



VOLUNTEER LINK-UP

Calvary Health Care Sydney – Volunteer Services

Newsletter Date: June 2017
Issue 130

<http://volunteerservice.calvary-sydney.org.au/>

May 21-28 is **National Palliative Care Week.**

With a special focus on aged care, the theme for this year is:
*'You matter. Your care matters.
Palliative care can make a difference'.*

A heartfelt thank you to all our wonderful Calvary staff and volunteers who care for people approaching and reaching the end of their lives and their families and carers each and every day. **Naomi McGowan** National Project Manager, Palliative and End of Life Care

Calvary Kogarah celebrated Palliative Care week on Tuesday 23rd May with a forum of many inspiring speakers who shared narratives on the Art & Science of Palliative Care. Frank Brennan, Chris our Social Worker and others shared moving stories of their work in Palliative Care. Liz Trillia spoke on how her life had been so enriched from her experiences of volunteering in Calvary Palliative Care and shared some of the stories of the patients she met along the way. It was indeed a wonderful celebration of the work we do in Palliative Care and how these patients and families indelibly touch our lives.

New Calvary Booklet: Healing After Loss
Just in time for National Palliative Care Week, a new Calvary booklet Healing After Loss is now available online.
[CLICK HERE.](#)

This booklet is about coping with loss, grief and bereavement. It includes external links and resources including websites, support lines and books for people of all ages. We would like to thank Calvary Health Care Kogarah's Bereavement Counselling Service and their consumer representatives for their kind permission to update this publication for national use.

Below is the display in our foyer for Pall care week, families invited to leave a message..... on different coloured paper hearts.....



My brother loved the tender compassionate care here..like the foot massages. RIP



Its often the little acts of kindness that are remembered

For your Diary



for **COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS ONLY**

Wednesday 28th June 2017

10am – 1200

10am
11am

Debrief
Massage techniques - Joy Young.



BPA – Best Practice Australia

Calvary Kogarah volunteers ended up with 78% response rate for the BPA survey which is absolutely awesome. It may be a while before we receive the results but I will make these available to you. Of course I am not surprised as each of you are so committed to making a difference in the lives of our patients, families and staff and make the mission of Calvary visible by your little acts of kindness. Thank you

National Volunteer Week –

It was a great turn up for the National Volunteer week and always a good opportunity for the community and hospital volunteers to get together.

Carmen gave a very good talk on MND and thanked the volunteers for the many ways in which they assisted our MND clients with massages, assisting at meal times, taking the time to stop and listen to them.

Margo Green spoke on Advanced Care Planning and the CALD community. I have included a link which might be a good resource especially if you were not able to attend the training.

<http://planningaheadtools.com.au/>

<http://www.acptalk.com.au/>

Once the fire training and mandatory training was completed we then all enjoyed a hearty BBQ and lots of chat and catching up was enjoyed by all.

Thanks to Mike and Ray for cooking the BBQ ☺. Several staff spoke with me afterwards and offered to cook the BBQ next time for the volunteers, saying it would be their way of saying how much they appreciate all you do. ☺

Palliative Care Volunteer Conference 19/5/2017

Five Calvary volunteers attended the NSW Palliative Care Conference and kindly shared some of the highlights they experienced, with you all.

Thank you for the inspiring conference!

I would like to thank you for the wonderful conference at Maitland. It was so well organised. It was a wonderful experience for me. I found the presentations worthwhile and inspiring. The workshop was really outstanding. Got the real message of therapeutic laughing, which is.. 'laughter is contagious'.

It was such a very good opportunity for all volunteers to meet, spend joyful times together and share our experiences. I'm looking forward for the next! Despina

The highlight for Caecilia was listening to the talk on the Music & Memories program at Calvary. Mary also shared some of the patients' experiences with the Reverie harp, which is taken around the Palliative Care wards by our volunteers.

Caecilia wrote 'the harp was amazing, having it designed so it is light weight and able to be put on the lap is a plus for palliative patients. As I am very interested in MND, I can see these patients benefiting from having the harp (at any stage of the progression), even when the arms and fingers are weak we can help them to move their arm/fingers across the strings. they would be so happy to hear the soothing sounds, and the best thing is anyone can do it without being a musician and their family, and small children/grandchildren can also play it with the patients. We can also record it whilst the patient is having a go. What a thoughtful invention!'

From Ronda: Thanks for this opportunity. The venue was great, which added to the comfort and enjoyment of meeting other participants from across NSW Palliative Care services. Mary Ashton presented a very interesting talk on the skills of using Music Therapy with Dementia patients. With the use of Ipod and ear phones, which are uploaded with their own selection of music, the patient is able to quieten their restlessness for a time, whilst enjoying 'their music', enticing them to sing, dance and recall something that the person knew or did in earlier years. It may only be for twenty minutes, but that is quite an achievement. Phillipa shared some of her own life stories and talked about resilience and aspects of her journey and the lessons she learnt along the way which brought their own healing in her life. She spoke of the importance of finding a friend with whom you can speak your truth. She also talked about importance of mindfulness and meditation, giving yourself 'permission to pause' and to make space for ourselves in our busy lives.



Kerry Noonan presented 'Passengers: storytelling, drama & death literacy'-

WHAT IS DEATH LITERACY? It's the practical know-how needed to plan well for end of life. This includes knowledge, skills, and being able to take action. Getting involved in end of life care and having conversations can help build our death literacy.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? 'Death literacy' recognises the role that everyone has in end of life care and death care.

Having knowledge helps us make informed decisions about the care, being able to act on that knowledge is empowering. Many of us are looking to build our death literacy so we can make informed decisions about our dying, end of life care and death.

<http://www.dyingtoknowday.org/>

Ronda shared how much she loved hearing about Kerry's work with the high school students drama classes which involves starting conversations about dying, death and grief. Very powerful film productions by the students which moved us all.

Very well done. Thank you again for the opportunity, Anne-Marie.

I attended the NSW Palliative Care Volunteers Conference at Maitland last Friday 19th May 2017. It was very interesting and informative and I enjoyed meeting other volunteers on the day. I particularly enjoyed the 'writing' session where we all had to write a story about "The patient or client or moment I will never forget". Putting those words on paper brought happy and sad memories flooding back. I'm sure we all have memories like that.

That's what Palliative Care is all about and what makes it so rewarding and such a privilege to volunteer there.

Christine.

What a great conference! I thoroughly enjoyed all the presentations. Of course Phillipa and Mary were brilliant and generous in sharing their knowledge with us. It was great to hear about the work being done by Groundswell. I had not heard of them before and was interested in the program they run at Penrith High School. The students from the drama course participate in learning about death and grief and then present a play using the information they have learned. The best part of attending these conferences is meeting other volunteers - some we know and some we meet for the first time. The venue was great, good food and wonderful company. Who could ask for more?

Barbara.

Consider this...

45% of people die without a will.

70% of people express a wish to die at home. 14% get to do so.

Less than 10% die with an advance care plan & never tell anyone their end-of-life wishes.

What if... we were to create a shift from generalised avoidance to deep engagement and social action?



Our newest recruits, volunteers Sharon & Kane... first month on the job.....



‘Its exhausting work!!! I’ve just been to Mary Potter House and been patted to death, then visting patients in the Rehab ward.... and now I’m told we are headed off to Palliative Care wards..... The staff keep telling me how gorgeous I am.....yawn..... it’s a tough life being a dog”

Christmas Thank you luncheon:

We are starting to plan for our luncheon, no- not ‘Christmas in July’ but for Friday, December 8th .

If anyone is interested in being on the working party please let me know. Also, would anyone have contacts for raffle prizes donations for our tombola??

We will have a meeting first week of June to start planning.

Remember to put the date in the calender – venue is booked so planning for a fun day again.

MACC Committee: Would any volunteer be interested in being a representative on the Calvary Multicultural committee which discusses cultural issues in health and ensures we are meeting these requirements. If you would like to know more, I can introduce you to Margo who will provide you with more information. It is not a big commitment in time, but an interesting committee to be part of.

I would like to thank John Au who has been on the committee for the past few years and who’s input was very much appreciated by the staff.

Self-Care is About Setting Boundaries and Letting Go

The boundary challenges come with the job. The key to maintaining boundaries is to be aware of our interactions. The ideal boundary “line” is balanced between what is best for the patient and what is best for us. If our boundaries are too restrictive, we risk the patient not feeling that we care. If we do too much for the patient, we risk compassion fatigue. *Lizzy Miles*. It is important to reflect on ‘who’s needs are being met’ in this situation, which requires us to be reflective about our practise both as professionals and as volunteers.

Understanding the boundaries of your role as a volunteer keeps you safe. It’s important to know the tasks as described in your role description which defines the boundary of your particular role as volunteer vs staff role.

Its important not to promise more than you can give as a volunteer. During a patient’s stay in hospital or companioning & supporting a patient in their home, you are only there for the defined time. Once the patient leaves hospital, then your role has ended with that particular person. Volunteering is a selfless act, you are there in the moment to make a difference, then that moment has passed and you move onto the next opportunity to touch someones life in the special ways you do.

If a patient enjoys foot massages whilst in hospital and would like a community volunteer, let MVS know and I will arrange to do a home visit, access the safety of that environment etc, explain the boundaries of the service we can provide then assign a community volunteer to that particular patient if appropriate.

So attention to maintaining good boundaries is important to ensure your safety and well being. If uncertain, check the Policy & Procedure Manual in the volunteer room or speak with MVS.

Keeping you safe is our priority.

Click link below to read more:-

[Crossing boundaries: Issues for hospice palliative care volunteers](#)

