gerontological nursing

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Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the newsletter. It has been an exciting year and we would like to thank all of you who have given both your time and effort to the Gerontological Demonstration Project throughout 2002. This publication will provide you with an update on some of the activities and people that are contributing to the on going development of the Project. Have a very merry Christmas!

Project News

As you will be aware the project has had its share of problems with the CVW software and a decision has been taken to change over to a new system known as Blackboard. We are confident that this system will be much better than our previous one, and we are grateful to all who have battled with a variety of technical teething troubles. The new system has many more features and a real bonus is that it can be used on any type of computer that has an internet browser. Tom has sent a letter advising IT support staff in your work place of the new system and we hope that the transition to Blackboard will be a smooth one.

As you know, the project is expanding with the support of major European Funding. This means that the number of link nurses has doubled and includes another 30 nurses all of whom work within Care Homes.

As a result of increased funding there are more staff available to support your role as a link nurse. There will also be more happening within the virtual college, and you will find additional learning resources to support Practice Development.

We continue to receive funding from NMPDU, The Queen's Nursing Institute, Scotland, The Foundation of Nursing Studies, Glasgow Caledonian University, and are delighted to have new funding from EQUAL, and the Health Education Board for Scotland. Ashbourne Ltd are partners in the EQUAL project; supporting the initiative in cash and kind.

As you know there are many other organisations who recognise the value of the Demonstration Project and the promotion of Gerontological Nursing within Scotland. The investment and support we are attracting is a direct result of the quality of achievements that have been made by the original group of link nurses, the Steering Committee, and project staff. So well done everyone and thank you.

Debbie Tolson



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for more information about the project visit the web site at:
www.geronurse.com

Update on Best Practice Statement 'Working with older people towards prevention and early detection of depression'

The development of our second Best Practice Statement is now under way, and by the time you read this newsletter aspects of the statement will have been tried and tested by the demonstration site staff at Eastwood Court, part of the Ashbourne Homes group. The first task for the Steering Group was to consider the scope of the statement. It was agreed that the focus for the statement would be the prevention and early detection of depression, as these are areas where nurses providing continuing care have the potential to play a major role.

Our second task was to identify an expert in mental health nursing who

would search for evidence to underpin the statement. We were fortunate in persuading Valerie Provan, one of our own link nurses to take on the job of expert. Valerie's background in mental health nursing, audit and quality has proved invaluable to the project. Valerie's remit was to search the literature, focusing on the nurse's role in the prevention and detection of depression. In contrast to the huge number of published reports and guidelines on nutrition, there appeared to be much less published work on these aspects of the nurses' role. Valerie assisted by mental health expert, Andy Lowndes decided to brainstorm issues that seemed relevant to the topic. This approach provided new avenues to explore, that might not have emerged if the focus had been confined solely to the literature on depression.

The next step is to develop an audit tool based on the draft statement outcomes. Valerie in collaboration with the staff at Eastwood Court has produced audit tools, which focus on two separate groups of older people and the facility itself. The first group is older people who are new admissions or thinking of moving into a care home and the second is those people who have been in residence for longer than six months. It is planned to complete the audit and report at the Steering Group meeting in April. It is anticipated that work at the demonstration site and the development of the statement will be completed by February.

The draft statement has been well received at its first 'airing', and we have received valuable feedback. If you haven't yet had a chance to provide feedback, we want your contribution, as consensus from the link nurse community is an important part of the statement development process.

Irene Schofield

Demonstration Site 2

Eastwood Court in Giffnock, Glasgow is the second Demonstration Site for the Gerontological Project. The home is part of Ashbourne Healthcare which has over 130 homes throughout Britain.

Eastwood Court is a 61 bedded Care Centre for frail elderly and confused older people. Within our 61 complement we have 2 places for young physically disabled adults.

Our part of the project is looking at the prevention and early detection of depression in older people. It is a nurse-led project, whose work will be based on the set of principles set by the virtual practice development community of link nurses. These principles reflect the community's beliefs about gerontological nursing.

An initial questionnaire was sent to staff to determine their perceptions of how many residents within the home they thought were depressed, how they would recognise depression and what they would do if they felt some-one was depressed.

The next stage was to carry out a baseline audit within the home looking at the following areas:

- Promoting nurses awareness of depression in the Older Person
- Assessment and Care Planning
- Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Policy, Education and Training

Audit results are being collated at present and the results will be available to Link Nurses via the Virtual College.

The Best Practice Statement audit tool is available on the Blackboard system.

If you have colleagues who are interested in the Project, please invite them to visit our website on www.geronurse.com.

Mary McGee

Virtual Practice Development College

Andy Lowndes (Practice Development Fellow) and John Smith (Research Assistant) are both working full time on the Project and are funded by the EQUAL grant. They are constructing the Virtual Practice Development College in Blackboard and also developing new ways of supporting a Practice Development Community, such as 'Interactive Learning Rooms.' John will also be providing technical support should anyone have any problems.

If you have any comments or suggestions that you'd like to see included in the Virtual College then you can contact us by email on A.Lowndes@gcal.ac.uk or J.J.Smith@gcal.ac.uk

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