

**Willingness and skill to make
a difference in what we do**



**BALLARAT
HOSPICE
CARE INC.**
Home Based Palliative Care

**2021-22
Annual Report**





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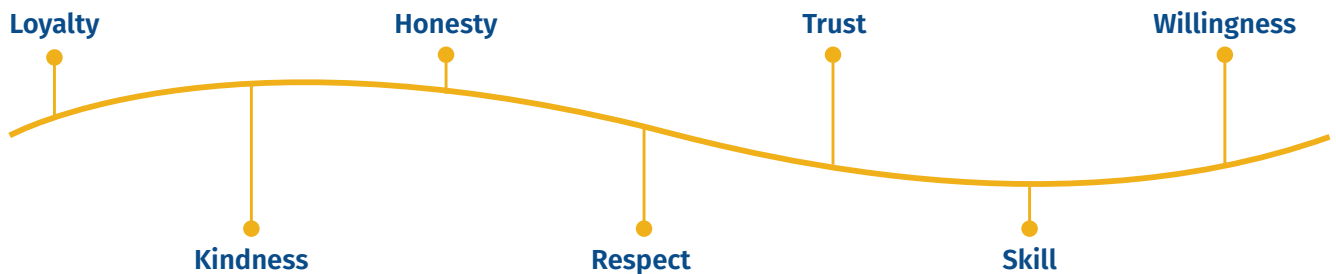
**BALLARAT
HOSPICE**
CARE INC.

Home Based Palliative Care

Who we are

We are a team of specialist palliative care nurses, supportive care advisors, patient and family support volunteers, and compassionate administration and support staff. Established by community members in 1985, our not for profit organisation has guided patients, and supported carers and families to live, die and grieve well.

Our Values



Vision

To offer our community a specialist palliative care service focused on end of life issues and care.

Mission

Ballarat Hospice Care, using a skilled, interdisciplinary team approach, facilitates with compassion, the provision of home-based, holistic palliative and end of life care.

Our aims

1. To provide specialist palliative care equitably and responsively within available resources.
2. To promote palliative care values within the community.

Philosophy

We believe that

- the care of patients must acknowledge the whole person in their social context
- grief, loss and death are a part of life
- suffering can be alleviated by providing support relevant to patients and carers, which reflects their choices
- all patients and carers are entitled to open, honest communication, which respects choices and autonomy
- caring for ourselves and each other enables us to care for others
- bereavement support is an essential element in supporting people after significant loss.

The difference we make

We

- make a difference to the patients, carers and families we support. Our holistic approach to care means that we walk alongside people; supporting, empowering and caring for them
- ensure our services are responsive to the individual needs of each patient, carer and family
- provide in-home specialist palliative care, addressing physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs
- work closely with other health and community services.

We offer

- in home specialist palliative care nursing
- 24 hour nursing support
- volunteer support
- support to make current and future care choices
- carer and patient education
- equipment loan to enhance comfort and safety.

We aim to

- support people to feel safe
- enhance quality of life
- work together to achieve choices on how to live and die.

Acknowledgement and inclusion

We

- acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where we live and work, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- are committed to ensuring our services are safe, respectful, equitable and inclusive to all people, their carers and families
- welcome and work with people of every age, health status, race, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, linguistic background, and financial status.



Our strategic goals

1. Client and community

A home based, person-centred, specialist palliative and end of life care service with the capacity to meet diverse and evolving community needs, a service which is provided in collaboration with patients, carers, other service providers and community stakeholders.

2. Our people and our business

A quality and sustainable business and service delivery model that has a collaborative and inclusive approach.

3. Sustainable performance and governance

We are governed and managed for sustainable performance, including financial sustainability.

4. Innovation and learning

Working in partnership with other service providers, we will achieve excellence, innovation and learning in palliative and end of life care for the benefit of all.





Recognition

This year we particularly acknowledge and celebrate

- **Carita Clancy**, Chief Executive Officer – 15 years
(Carita is acknowledged on page 09)

“What keeps me connected to Hospice and turning up each day are the remarkable people I work with. Every day they demonstrate compassion without judgment for who they care for while appreciating the staff who guide the strategic direction of the organisation. Together they work to achieve the Board vision to ensure Ballarat Hospice Care is here for the long term. I have always felt appreciated and as I demonstrate the values of this amazingly great place to work; I know the difference I make is valued.”

Carita Clancy

- **Janine Lynch**, Specialist Palliative Care Nurse – 10 years

Janine came to us from Ballarat Health Services Dialysis Unit. She brought with her many skills, a great attitude and expansive knowledge about people living with renal disease and the role palliative care has to improve the quality of their lives. Janine lives the values of Ballarat Hospice Care; she is always willing to contribute and participate to ensure we offer the best service we

can. Janine's kind and thoughtful way of nursing flows into how she works beside, cares for and values her colleagues. Her particular skill of precision came into its own while she was an active member of the Palliative Care Hub Project User Group. Details of the office layout and our equipment was all due to her. We are very grateful that Janine continues to be a part of our story.

“I enjoy coming to work as it is so rewarding and a privilege to care for people at this time of their life. I feel so supported by the kindness and guidance from my workmates; this is what keeps me coming back.”

Janine Lynch

- **Caryl Whitfield**, Administration – 5 years

Caryl is a person of integrity, she is reliable and expresses the values of Hospice. She is always willing to give her best with honesty and loyalty to Hospice, her friends and family. She demonstrates great resourcefulness and willingness, and we are grateful that she is part of our team.

“I enjoy the inclusive, friendly, supportive environment. It's a great place to work.”

Caryl Whitfield

The following volunteers achieved significant years of service milestones. We are grateful for their willingness and loyalty:

Five years of service:

- Carol Hanrahan
Friends of Hospice
Op Shop Volunteer
- Jan Murrihy
Supportive Care Volunteer
- Jillian Gale
Friends of Hospice
Op Shop Volunteer
- Joan Brick
Supportive Care Volunteer
- John Elliott
Supportive Care Volunteer

Fifteen years of service:

- Phyl Graham
Operations Volunteer

Carer Recognition

Ballarat Hospice Care Inc. takes all practical measures to ensure that its employees and agents have an awareness and understanding of the care relationship principles in relation to the Carer Recognition Act 2012 (Vic) and the Statement for Australian Carers in the Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth).

Child Safety

Ballarat Hospice Care Inc. is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of all management, employees, volunteers and contractors. Ballarat Hospice Care has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Statement of Attestation: - Risk Management Compliance

Ballarat Hospice Care Inc. is required to annually attest to its compliance with the mandatory requirements of the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (VGRMF August 2020). Ballarat Hospice Care has completed the process and undertaken an audit against the supplied checklist to support this attestation and has recorded any findings of non-compliance to ensure continual improvement of the risk management function.

In addition to the above, Ballarat Hospice Care has met the accreditation requirements of the Quality Improvement Council's Health and Community Services Standards 7th Edition without any recommendations for Standard 1.6 Risk Management.

Website

Ballarathospicecare.org.au

Our Board of Governance

Patron

Rob Knowles AO

Chair

Geoff Russell

*B.A. (Sociology), Grad. Dip. Bus. Admin.,
Dip. Fin. Services. GAICD*

Deputy Chair

Kevin Harper

FCR (Lond.), Grad. RMA Sandhurst, MACPM, ARSCM, L.Th

Treasurer

Sandra Marston

*Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Science (Hons),
Chartered Accountant*

Members

Neale Gribble

Bachelor of Law, Bachelor of Commerce

Meredith Johnson

Bachelor Economics

Gabrielle Kirby

*Cert Oncology Nursing U.K., Bachelor Health Science,
Graduate Diploma Palliative & Gerontic Care, Master
Health Management.*

David Leach

Bachelor of Theology, TPTC.

Stephen Lewis

*Bachelor of Business, Certified Practising Accountant
& member Tax Institute Australia*

Mandy Macdonald

*Diploma of Human Resource Management, Diploma of
OH&S, Diploma of Management*

Malcolm Weaver

Diploma of Business, former Chartered Accountant



New Members

Welcomed February 2022



Gabrielle Kirby

Cert Oncology Nursing U.K., Bachelor Health Science, Graduate Diploma Palliative & Gerontic Care, Master Health Management.

With a lifelong interest and passion for home-based palliative nursing care, it was with pleasure that I accepted the invitation to join the Board of Ballarat Hospice Care this year. Having recently retired from an almost 40 year nursing and management career in various metro and rural public and not for profit community, health and aged care settings; the time was right to give back some of the expertise and learnings from my experience to a very worthwhile community organisation. As a resident of the Hepburn Shire, I aim to add a broader community perspective to how we care for the dying in this region. I believe good clinical governance is essential in the provision of high quality care for people of all ages in all settings, and hope I can contribute to this important aspect for the clients, staff and volunteers of Ballarat Hospice Care.

Departing Member



Kevin Harper

FCR (Lond.), Grad. RMA Sandhurst, MACPM, ARSCM, L.Th

Kevin served over 13 years as a valued Board Member and had a significant impact on community engagement, patient care and support. These are important strategic areas in relation to the Ballarat Hospice Care role as a community provider of palliative care services. Furthermore, Kevin's willingness to serve as Deputy Chair provided Board stability in relation to the community profile and ongoing funding partnerships. Kevin was a great advocate for the organisation; he was always ready to promote the palliative care cause. We thank Kevin for his contributions.

Sub Committees

Finance

Geoff Russell (Chair)

Sandra Marston

Stephen Lewis

Risk Management

Neale Gribble (Chair)

Meredith Johnson

Community Engagement

Kevin Harper (Chair)

David Leach

Quality and Compliance

Meredith Johnson (Chair)

Geoff Russell

Nominations

Neale Gribble (Chair)

Geoff Russell

Meredith Johnson

Mandy Macdonald

Our Staff

Chief Executive Officer

Carita Clancy

Clinical Operations Manager

Melanie Pither (nee Mattinson) (Until May 2022)

Operations Manager

Katherine Gillespie (Commenced June 2022)

Medical Director

Dr David Brumley OAM

Community Engagement Manager

Michelle MacGillivray

Finance Manager

Kerrie Smith

Quality and Compliance Manager

Karen Taylor

Friends of Hospice Op Shop Coordinator

Darcy Irvin (Welcomed June 2021)

Finn Johnson (Welcomed March 2022)

Volunteer Manager

Lauren Zeuschner

Administration

Lee Ellis

Caryl Whitfield

Stores Coordinator

Peter Jones

Equipment & Maintenance

Roger Simkin (Welcomed June 2021)

Max Watson (Welcomed May 2022)

Project and Research Coordinator

Diane Nimmo

Clinical Coordinators

Vicky Smith

Melanie Pither (nee Mattinson) (Commenced May 2022)

Specialist Palliative Care Nurses

Valerie Armenante (Welcomed July 2021)

Sarah Brennan (Welcomed February 2022)

Leanne Burns

Louise Cooke (Welcomed July 2021)

Debbie Hubble

Janine Lynch

Mandy Martin

Sharon Moss

Simon Murphy

Leanne Mouritzen (Welcomed August 2021)

Vicky Smith

Supportive Care Coordinator

Julie Hassard

Supportive Care Advisors

Angela Anderson (Welcomed May 2022)

Katherine Gillespie (Until June 2022)

Katrina Tansey

Farewells

All at Ballarat Hospice Care value the contributions of

Jenny D'Antonio

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

(Farewelled December 2021)

Darcy Irvin

Friends of Hospice Op Shop Coordinator

(Farewelled November 2021)

Prue Kelly

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

(Farewelled April 2022)

Brendan King

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

(Farewelled April 2022)

Glenda Marsden

Supportive Care Coordinator/ Advisor

(Farewelled January 2022)

Nicola McMahon

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

(Farewelled February 2022)

Jacinta Smith

Specialist Palliative Care Nurse

(Farewelled December 2021)

Lauren Zeuschner

Volunteer Manager

(Farewelled May 2022)



Vale

With sadness, respect and gratitude we acknowledge:

Keith Ridsdale, a wonderful friend, supporter and volunteer of Ballarat Hospice Care. Keith lived life large and was a memorable presence during his time as a volunteer. He gave in many ways; assisting in the establishment of the Friends of Hospice Op Shop; firstly at 312 Drummond Street, then at Little Bridge Street before the current location at 723 Sturt Street Ballarat. He was a great advocate for the “Give That They May Grow” campaign which raised funds and awareness for our new home at 1836 Sturt Street in Alfredton. He was always willing to represent Ballarat Hospice Care and speak on our behalf to raise awareness about palliative care.

Beth Burridge, a beautiful friend, supporter and long term member of the Special Interest Group. Beth was a wonderful volunteer in Ballarat and is fondly remembered.

Responsible Ministers and Officers

For the reporting period:

- The Hon Martin Foley, Minister for Health (until June 2022)
- The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas, MP (June 2022)
- Professor Euan Wallace, Secretary Department of Health
- Theresa Williamson, Manager End of Life Care and Palliative Services, Program Improvement – Health Services and Ageing, System Improvement Group, Commissioning and System Improvement Division, Department of Health
- Paul Smith Deputy Secretary, West Division, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- John Koopmans, Adviser Aged, Homelessness and Community Programs Team, Central Highlands Area, West Division, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

From our Chair and CEO

An “out of sync story”

Carita Clancy was acknowledged for her 15 years of service in April 2022 with a presentation from Board Chair, Geoff Russell. These words are also shared in relation to Carita’s resignation from the role of CEO. Carita will be leaving in October 2022. The Board, staff and volunteers thank her for her service and wish her all the best in her new adventures.

“Since Carita’s appointment as CEO in April 2007, the growth and development of Ballarat Hospice Care has been significant and proves the community support and need for home based palliative care services in our region.

In particular, I refer to the increase in patients in care from 50 at any one time to over 200 at times and increasing. This certainly reflects the quality of care provided by Ballarat Hospice Care staff all of whom have been provided with an effective support structure initiated by Carita.

In addition, Carita succeeded in increasing the level of funding to double what it was in 2007. This has been so necessary to cater for the patient referral growth since that time.

A dream that Carita had, and was realised, is the opening of the Friends of Hospice Op Shop. It not only provides a valuable source of income, it has enabled Ballarat Hospice Care to more effectively connect with members of the public.

Carita’s contributions to developing the necessary documentation for funding approval by the Government for the new building needs particular recognition. This work required rigour, attention to detail and a great deal of information about projected growth and development of the service. The submission was recognised by external sources as the best and most comprehensive document seen from any organisation.

Carita can move on to the next stage in her life knowing that the staffing structure she instituted is a leader in the palliative care field; that the financial strength of the organisation is sound, and that Ballarat Hospice Care is in a position to contemplate further growth and development to meet the needs of the community.”

Geoff Russell
Chair

Chair and CEO report

Knowledge management and change

Ballarat Hospice Care has always been guided by our values; this is a common theme throughout our strategic and day to day operations. What stands out this year is the willingness to embrace change and trust that all will go well for the future of the organisation. Our strategic plan for the Ballarat Hospice Care Palliative Care Hub is on track; achieving all that we set down through our operations plan and specifically the building strategic plan itself. At the core of our business are the patients and families who we care for. In supporting this work, we also have a focus on raising awareness about palliative and end of life care, and bringing the conversations, symbols and opportunities to the forefront of community engagement.

We maintain a risk register, which is monitored closely with regular reviews. What was highlighted this year is the knowledge our current Board and CEO have, and the risk of this knowledge being lost. During the years of the Covid19 pandemic we focused on keeping our organisation and community safe while we continued the conversations and planning for Board and CEO succession.

Members of the Board came together through the Recruitment and Nominations Committee in anticipation of recruiting a new CEO after accepting the resignation of Carita Clancy in February 2022. This time gave Committee Chair, Malcolm Weaver along with Board Members Geoff Russell, Mandy Macdonald, Meredith Johnson and Neale Gribble an opportunity to develop a rigorous recruitment process to ensure the best person possible is engaged for the CEO role.

In our work with patients and families, the care shifts to enable the best outcome while responding to their changing needs. So too with our organisation and how we operate. We refined our organisational structure, with a shift of people and their skills; Katherine Gillespie is now our Operations Manager and Mel Pither (nee Mattinson) job shares with Vicky Smith the Clinical Coordinator role. The shift received positive feedback both internally and externally; it is contributing to improved staff wellbeing and strengthening communication and systems. It is great to have a workplace where giving the best of yourself and the willingness to reset is valued. Through these shifts and changes, more information is being shared from the CEO to Operations Manager with a flow on effect to staff and volunteers.

Other important developments, which contribute to managing risks and sharing knowledge include

- Community Engagement Manager, Michelle MacGillivray is undertaking a large amount of work sharing knowledge and information through social media and our new web page. Information shared includes general organisational information, information about the Palliative Care Hub and palliative care.
- Finance Manager, Kerrie Smith works closely with the CEO and the Operations Manager to enable a shared understanding of our organisational business needs and budgets.
- Project and Research Coordinator, Diane Nimmo through Ballarat Hospice Care is leading projects influencing, sharing and strengthening palliative care systems across the Grampians region.
- Quality and Compliance Manager, Karen Taylor is supported in her workload enabling an increase in the shared understanding of our legislative and quality requirements across the organisation.
- Volunteer Manager, Lauren Zeuschner continued to recruit new volunteers and remained connected with current volunteers.

In short, the new organisational structure endorsed by the Board, contributes to managing the knowledge risk for the organisation.

The Friends of Hospice Op Shop reopened after the COVID19 lockdowns and an internal makeover; it is restored to a thriving hub of volunteer activity and enthusiastic shoppers. We are so grateful to our volunteers and the community for their ongoing support of the shop.

As we prepare for change we continue to share our knowledge to empower our Board, staff, volunteers and community. Together we look forward to the engagement of a new CEO with the support of a renewed Board plan.

Geoff Russell
Chair

Carita Clancy
Chief Executive Officer

Further acknowledgements

We do not work in isolation; as always we rely on collaboration, support, assistance and guidance from our partners and we thank them.

- Grampians Region Palliative Care Team
- Grampians Regional Palliative Care Consortium
- General Practitioners
- Specialists
- Grampians Health and in particular Gandarra Palliative Care Unit
- Saint John of God Hospital
- Central Highlands Rural Health
- Palliative Care Services at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne
- City of Ballarat Hepburn Shire
- Golden Plains and Moorabool
- Victorian State Government particularly the Department of Health



A final word from the CEO

"The Board accepted my resignation in the spirit of renewal for which I am grateful. I am also grateful to the Board for undertaking a rigorous process to recruit Ballarat Hospice Care's next CEO, Andrew Howard. I have been fortunate to have held the role of CEO over the last 15 years, and feel privileged to have supported and led the staff and volunteers in caring for our community. The recognition given to me and the support from the Board, staff and volunteers along with the community is greatly valued, and creates precious memories.

It is through this support for each other that together we have achieved so much and as always, we could not have done this without the many people and services who are part of the Ballarat Hospice Care community. I can't thank everyone enough who have contributed to the growth and wellbeing of Ballarat Hospice Care and to me; change and new opportunities abound for us all."

Carita Clancy



Clinical Services

The past year has been one of continuous change, reorientation and establishing a thriving and robust organisation. We continued to respond and adapt how we delivered support and cared for our patients in an ever-changing environment throughout the year.

Our staff remained committed to providing high quality care to ensure patients live and die well in their place of choice. Throughout the pandemic, we responded to an increase in the number of people dying at home.

We

- supported many patients who chose to die at home
- responded to rapid discharges from public and private hospitals
- provided equipment, nursing support and supportive care assistance enabling people, their carers and families to feel safe and cared for.

Supportive Care

In the spirit of renewal, significant change occurred in our Supportive Care service.

- Glenda Marsden stepped away from the coordination and advisor role in January 2022
- Julie Hassard was appointed as Supportive Care Coordinator in January 2022
- Angela Anderson was welcomed as a Supportive Care Advisor in May 2022
- Katherine Gillespie took the opportunity to undertake the Operations Manager role in June 2022 acknowledging her former role as a Supportive Care Advisor for two years.

Supportive Care volunteers returned to caring and supporting patients in their homes in early 2022. This was after a two-year absence of working in patients' homes due to the Covid19 pandemic.

It has been a wonderful step forward; we know our patients and carers appreciate and value the support our volunteers offer including

- social connection,
- in home respite and
- transport to medical appointments.

Real examples of our Supportive Care volunteers at work

- A patient works with two volunteers; one volunteer visits the patient weekly and another drives the patient to the shops once or twice a month. Our patient feels the volunteer support increases a feeling of independence; enjoys their company and believes they are not as reliant on family for these tasks.
- A carer wished for someone to have a cuppa with each week. This provided valuable social connection and emotional support as they cared for their spouse at home.
- A volunteer provided in home respite to enable a carer to get their hair done, attend a local craft group and take some time away from home-based caring.

Bereavement support is an integral part of the care we provide to patients' families and carers after a patient has died. We send a card acknowledging the patient's death. We follow up with a phone call approximately two weeks after the patient died to check in with the family and or carer, usually after the funeral and often when family members and friends have gone home. This is a vulnerable time for our carers.

Supportive Care Advisors phone family members and or carers three months and six months after their loved person's death. These calls offer special support and information about grief, loss and other supports available.

We are grateful for the assistance provided by one of our volunteers to prepare cards sent to acknowledge 12 months after the death of a patient. Families often make contact with us upon receiving this card and tell us this connection and recognition is appreciated and valued.

Nursing

We welcomed four new Palliative Care Nurses to our nursing team. Valerie, Sarah, Louise and Leanne are competent, caring, compassionate and skilled nurses and have been warmly welcomed to their roles.

We made significant improvements to our after hours care, undertaking an Afterhours Project working with Caritas Christi and the Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium. We received overwhelming positive feedback from patients and carers about the after hours support received. Additionally, our nurses also reported a significantly improved after hours experience. More about this project is covered in the Research, Quality and Service Improvement section of this report.

We continued to work closely with the Grampians Regional Palliative Care Team to care for our patients. Professional development education provided by members of the Regional Team strengthen our skills and help us develop a shared understanding of contemporary complex palliative care approaches.

Our work continues to be based on a collaborative approach where we work with

- the patient, their carer and family
- the patient's treating medical team, which may include GPs, specialists, consultants and other services.

We appreciate the skills and expertise that each health professional brings to the care of our patients and strive for effective working relationships with many health professionals to ensure well-coordinated care for patients.

Equipment/Stores

This year we welcomed new staff to the equipment and stores area as we experienced high demand to support patients to be cared for safely at home. Many people may be unaware of the extraordinary range and amount of equipment we provide on loan to patients.

Loaned items assist patients with daily living activities, comfort and movement such as

- hospital beds for end of life care
- electric recliner chairs
- wheel chairs
- four wheel walkers
- air mattresses
- oxygen concentrators
- shower chairs and
- over toilet frames.

Our equipment is

- provided free of charge
- available for use by patients for as long as needed
- delivered to patients' homes when required.

We continue to value the support our community provides through generous financial donations that assist with equipment purchase to enable people to remain at home comfortably and safely.





Key service statistics demonstrating increasing demand

Compared to the previous year

397

Referrals **-1%**
from 2020-2021 **401**

334

Admissions **+5%**
from 2020-2021 **318**

341

Separations **+6%**
from 2020-2021 **321**

50

Discharges **+11%**
from 2020-2021 **44**

291

Deaths **+5%**
from 2020-2021 **277**

140

Home deaths **+16%**
from 2020-2021 **121**

201

Individual patients
(average per month) **+2%**
from 2020-2021 **197**

527

Total patients
annually **+3%**
from 2020-2021 **514**

Clinical service

67%

Patients died in
their place of choice
2021-2022 **194**

22%

Patients who died and their
place of choice was not met
2021-2022 **63**

12%

Patients who died
and their place of
choice was not known
2021-2022 **34**

+25%

After hours contacts
2021-2022 **3128**
2020-2021 **2485**

Research, Quality and Service Improvement

Quality

Ballarat Hospice Care received positive feedback during the mid-cycle quality assessment in January 2022. The feedback supports us as we work toward reaccreditation against the Quality Innovation Council 7th edition and Rainbow Tick 3rd edition standards in 2023.

Here's a few findings from the assessor's report

- "a substantial increase in demand for the service, which is being managed"
- "efficiencies have been gained in service delivery"
- "training for palliative staff occurs with innovative and resourceful opportunities being taken up".

Throughout the year we monitored and responded to Legislative Compliance and Department of Health guidelines in how we work together keeping our staff, volunteers, patients and their families safe.

Rapid Discharge Research Project

A joint Ballarat Hospice Care and Ballarat Health Services project

Project title: Sustainable Service Integration to meet the choices of people requiring palliative care and wanting to be discharged from acute hospital to home for ongoing care and to die at home: Rapid Discharge

Lead: Ballarat Hospice Care Inc.

Partners: Ballarat Health Services; Grampians Regional Palliative Care Team (Ballarat Health Services)

Funding: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, 2019 Palliative Care Service Innovation and Development Grant

Duration: September 2019 – July 2021

Ethics: Approved by the Ballarat Health Services and St John of God Healthcare Human Research Ethics Committee (ERM 64367)

Background

Patient-centred care is about providing the best care possible while considering patient needs and preferences. This includes being cared for and dying in one's place of choice. Being cared for and dying in one's preferred location is considered an integral part of living and dying well. Many people wish to die in their home as they often have a strong connection to this place.

Home offers a sense of belonging and social connection, familiar people, objects and surroundings, which is especially comforting at this time.

However, when approaching the end of life, planned hospital admission as well as unexpected presentations to the Emergency Department and hospital stays are common.

This project was concerned with limiting preventable visits to the Emergency Department and inpatient hospital stays, while supporting the timely, smooth, safe and sustainable return of people with an advanced life-limiting illness back home; especially when the patient and family identify that their preferred place of care and/or preferred place of death is within the community or 'home'.

Activities

A comprehensive project report was submitted to the Victorian Department of Health.

The Department of Health endorsed the report, and expressed their support to progress the implementation of outcomes.

A comprehensive project report was submitted to the Victorian Department of Health.

The Department of Health endorsed the project report, and expressed their support to progress the implementation of outcomes.

"Congratulations - This is a great piece of work, incredibly comprehensive and looks like you've established some meaningful engagement between the services to forge a way forward."

Theresa Williamson,
Manager, End of Life Care and Patient
Choice, Department of Health

We thank the Department of Health for enabling this project and Theresa Williamson for her support.

Service Improvement - Grampians region project

Project title

Afterhours PalCare Project

Project initiator

Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium

Lead

Ballarat Hospice Care Inc.

Participants

Ballarat Hospice Care Inc.

Central Grampians Palliative Care - East Grampians Health Service

Wimmera Palliative Care Service - Grampians Health

Bacchus Marsh Community Palliative Care Service - Western Health

Grampians Regional Palliative Care Team - Grampians Health

Funding

Western Victoria Primary Health Network; After Hours program funds provided by the Australian Government

Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium

Project commencement

August 2020 (ongoing)

Background

Palliative care patients living and being cared for at home often require support outside of business hours. All four community palliative care services located in the Grampians region required support to strengthen their after hours service delivery.

Ballarat Hospice Care have been providing after hours specialist palliative care nursing support since 1987. A Ballarat Hospice Care Specialist Palliative Care Nurse provided after hours phone and where safe to do so in home support.

Due to a general increase in patient numbers, an increased complexity of illnesses, and the impact of Covid19, this model of afterhours care became unsustainable.

The project

To strengthen after hours phone support across the Grampians region, the Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium (GRPCC) initiated a project co-funded by the Western Victoria Primary Health Network After Hours program funds provided by the Australian Government, and the GRPCC.

The key activities of the GRPCC Afterhours

PalCare Project include

Funded access to PalCare patient information management software for all participating services, enabling access to region wide clients for complex review by the Grampians Region Palliative Care Team and after hours support through Caritas Afterhours Triage Service.

Funded access to St Vincent Hospital's Caritas Afterhours Phone Triage Service for all participating services. This service, staffed by senior palliative care nurses operates Monday to Friday from 4:30pm to 7:15am and for 24 hours a day over weekends and public holidays.

Activities

Ballarat Hospice Care

- shared their systems, resources, knowledge, learnings and experiences with the region
- shared relationships to enable the implementation of the project across the Grampians region
- is the project lead, driving and supporting the implementation of the project across the Grampians region.

Outcomes

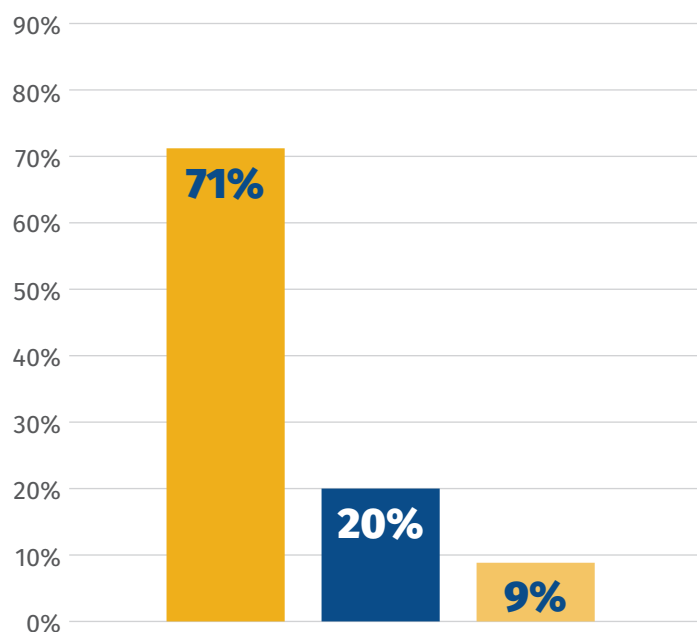
We

- revised our model of afterhours care to include a second level of triage through Caritas Afterhours Phone Triage Service ensuring the sustainability of a responsive, patient-centred afterhours service
- improved nurse wellbeing
- strengthened our position as a leader in the region
- strengthened existing and established new relationships.

Evaluation

Between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, Caritas triaged 560 after hours calls on behalf of Ballarat Hospice Care. This is an average of 62 calls per month.

Triage outcome



71%

of those calls were resolved by Caritas Afterhours Coordinators

20%

were escalated to the Ballarat Hospice Care Nurse on Call

9%

of callers were recommended to call an ambulance or present to the Emergency Department

Patients

71% of patients followed up with regard to their satisfaction with the support received from Caritas Afterhours Coordinators, described their treatment experience as good or excellent, and

24% as fair.

67% of respondents indicated that they would have called an ambulance or presented directly to a hospital if the afterhours service was not available.

Patient satisfaction with Telehealth consultation

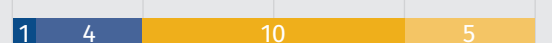
Your overall treatment experience at telehealth



How well your privacy was respected



The courtesy, respect, sensitivity and friendliness of the specialist



The explanation of your treatment by the specialist



The length of time with specialist



Legend: Poor (Dark Blue), Fair (Medium Blue), Good (Yellow), Excellent (Light Yellow)

0 5 10 15 20

Nursing staff

- **64%** of our nursing staff who participated in a survey indicated that they are very satisfied with the after hours support provided to patients and carers. This is a 14% improvement since the introduction of Caritas Afterhours Phone Triage Service.
- **100%** of the nursing staff believe that
 - they provide better care to the patients who need them the most since the introduction of Caritas Afterhours Phone Triage Service
 - patients and their carers continue to feel supported
 - being supported by Caritas in the after hours impacts positively on their workload during the workday.

- Furthermore, the survey showed that since the introduction of Caritas Afterhours Phone Triage Service, the well-being of nurses working after hours on call shifts has improved significantly.

We thank Anna Gray, Manager Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium for initiating this project, and working closely with Ballarat Hospice Care during its region-wide implementation.



Our Volunteers

We appreciate the enormous contributions of our volunteers. This year we were especially grateful for the willingness and loyalty of our volunteers, despite the difficulties the Covid19 pandemic presented. Their commitment is evident in the many ways they served by

- providing a warm welcoming touch to our events
- creating a welcoming and boutique Friends of Hospice Op Shop experience
- working directly with patients, carers and families
- cleaning our work cars so nurses and supportive care advisors arrived in clean well maintained vehicles to patient homes
- ensuring our equipment is sanitised, clean and ready for patient care
- weeding, planting and beautifying our garden; making it one of the best maintained grounds in Ballarat
- leading staff meditation sessions
- sorting and organising donations in the warehouse
- ensuring carers receive beautiful kind and compassionate hand written cards during bereavement
- providing administration, project and research support that improves capacity and maintains our connection to the people we care about.

With the easing of Covid19 restrictions in March, we celebrated the reopening of the Friends of Hospice Op Shop and the Supportive Care Volunteers returned to support people in their homes. We could come together again for events to appreciate, celebrate and acknowledge the ways Ballarat Hospice Care is better together with our volunteers.

Recruitment

This year we welcomed 15 new volunteers.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • Margaret B | • Jan B |
| • Sharon D | • Jane F |
| • Jenny F | • Tanya G |
| • Yvonne M | • Robert M |
| • Helen N | • Shirley R |
| • Cilla R | • Rhonda S |
| • Michael T | • Vicki W |
| • Michael W | |

Training

Volunteers had the opportunity to develop their skills via two training sessions offered this year. Accidental Counsellor and Anti-Racism Bystander education.

Appreciation

This year staff and volunteers gathered for two events to celebrate our volunteers and the enormous contribution they make:

- An End of Year Celebration held during December 2021 to celebrate and acknowledge significant years of service and thank everyone for their care and service.
- A “Better Together” themed National Volunteer Week celebration in May; a morning tea to come together, appreciate, celebrate and acknowledge the many ways in which our volunteers make a difference to the lives of our patients and staff.

Feedback

We care about the experience of our volunteers.

In November 2021, 86% of our volunteers participated in the annual volunteer survey. In response to volunteer feedback, a 12-month trial of a buddy mentor system for new volunteers was introduced. The buddy system aims to ensure new volunteers feel welcome at Ballarat Hospice Care while assisting them to integrate into their role and team. Volunteers reported that the most satisfying aspect of their roles are:

‘The connection with other volunteers.’

‘...helping an organisation that is worthwhile to the community as a whole.’

‘The obvious appreciation of the staff.’

Resignations

We said goodbye to five volunteers this year. A huge thank you to these dedicated volunteers for their collective 32 years of volunteer service to Ballarat Hospice Care.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| • Jan B | • Carol C |
| • Mary O | • Keith R |
| • Rita T | |



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Keryn & Bryan Crebbin
Kevin Doherty

Kevin Harper
Lee Ellis
Lorraine Ellis
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Mandy Macdonald
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Estate of Jean Margaret Howard
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 Suzanne Beck
 Terrence 'Terry' Foran
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**BALLARAT
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Home Based Palliative Care

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