

CURRICULUM VITAE

Associate Professor. Meera Ruth Agar FRACP, FACHPM, MPC, MBBS

Current appointments

Director of Palliative Care and Staff Specialists in Palliative Medicine, Braeside Hospital, HammondCare

Conjoint Associate Professor, University of New South Wales.

Senior Lecturer, Discipline of Palliative and Supportive Services, School of Medicine, Flinders University.

Clinical Trials Director, Ingham Institute of Applied Medical Research

Key publications

Agar M, Draper B, Phillips P, Phillips J, Collier A, Harlum J, et al. Making decisions about delirium: A qualitative comparison of decision making between nurses working in palliative care, aged care, aged care psychiatry, and oncology. *Palliative Medicine*. 2011;Sep 9. [Epub ahead of print].

Agar M, Currow D, Plummer J, Chye R, Draper B. Differing management of people with advanced cancer and delirium by four sub-specialties. *Palliative Medicine*. 2008;22(5):633-40.

Agar M, Currow D, Plummer J, Seidel R, Carnahan R, Abernethy AP. Changes in anticholinergic load from regular prescribed medications in palliative care as death approaches. *Palliative Medicine*. 2009;23(3):257-65.

Agar M, Currow DC, Shelby-James TM, Plummer J, Sanderson C, Abernethy AP. Preference for place of care and place of death in palliative care: are these different questions? *Palliative Medicine*. 2008;22(7):787-95.

Agar M, Lawlor P. Delirium in cancer patients: a focus on treatment-induced psychopathology. *Curr Opin Oncol*. 2008;20(4):360-6.

Agar M, Lockett T. Outcome measures for palliative care research. *Current opinion in supportive and palliative care*. 2012;6(4):500-7.

Agar M, Sheehan C, Chapman M, Ko D, Currow D. Informed Consent in Palliative Care Clinical Trials: challenging but possible. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*. 2012;(in press)

Agar M, To T, Plummer J, Abernethy A, Currow D. Anti-cholinergic load, health care utilization, and survival in people with advanced cancer: a pilot study. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*. 2010;13(6):745-52.

Leonard M, Agar M, Mason C, Lawlor P. Delirium issues in palliative care settings. *J Psychosom Res*. 2008;65(3):289-98.

Lockett T, Davidson PM, Lam L, Phillips J, Currow DC, Agar M. Do Community Specialist Palliative Care Services That Provide Home Nursing Increase Rates of Home

Death for People With Life-Limiting Illnesses? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Comparative Studies. *J Pain Symptom Manage*. 2012. Epub ahead of print.

Hosie A, Davidson PM, Agar M, Sanderson CR, Phillips J. Delirium prevalence, incidence, and implications for screening in specialist palliative care inpatient settings: A systematic review. *Palliative Medicine*. 2012. Epub ahead of print.

Hardy J, Quinn S, Fazekas B, Plummer J, Eckermann S, Agar M, et al. Randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study to assess the efficacy and toxicity of subcutaneous ketamine in the management of cancer pain. *Journal of Clinical Oncology* 2012;30(29):3611-7

Key grants

1. **M Agar**, G Caplan, M Hill, B Draper, D Rowett, C Sanderson, D Currow, T Shelby-James and P Lawlor. Randomised control trial of oral risperidone, oral haloperidol, and oral placebo with rescue subcutaneous midazolam in the management of delirium in palliative care inpatients. Commonwealth Dept of Health and Ageing. Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative.
2. **Agar M**, Davidson P, Lovell M, Clayton J, Xuan W, Clark K, Sanderson C, Liauw W, Luckett T, Chye R, Phillips J. Improving Palliative Care through Clinical Trials (ImPaCCT) - the NSW collaborative trials group in palliative care. Cooperative clinical trial grant. Cancer Institute NSW.
3. **Agar M**, Chenoweth L, Beattie E, Mitchell G, Goodall S, Luscombe G, Luckett T, Pond D, Phillips J, Davidson P, Collier A. Improving palliative care for people with advanced dementia living in residential aged care. Aged care service improvement and healthy ageing grants flexible fund. Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.
4. De Souza P, Barton M, Apte M, **Agar M**, Lee S, Bokey L, South West Sydney translational cancer research unit. CINSW translational cancer research unit.
5. Clark K, Talley N, Currow D, Davidson P, **Agar M**, Phillips J, Lam L. A multi-centre randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of an algorithmic approach to the diagnosis and management of constipation in palliative care. National Health and Medical Research Council Project grant
6. Chantrill L, Asghari R, Harvey M, **Agar M**, Della Fiorentina S and De Souza P. Sydney South West Local health District Clinical Trials grant. Cancer Institute New South Wales.

Community engagement

A/Prof Agar has substantive involvement in the research and palliative care community. She is the chief investigator and Chair for ImPACCT: "improving palliative care through clinical trials" (NSW palliative care clinical trials collaborative group). CI Agar has several roles as part of the national Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCSCC): Chair of the trial management committee, and member of both the scientific committee and Management Advisory Board; and is the site investigator for one of the national clinical sites. She is the Deputy Chair of the Cancer Institute New South Wales Human Research Ethics Committee and a member of the scientific advisory committee and management executive for the Australian National Cooperative trials group – neuro-oncology (COGNO). She currently is the Chair of the Palliative Care Group, and member of Council, Clinical Oncological Society of Australia. Member, Australasian Chapter of

Palliative Medicine Committee 2008 – ongoing; Chair, Sydney Institute of Palliative Medicine Education and Training Committee 2007 – ongoing, and Board Member (Australasian representative) of the European Delirium Association 2009 – ongoing.

Awards and prizes

A/Prof Agar was awarded a scholarship to attend the Australia and Asia Pacific Clinical Oncology Research Development (ACORD) workshop (2004), the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Palliative Medicine project prize (2003), the poster prize at the 3rd European Delirium Congress, European Delirium Association 2008, and she was part of the Flinders University team awarded a Vice Chancellors Award in 2008 for excellence in teaching, ALTC Citation in 2010 and an Australian Award for University teaching in 2012 (Office of Learning and teaching) for programs that enhance learning. In 2011 the South West Sydney Palliative Care Clinical trials Unit that she leads won the New South Wales Premier's Cancer Research award for innovations in clinical trials. CI Agar won the Palliative Care New South Wales award for significance in palliative care research in 2011, and the palliative care for people at home project: Palliative extended packages at home project for which she was the chief investigator won the Palliative Care NSW innovation in palliative care award.