

To whom it may concern,

Re: *Palliative Care Needs Assessment Guidelines* & Needs Assessment Tool: Progressive Disease – Cancer (NAT: PD-C)

Two important national resources, developed with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing, were released in 2009: The *Palliative Care Needs Assessment Guidelines* (summary version) and the *Needs Assessment Tool: Progressive Disease-Cancer* (NAT: PD-C).

Our evaluation of these resources showed that systematic use of the *Guidelines* and NAT: PD-C had an impact on some patient outcomes; assisted busy clinicians to efficiently identify issues of concern, particularly in areas that are not routinely well addressed such as psychosocial issues; and did not create additional burden in terms of consultation length. The NAT: PD-C also has acceptable levels of reliability and validity; and was clinically feasible when tested in a clinical setting with people with advanced cancer.

The resources have been disseminated nationally, with advice from a National Dissemination Planning Committee, which included representatives of key organisations with expertise in reaching the primary specialist and generalist target groups for these resources – the palliative care community, GPs, nurses and the oncology community. Dissemination strategies included:

- Mail-out to all oncology centres, palliative care services and divisions of general practice across Australia.
- Free copies of a summary version of the *Guidelines* and the NAT: PD-C available at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/cherp/professional-resources>.
- Conference presentations and national workshops conducted in 2009 to support health professional skills development.
- An online health professional training program, available free at: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/cherp/can-meet-needs-resource/>.

GPs are a key target group for the resources we developed and evaluated. Hence, we are very keen to engage the Divisions of General Practice across Australia in facilitating access to the online training program for your members, by including the program's link on your website.

Furthermore, based on many discussions with GPs, we have now also developed a form of the NAT: PD-C for uploading on Medical Director and request the template be placed on your website. A copy of this template is attached.

Centre for
Health Research &
Psycho-oncology (CHeRP)

Cancer Council NSW
And University of Newcastle
Room 230A, Level 2
David Maddison Building
Callaghan NSW 2308 Australia

Telephone 61 2 4913 8604
Facsimile 61 2 4913 8601

I would be happy to discuss the Division's involvement further via telephone if you can direct me to the appropriate contact person [Ph: (02) 4913 8600, Email: afaf.girgis@newcastle.edu.au] and look forward to your support with this request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Afaf Girgis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Afaf Girgis
DIRECTOR
Centre for Health Research & Psycho-oncology (CHeRP)