



Mercy Health
Care first

Winter News 2009

MERCY PALLIATIVE CARE

CHANGING FACE OF CARE

IN THE 50 YEARS THAT NOW ENCOMPASS MODERN DAY PALLIATIVE CARE, A NUMBER OF CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE.



Hundreds of years ago, during the Crusades of the Middle Ages, we know that hospices were often found in monasteries, established not only for the sick and dying, but also for the hungry wayfarer, the woman in labour, the needy poor, the orphan and the leper. The goal was hospitality in its true sense: protection, refreshment and fellowship, rather than the demand for a cure.¹

The development of technology in the 1960s, beginning with cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and life support, was symbolic of the advances in health care as we began to understand illness and the role of medicine. The goal of medicine shifted from healing to cure and the elimination of disease.

Consequently people began to believe that all illness could be cured. In the context of these advances, people were reluctant to acknowledge that death through curable illness still occurred and that care was needed to ensure comfort during the dying process. Early hospices arose as sanctuaries from traditional hospitals.

Cicely Saunders' experiences as a nurse, social worker and physician convinced her that dying patients were often neglected and ignored, suffering unnecessarily for want of both basic symptom management and attention. Hence the development of modern hospices or programs of care for the dying began in Britain. The most famous is St Christopher's Hospice in London, begun by Dame Cicely Saunders in 1967.² [Continued page 3](#)

PROVISION OF CARE STATISTICS [NOV / DEC / JAN]

- > Population of catchment area: 695,642 (1368 sq kms)
- > New referrals: 349
- > Number of deaths: 179
- > Face to face contact with patients and families: 7007
- > Time involved with face to face contacts: 314,293 (5238 hours)
- > Kilometres travelled by staff to visit patients and families: 42,041 kms (9 return trips to Alice Springs)
- > Family support volunteer hours: 519 hours

NEWSLETTER DONATIONS

WE WISH TO THANK EVERYONE WHO SENT DONATIONS IN RESPONSE TO OUR AUTUMN NEWSLETTER. WE RECEIVED \$14,680. AS ALWAYS, A BIG THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS.

Manager's Report



CAROL QUAYLE, MANAGER,
PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol".

IT IS ANZAC DAY AS I PONDER THIS REPORT AND REFLECT ON HOW LIFE HAS CHANGED OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS.

As technology has changed in war, so it has impacted on the care of dying people and their families. In the earliest days of hospice care, dying people were frequently left to die alone and in pain – physically and psychologically.

Now in modern palliative care, whilst there remain many challenges, we recognise and actively support all aspects of care for people living with a life-threatening illness when providing palliative care. At the bedside, care is taken to ensure the physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of life are identified, acknowledged and supported. At the broadest health level we actively engage with government and other external organisations to ensure the principles of palliative care can be carried through into policy development and implementation.

One of the challenges I face in managing Mercy Palliative Care is to be available to staff whilst engaging actively in the current palliative care projects with the State Government. I am in the privileged position to meet fortnightly with the executive officers and managers of the metropolitan and rural community palliative care services in the Leadership Program auspiced by Palliative Care Victoria and The Department of Human Services. This has provided me with opportunities to share the visions and challenges in palliative care and help guide our input into the many government advisory and steering committees we have been invited to. Currently Mercy Palliative Care is represented at a state level for data reporting, Service Delivery Framework-Funding Review Model and the Implementation of Paediatric Palliative Care Policy. In addition three staff members are involved with Catholic Health Australia's Palliative Care Special Interest Group.

The work of palliative care in the 21st century at Mercy Palliative Care, whilst focused on patient and family care, is also to actively engage in the broader palliative care sector at all levels – local, state and national to ensure funding is focused at patient and family care of the highest quality.

As I continue to represent Mercy Palliative Care at a range of levels I wish you the best for the coming winter, hoping there may be some rain to replenish the needs of our countryside and water ways.

HELPING THE COMMUNITY...

During the development of the Mercy Palliative Care building at Devonshire Road, Sunshine in the 1990s, it was decided that Mercy Palliative Care would become the caretakers for the Russell Street Gates.

Many who come to the building comment on the beautiful wrought iron gates which were made in 1922 by Charlie Pippett, a blacksmith with Sunshine Harvester.

A plaque was erected in 2000 by the Sunshine Historical Society to commemorate the significance of Sunshine Harvester in the local history of Sunshine, and to honour

Charlie Pippett's extraordinary work. However in 2007, the plaque was stolen. Fortunately on April 27th 2009 a new plaque was unveiled by the Sunshine Historical Society in the presence of local councillors from the City of Brimbank, former workers from the Sunshine Harvester foundry, representatives from the Sisters of Mercy and descendants of Charlie Pippett. Mercy Palliative Care later hosted morning tea following the unveiling which was well received by all who attended.



CHANGING FACE OF CARE *Continued from page 1*

In 2009 we now provide palliative care in many settings – home-based, inpatient specialist wards, hospital consultancy across general wards for patients who have diagnoses requiring specialised support, day hospices and the use of a health promotional philosophy to raise the profile of palliative care from one of “doom and gloom” to one that encourages the community to understand the importance of living in the face of life-threatening illnesses. While general health care services are often involved in the care of people with a terminal illness, the Palliative Care Program provides specialist services that address specific issues such as the management of pain and other symptoms associated with a terminal illness and to provide psychological, social and spiritual support where required or if requested.

This is supported by the underlying principles of the Palliative Care Program:

- > Care is holistic, multidisciplinary and client-centred
- > Care includes medical, nursing, allied health and volunteer services
- > Support is provided for families and friends, including grief and bereavement support
- > Patients can make informed choices about their care including the type of care and where the care is delivered
- > Aims to achieve an integrated service across all aspects

> Service delivery is seamless between the locations where care is delivered, whether that is in the community or in a health care facility.

In Victoria, palliative care as a sector is now well developed and, as an organisation, Mercy Palliative Care is involved in a range of activities that continue to reflect, review and refine service delivery. Staff from Mercy Palliative Care regularly attend workshops, steering committees and advisory committees to advocate for the needs of patients and families.

Some of the projects that are currently being undertaken by the Department of Human Services include:

- > Service Delivery Framework and Funding Model Review
- > Strengthening Palliative Care Policy Evaluation and Refresh
- > Strengthening care for children with a life-threatening condition
- > Victorian Rural Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner Project
- > Program of Experience in Palliative Approach
- > Community Palliative Care (data collection)
- > Review of hospital-based palliative care consultancy teams



DAME CICELY SAUNDERS
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Details of the programs being developed to improve access to palliative care services can be accessed through the Department of Human Services website www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare

1. <http://www.victoriahospice.org/about-victoria-hospice/news-and-media/brief-history--care> (retrieved 25/4/09)
2. <http://www.mywhatever.com/cifwriter/library/70/4902.html> (retrieved 25/4/09)

LOAN EQUIPMENT

Do you have loan equipment from Mercy Palliative Care which is no longer needed? Please give us a call on **1300 369 019** and we will organise for it to be picked up. The equipment will be easily recognised as it will have a white Mercy Hospice sticker on it.



WHO'S WHO AT MERCY

Name

Jaclyn Bongiovanni

Position

Acting Clinical Nurse Consultant

Best part of the job

Developing a relationship with patients, their carers and staff.

'Fave' restaurant

Coco-chine in Caroline Springs.

'Fave' footy team

Unfortunately, the Western Bulldogs – *Woof Woof Woof!*

Last Book

Never Say Die by Dr Chris O'Brien.

Biggest adventure

Having three boys including twins by IVF – what a journey.

"They're now teenagers; what have I done?"

THANK YOU GIFTS

All gifts are gratefully received, acknowledged and every donor is thanked.

Donations in the form of bequests, memorial gifts and thank you gifts from the community and grateful families enable Mercy Palliative Care to provide additional services and equipment to improve the lives of those we serve. Some families have chosen to make a memorial gift by supporting a scholarship to help train more staff or to provide counselling for those in need.

To discuss your thank you gift please phone Carol Quayle on **9364 9777**.

ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Notice Board

MERCY PALLIATIVE CARE MEMORIAL SERVICE

The next Memorial Service will be held on Monday 7 September at 7pm. If you would like to attend, please call the office on **(03) 9364 9777**.

BEREAVEMENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Thursday 17 August, Thursday 24 August, Thursday 31 August.
(2 sessions each date) 10am–12.30pm or 6.30pm–9pm.
Please call the office on **9364 9777** if you would like to attend one of the sessions.

MERCY & WESTERN DAY HOSPICE

The Day Hospice is a joint initiative between Western Health and Mercy Palliative Care held at the Sunshine Hospital. The aim of Day Hospice is to promote wellbeing, independence and enjoyment for clients whilst providing a day off for carers.

Open Tuesday and Thursdays from 9am–3pm, the hospice provides activities, morning and afternoon tea and lunch for a gold coin donation. **Enquiries (03) 8345 1226**.

PROGRAMS FOR CARERS

Carers Victoria, located in Footscray, has a huge range of education options and programs for carers. You can visit their website carersvic.org.au or call them on **1800 242 636**.

SUPPORT IN BEREAVEMENT

Creative Memories Group occurs on the **first Thursday** of each month from **1.30pm–3pm** at the Sunshine office, 3 Devonshire Road, Sunshine. For more information and to book a space at the table please call us on **9364 9777**.

In collaboration with Mercy Palliative Care, the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement provides regular monthly groups for local families at the Sunshine Office. **Kids Grieve Too West** is held on the third Monday of the month. For further information about this group please contact the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement on **9265 2111**.

MERCY PALLIATIVE CARE

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CD DRIVE

During June and July, Mercy Palliative Care is having a CD drive. So, if you have any CDs that you no longer want that are in good condition, please consider donating them to the Music Therapy Program. We are looking for music across a wide range of styles including classical, theatre/musicals, country and western, popular, rock, jazz and blues, sacred and relaxation. CDs can be left at the office at 3 Devonshire Road, Sunshine. If you have any queries, please contact Lucy Forrest, Music Therapist on **9364 9777**. Thank you for your support.

WE REMEMBER

We are indebted to the wonderful support from family and friends in memory of their loved one. Since our last newsletter, funeral donations have been received in memory of:

Paulo Attana
William Charles
Margaret Conway
John Copland
Catello Farriciello
Pasquale Giudice
Michael Healy
Eva Mitchell
Prudence (Judy) Nelson
Wallace Pereira
May Stevenson
Gebhard (Gerry) Stoekle
Catherine Testa

AREAS OF SERVICE

- City of Brimbank
- City of Hobson's Bay
- City of Maribyrnong
- City of Melbourne
- City of Moonee Valley
- City of Wyndham
- Shire of Melton

PRIVACY POLICY: Under the new privacy laws, it is vitally important that we protect your privacy to ensure that your rights are fully protected. Currently we hold personal information about donors, such as names, addresses and anonymous information relating to donation history. We supply a taxation receipt for every donation of \$2 or more, provided we have your name and address details. We do not and will not disclose any information about you to any other person or organisation. This information is securely held and can only be accessed by authorised personnel under the terms of the new legislation. Should you choose to receive no further information from us you can simply write to the address provided above.