



NSCCAHS NEWSLETTER

August 2011

Area Director of the HSP – Kavita Varshney

Welcome to another edition of the HSP newsletter for the NSCCAHS. The year is steadily going by and this year we have embarked on a process of conducting workshops at various sites within the area.

We have been hosted by the San, Ryde, Manly, and very shortly Hornsby. We still have activities planned for later in the year at Mona Vale and Wyong.

Thanks to those host sites for their hospitality and their local medical staff who have an excellent contribution to the teaching of all CMO's within the area.

Thanks also to the CMO's who have travelled from far and wide to attend. I think it has enriched the learning experience to have ideas and experiences from many hospitals and I hope also created a sense of collegiality.

Educational Support Officer of the HSP – Marcello Gizzi

2011 has seen some great workshops being run at several hospitals this year with themes of respiratory disease; ACLS/Cardiology and Mental Health.

2011 has also seen the introduction of CPD Hours to course and workshop completion certificates which will assist all HSP participants with meeting APHRA registration.

We still have 2 workshops to go for the remainder of year and we encourage you to go as the feedback from current participants has been great.

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What has been happening?

✓ Enrolments

We have been busy enrolling people in the program and getting information out to all the possible participants. Please let your friends and colleagues know about the HSP programme and encourage them to join if they haven't already done so.

The stats to date:

Hospital Site	Participant Enrolments
Royal North Shore	4
Hornsby	20
Wyong	6
Gosford	2
Manly	6
Mona Vale	9
Ryde	8
NS & CC	1
Sydney Adventist	13

✓ Start of workshops

Respiratory Workshop – SAN hospital

The respiratory workshop was very educational and interactive. I thought it was made more interesting because the attendees were made to participate in every part. It was well resourced and the instructors were knowledgeable and experienced. The lectures contained updates on respiratory illnesses such as asthma which are commonly seen and managed in the ED.

There were clinical scenarios that required everyone to get involved and gave us insights on scenarios that we could encounter in a regular work day. My scenario helped me deal with a potentially difficult airway which is not uncommon in the ED. I was surprised to find that the simulation dummies were as realistic as possible! I actually almost failed to intubate my "patient" because of lack of preparation and anticipation.

The lesson I learned here is one I will be taking with me until I retire as it emphasized the need to cover all possibilities and never to assume or be over-confident, because a case that may seem simple could prove to be otherwise. It was truly a helpful workshop. Since then, I have looked forward to attending the other HSP workshops because I believe they will sharpen the knowledge and confidence of all doctors working on the frontline.

John Trinidad- ED CMO Hornsby Hospital

Toxicology Workshop at the simulation centre

In April I had the opportunity to attend the Simtox 2011 course run at the Sydney Clinical Skills and Simulation centre. This two day course covered the fundamentals of all aspects of toxicology that a doctor might encounter in an emergency care or other primary care setting, including pharmacological and non-pharmacological poisoning, envenomation, ECG interpretation, recent advances in toxicology and the basic approach to management of unknown substance ingestions.

I imagine toxicology is intimidating for most of us because it's a specialised area we deal with on rare occasions and when we do it's invariably under stressful circumstances with a potentially very unstable patient. While it's a great comfort to know that expert advice is available twenty-four, seven from the Poisons Information Centre, there is no substitute for the treating doctor having a firm clinical grounding in the pharmacodynamics, physiology and principles of treatment. The most useful take home message for me was a structured approach to risk management, a plan based on understanding of the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of known or potential exposures, when and how to prepare for highest risk times and when a patient can be considered to be out of danger. This approach was emphasised repeatedly throughout the course.

Only two of the sessions were didactic talks, the rest being case based discussions in smaller groups, which was a great way to learn. I understand that this was also the first time this course had involved a simulation session. I have always found that simulation is an excellent way to focus learning in a practical setting. Even though I felt a little out of my depth during our simulation session, being in the first group who did it before we had any other teaching, I thought it was an extremely valuable component of the programme. As always, it was also a lot of fun.

The teaching was excellent. It was a real privilege to be taught by expert toxicologists, many of whom had travelled interstate to run the course. The opportunity to pick their brains in small group discussions, rather than over the phone during a clinical crisis was invaluable.

Overall Simtox 2011 was a fantastic experience. I feel it really enhanced my competence in dealing with clinical problems in toxicology and I can highly recommend it to other practitioners. I'd like to thank the Hospital Skills Programme for giving me the opportunity to attend, as well as all those involved in running an excellent course.

Dr. Brent Steeves - Sydney Adventist Hospital

Toxicology workshop at the simulation centre

A number of Area CMO's were given the opportunity to attend Simtox on April 14-15 at the Simulation Centre RNSH, with funding provided by the HSP. The

audience was Registrars, Consultants and CMO's- having it pitched just right for this audience group. It was run by the amiable Emergency staff specialists who man the toxicologist phones attached to the Poisons Information Centre.

Rather than just didactic teaching the method of engaging staff in case discussions, and mixed with throwing us into simulations, it was a brilliant way to learn. The laudable acting skills of the Simulation Centre staff were brought to bear upon the unwitting participants, and depending on when you did your simulations in the course of teaching, you felt well equipped or not...

By the end of the 2 days my head was swimming with facts, but in a good way. Particularly of use was the update on newer treatments which have proven their worth and management of patients when you do not have immediate access to the facilities of a tertiary care facility.

I have looked forward to the chance to get on the blower to the toxicologists- as I usually do at least weekly- regarding an overdose or two- and incredibly haven't seen even single one since then! The course provided the chance to gain some confidence and a framework with which to approach toxicology cases and if the opportunity arises for any HSP participants to attend in the future, I would strongly recommend applying.

Dr Justine Douthwaite Senior CMO -Mona Vale Hospital

Mental Health Workshop – Manly Hospital

I have attended the mental health Workshop on 15/6/2011 held in Manly Hospital. The teaching session was well organized with input with regards to examination of the patient as well as practical suggestion on managing patients who are agitated. I benefited a lot from this session as I have lost touch with the principles in management of mental health patients (the mental health staff in the hospital that I work in manage all aspects of their care except the medical clearance).It also gave us the opportunity to ask questions as well as vent out our frustrations we face at work! Marcello (one of the staff) had gone to great trouble with in providing a great lunch which made it an enjoyable experience.

Dr B Rajaratnam - Wyong Hospital

Mental Health Workshop – Manly Hospital

I thought the Mental Health Workshop that was recently held at Manly Hospital was excellent. In particular the topics covered including understanding the Mental Health Act, sedation techniques for agitated patients, take down techniques for violent patients and mental state examination were extremely relevant and practical. From my perspective, having worked in an Emergency Department for years, this workshop represented the most useful revision of mental health problems I commonly encounter. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and would recommend the course to anyone. Keep up the good work!

Dr Tony Bernard, CMO, Mona Vale Hospital

Upcoming Courses:



Toxicology/Altered LOC Workshop, 12th October 2011, Mona Vale Hospital

Orthopaedic/Rheumatology Workshop, 7th December 2011, Wyong Hospital

Quote to consider:

They say "people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones". Okay, how about "nobody should throw stones?". My policy is no stone throwing, regardless of housing situation. - Dimitri Martin

(thanks to Justine Douthwaite for the quote)