

## UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS AT MERCY HOSPICE AUCKLAND AND IN PALLIATIVE CARE IN THE ADHB AREA APRIL 2009

Mercy Hospice Auckland has now been based at 61 College Hill, Ponsonby for 2 years. We continue to provide 13 inpatient beds and a community palliative care nursing service with family support and medical specialist back up as well as a wide range of services from volunteers.

### Recent developments at Mercy Hospice Auckland include:

- **“Opening Doors”**  
A day stay program on Tuesdays and Wednesdays – currently only for patients under our service. Contact Viv James Ph 361 5966 or patient’s community nurse.
- **Carer support and education**  
A program for those looking after patients at home. Contact Angie Poi or Jean Ashman Ph 361 5966.
- **Cloud Workshop**  
An art workshop for children who have been bereaved. Run approximately 3 monthly. Contact Marie Goh Ph 361 5966.
- **Syringe driver changes**  
The widely used Graseby syringe driver no longer meets acceptable safety standards and will be replaced by the Cardinal brand pump later this year. This will involve re-training of nurses, but the prescribing for procedure for syringe drivers will be unchanged.
- **Special Authority changes**  
The following drugs previously requiring Specialist application are now available on Special Authority with application from any relevant practitioner:
  - Fentanyl Patches
  - Gabapentin
  - Scopoderm Patch
  - Domperidone – to reduce part charge.
- **Midazolam**  
Widely used as a short-acting benzodiazepine for anxiety, shortness of breath and sedation is now available on general prescription.
- **Special Foods**  
Supplements such as Fortisip and Ensure still require specialist application – we are happy to do this on request.
- Hospice prescribers have a dispensation to prescribe Methylphenidate as a non-subsidised prescription. There is the occasional patient who benefits from this for cancer related fatigue or in depression when there is need for mood elevation without the time for standard antidepressants to become effective.

### ADHB developments in palliative care include:

- A palliative care needs analysis and strategy has now been completed and is available through the ADHB.
- Work is being done on additional support for providers of palliative care in the community. This project is being developed with ProCare although it is anticipated it will extend to all GPs in ADHB region.
- Formation of the Palliative Care Network which provides a forum for professional and lay groups involved in palliative care in the community. For more information contact Sara Rishworth on 361 5966.
- Formation of a regional Motor Neurone Disease Network with an assigned key worker for all MND patients.

**DrDirect line 24/7 to on-call consultant 376 7565**

### **Websites**

[www.mercyhospice.org.nz](http://www.mercyhospice.org.nz)

General hospice information & downloadable referral form

<http://www.healthpoint.co.nz/default.50881.sm>

Downloadable clinical guidelines & referral form