

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>End of life care pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</b>
<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Toni Ashmore and Joyce Graham</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive, Garran</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>51248512</b>
<b>Email</b>	<b><a href="mailto:Toni.ashmore@act.gov.au">Toni.ashmore@act.gov.au</a> and <a href="mailto:joyce.graham@act.gov.au">joyce.graham@act.gov.au</a></b>

### **Outline of the project**

As outlined by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission), the health care that people receive in the last years, months and weeks of their lives can minimise the distress and grief associated with death and dying for the individual, and their family, friends and carers.(1)

The National Palliative Care Strategy 2018 provides guidance in the improvement of palliative care across Australia so that people affected by life-limiting illnesses get the care they need to live well. A key guiding principle is that care is accessible to all Australians. There are however population groups that are currently under-served including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. (2) The National Palliative Care Strategy 2018 recommends that all jurisdictions develop care pathways for under-served populations.

It is important in developing care pathways that there is information and data to provide evidence of what activity is currently happening. In the ACT we currently have no information on end of life and palliative care journeys for people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We are currently engaged with a working group to co-design a mapping tool which we can utilise to review patient files from different services across the Territory so that we can understand more of current end of life and palliative care journeys for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This will inform a second phase (not part of this study program) where we will seek consumer input and from both the file audit and consumer input develop a care pathway for the ACT.

We would like to audit the files of all those who died in the ACT or returned to country within the SNSW LHD from October 31 retrospectively for 6 months with the tool that is currently being developed. The student will be undertaking the file audit these deaths at services identified dependant in accordance with the ethics approval.

The student will be required in conjunction with the supervisor and working group to analyse themes that arise from the audit of patient files and prepare recommendations in the form of a report for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Care Pathway working group.

- (1) Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Summary report: Results of pilot of end-of-life care audit and survey tools. Sydney: ACSQHC; 2016.
- (2) Australian Government. National Palliative Care Strategy. Canberra. 2018

#### **Proposed research methods**

Retrospective file audit of patient files for those who have died and identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; and received care in the ACT.

#### **Preferred study discipline being undertaken by the student**

Any health discipline.

#### **Potential benefits to the student and to the department**

Student:

- Develop research and analysis skills
- Gain an understanding of various Health Service record keeping processes
- Participate in audit tool analysis
- Develop knowledge of end of life care and quality of death for further application in clinical settings

Territory Wide End of Life and Palliative Care:

- Data collection and analysis of data on end of life care and quality of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT.
- Recommendations to inform the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Care pathway for the ACT.

#### **Department within ACT Health Directorate / Canberra Health Services where the student will be based**

Territory Wide End of Life and Palliative Care

Please submit form to [preclinical.research@act.gov.au](mailto:preclinical.research@act.gov.au)