

Media Release

28 November 2013

Community-based palliative care service launched

Palliative care patients in south western Sydney are to benefit from a new suite of community-based services that enable more patients to die in the comfort of their own home.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive, Amanda Larkin, said terminally ill people could access new services including personal care during the day, a visit from an evening registered nurse and video support with a night nurse as they reach the end of their life.

“Up to ninety per cent of Australians tell us they would rather spend their last days with loved ones in their own home than be in hospital, but only around 15 – 20 per cent of people are able to do so,” Ms Larkin said.

“These new services will enable more people to fulfil that wish.

“The new initiatives are based on the Palliative Extended And Care at Home (PEACH) model, and we are pleased to be coordinating this model in collaboration with not-for-profit health care provider Silver Chain,” Ms Larkin said.

“PEACH was developed and piloted by the District and is now being implemented across five metropolitan Local Health Districts.

“PEACH is flexible and can be tailored to the needs of each person, which means they can get end of life care at home instead of having to go into hospital.

“This allows family members to stay with their loved-one in the comfort of their home.

Ms Larkin said PEACH would complement existing in-patient services like Liverpool Hospital’s 16-bed acute palliative care unit which opened earlier this year.

“The acute palliative care ward is for palliative patients with more complex medical needs who require a higher level of care than they are able to receive at home or in the community,” Ms Larkin said.

Silver Chain Group’s Chief Executive Officer, Christopher McGowan said it was exciting to see the government and non-government sector working closely to support people where and how they choose to be supported at the end of their life.

“This partnership is a great opportunity for Silver Chain to use its extensive palliative care experience to complement the wonderful work done by the specialist palliative care

teams across South Western Sydney [LHD], and the other four metropolitan Local Health Districts," he said.

Referrals will be coordinated via the District's central intake information and intervention centre at the Triple I (Hub), ensuring the patient is properly set up at home with the appropriate equipment and medications and patient referrals to other services can be coordinated.

Palliative care patients will start benefiting from the new services from Monday 9 December 2013.