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Committee

Dr Eric Fairbank, President
Rhys Boyle, Vice President
Leanne Dalton, Treasurer
Teresa Treffry, Secretary
Deidre Bidmade
Daelene Bourke
Caroline Byrne
Brian Dillon
Carole Macpherson
Joanne McCormack
Tracey Togni

Upcoming Events and Meetings

May 16th Volunteer Dinner and Graduation for Group 6 volunteers with Guest speaker Mike Kennedy from Palliative Care Victoria.
May 22nd End of Life Preparations: The Essentials Workshop, 10.30-12.30pm at The Archie Graham Centre Call 5594920 to book a place.
May 23rd Palliative Care Victoria Volunteer Conference Rydges Hotel Melbourne.
June 7th-8th Death Literacy Conference, Sydney

Donations Update

The CWA have decided that their fundraising for the next 5 months will be for the Hospice. We already enjoy giving out their donations of rugs and bags to people we are helping care for.

Manager Update

It has been a very exciting time at Hospice with the announcement of the success of our application for the End of Life Ancillary Grant from the State Government and acceptance into the National Compassionate Communities Forum (NCCF).
We were fortunate to have Roma Britnell MP speak on Advance Care Planning and Voluntary Assisted Dying Legislation at our March Volunteer Meeting. We also assisted Melissa Couch, Advance Care Planning officer from South West Healthcare to run an information session at the Archie Graham Centre as part of Advance Care Planning Week.

To celebrate National Volunteers Week (May 21-27) and National Palliative Care week (May 21-27) the Volunteer Monthly meeting will be a dinner at the RSL with Mike Kennedy PCV as guest speaker and the Graduation of our new group of volunteers.

Volunteers Update

Training for the sixth group of volunteers is nearly complete and it will be wonderful to have this group join our Hospice volunteers.
We have a group of our volunteers attending the Palliative Care Victoria Conference in Melbourne on May 23rd and Glen Riddle will be leading one of the forums during the conference.
Three of our volunteers rattled donation tins at the May Racing Greyhound Club event and raised \$232.50.

Donations

Donations are welcome and can be deposited to the following Bank Account:
Bank: Bendigo Bank
BSB: 633000
Account: 144182748



OTHER NEWS

THE NATIONAL COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES FORUM (NCCF)

“Caring for one another at times of need, loss and/or crisis becomes the task of everyone”

The NCCF is a research initiative of the Groundswell Project whose vision is that when someone is dying, caring or grieving, we all know what to do. Their aim is to improve the knowledge and skills about the end of life for individuals in the community, improving community resilience around this inevitability, and consequently enhancing the community's health and wellbeing.

The Warrnambool & District Community Hospice has been identified by the NCCF as one of eight chosen sites in Australia (and the only one in Victoria) for this research to occur because of the work already being done by the Hospice in the Home program. These sites have been called 'Groundbreakers'.

Starting points to consider:

- Death is a **social** event with medical aspects, rather than the commonly held converse view of it being a serious medical condition to be delayed at all costs.
- Most people will suffer from chronic illnesses, and the number of people dying over the next 25 years is set to double. The hospital system as it stands will not be able to cope
- Community care has benefits both in terms of quality of life, as well as economically
- Caring for someone who is dying at home requires care around the clock, and a family cannot be expected to do this on their own.

A compassionate community is developed through raising public awareness, and by developing public policies that encourage emotional and practical support. Honest conversations are the beginning of trust, empathy and cooperation. This is not solely the responsibility of health organisations, but also of local government, workplaces, schools, universities, churches, libraries, art galleries... and the like. This is top down policy support with bottom up community engagement and development.

The success of a compassionate community lies in the mapping of informal networks of community individuals willing to support those in need, combining them with community organisations (e.g. Hospital in the Home) in collaboration with the formal networks of various health services.

Studies in the UK have shown that working towards a compassionate community promotes the integration of services, and reduces the health care inequalities that may occur, particularly in rural areas. The admission rate for hospital care drops dramatically, and there is improved health and wellbeing at the end of life. This has been called '*health promoting palliative care*'.

Compassion – the sharing and supporting of another person’s suffering – already exists in parts of the Warrnambool community. The aim of this research to see whether this can be further developed, and how it can be spread throughout the entire community. This might then inform other communities about maximising comfort and wellbeing for individuals, offering them and their families coordinated care wherever they live at the end of their lives.

Dr Eric Fairbank - President

