Community Nursing Bereavement Care

Professor Esther Chang and Professor John Daly from the School of Nursing, together with Sydney West Area Health Service Primary Care and Community Health Network (PC&CHN) has been awarded a UWS Research Partnership Program grant to examine bereavement care provided by community nurses for former carers of deceased, long term palliative clients.

'Community nurses are ideally positioned professionally to provide this care due to the amount of time they spend with the family, the relationship they develop over what can be a long period of time, and the counselling and emotional and practical support they provide in their role,' says Professor Chang. 'There is an ongoing debate within the grief and loss community about the effectiveness of bereavement counselling. Currently the model of care used within SWAHS PC&CHN, is based on a universal bereavement support visit provided by the community nurse at 2 weeks and 6 weeks post death. It would be wise at this time to reflect on the effectiveness of this model.'

Interviews with PC&CHN community nurses will take place to gain understanding and insight from personal experience. In addition, interviews with recently bereaved family members of palliative care patients will take place seeking descriptions of their grief, bereavement and coping, their perception on follow-up bereavement care, their comments on services received or reasons for refusal of services offered, as well as suggestions on how bereavement follow-up services may be improved.

Findings will inform a review of the existing model of care, and assist management to improve care with an expected reduction in the personal and social costs associated with complicated grief.

Project Title: Bereavement Care in Community Nursing
Funding has been set at: $9,753
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For more information on UWS Research Partnership Program, check:
http://www.uws.edu.au/research/ors/funding_opportunities/internal_research_grants