SSWAHS PALLIATIVE CARE
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

December 2010

Palliative Care (PC) Volunteer Program

The Palliative Care (PC) Volunteer Program commenced in 1990, with the appointment of the first PC Volunteer Coordinator in 1991, operating on a referral basis. It is divided into two sectors: 1) Northern Sector covering Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool and 2) the Southern Sector covering Macarthur and Wingecarribee.

Palliative Care is specialised care and support provided to people living with a life limiting condition such as cancer, heart failure, renal failure, motor neurone disease and others. The focus of Palliative Care is on quality of life. Importantly, palliative care also involves care and support for family and caregivers.

The PC Volunteers are considered an integral part of the Palliative Care Teams through SSWAHS (WZ). They are part of the multidisciplinary team within the palliative care service that supports patients and family members to improve the quality of life for people with a terminal illness who are dying. Currently we have twenty two volunteers who work across the zone with the Palliative Care Service in Liverpool Hospital, the inpatient Palliative Care Unit at Camden Hospital, Camden Day Therapy Centre and as part of Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Macarthur & Wingecarribee Community teams. The program has recently been extended into Bankstown Hospital in November 2010.

Palliative Care Coordinator

I’m Arlene Roache, Area Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator (WZ). I was appointed in this role in March 2010.

Education and Training

Our volunteers undertake a specialised 8 week intense training in caring for palliative care patients. They also undertake annual mandatory training i.e. OH&S and Manual Handling, Infection Control, Fire Safety, Clinical Information/Confidentiality, Complaints Handling & Child Protection.

What do our volunteers do?

The volunteers provide high quality practical and emotional support, have lots of patience, are enthusiastic, are able to show empathy and above all have great communication skills. These attributes not only benefit the hospital, community, palliative care patients and carers but staff as well.
Meet our Volunteers

Southern Sector

Northern Sector

- This year saw an increase in referrals across the two sectors
- The extension of the program into Bankstown Hospital and the Day Therapy Centre at Camden
- The approval of a budget to support the Northern Sector
- The various media releases promoting the palliative care volunteer program service and the volunteers

MILESTONES

Tricia Parker and Bonnie Harvey completing 17 years of service with a morning tea

Christine Jones turns 80
Clara Kemper was nominated to receive the Volunteer of the Year Award hosted by NSW Volunteering in partnership with Westpac Banking Corporation. Clara has been the only volunteer in the Fairfield area who has provided support to three clients and their carers simultaneously over a long period of time, ironically all three clients recently dying within a matter of days from each other. Congratulations Clara for going the extra mile in your role as a Palliative Care Volunteer. Clara was recently invited by CanRevive to speak to a CALD audience on the palliative care volunteer program, in particular the community aspect of it. Of course, Clara was well supported by an interpreter to deliver her talk. Well Done Clara – keep up the good work!

Successful fundraising initiatives and other significant palliative care events for the year

The pall care volunteers, staff and family members worked very hard to raise $2517 at the BBQ held at Bunnings, Bankstown Airport.

Morning teas were held to celebrate National Volunteers Week with media releases.

Carers Day
The volunteers wrapped gifts to give to the carers of the palliative care patients.
Snippet from Macarthur Connection

Thank you Carers
The Palliative Care Volunteer Program (Southern Sector) together with the Staff at Camden Palliative Care Inpatient Unit hosted a Thank you event for the carers of the patients in the Palliative Care Inpatient Unit at Camden Hospital. The carers enjoyed the food, coming together, the massages and the comfort packs gifted to them courtesy of Simplicity Funerals and the Palliative Care Volunteer Program. They were touched with the acknowledgement, the warm smiles and kindness shown to them by the community, the volunteers and the staff of the Palliative Care Inpatient Unit at Camden Hospital.

An official launch was held at their office in Liverpool and Paul Davison provided an education session in Grief Support for the Volunteers

Simplicity Funerals have made an ongoing pledge to donate Comfort Packs to give to the Carers of palliative care registered patients in the hospital and community.

SSWAHS Carers Program for fund-Spa at Macarthur Square and Sim-plicty Funerals, not for-teers and staff who made it happen.
The Palliative Care Volunteers wish to sincerely thank you for your generous donations. Your generosity has given them the capacity to provide for the palliative care patients and carers in the hospitals and community.

Thank you to the SSWAHS Media & Communications Unit for helping us promote the good work of the palliative care volunteers. We look forward to more positive media coverage in 2011.
Statistics

Statistics recorded in the year 2010, for the Palliative Care Volunteer program indicate:

- 1362 palliative care visits to patients in Hospital
- 231 palliative care patients visited in the community
- A total of 442 hours in face to face hospital/community visits – on average 25 mins time per patient/carer in the hospital and 1 hour in the community
- 90 OOS in providing other services i.e. the writing of bereavement cards for families of deceased palliative care patients, fundraising, palliative care events.
- 7380 kms travelled to provide the service
- Travelled 7280 kms to provide the service in the hospital and community.

Networks / Partnerships developed and meetings held with a view to extend the program with:

- Dr. Charlotte Smedley
  Area Cancer Services Development Manager, SSWAHS
- Janice Low
  Community Network Coordinator
  Cancer Council NSW
  Community Hub - Casula
- Lynda Johnston
  Area Manager Community Participation, SSWAHS
- Michelle Pearse,
  Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator Bears Cottage, Manly
- NSW Palliative Care Volunteer Managers Network
- Wendy Edmonds
  Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator
  Children’s Hospital, Westmead
The Palliative Care Volunteers wish you all
A Merry Christmas and A Bright and Prosperous New Year