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Alleviating pain and delivering art in palliative care

For someone who is dying, speaking about the past can be upsetting and the future can be uncertain. Reflected Legacy, an artist led project in Liverpool Hospital's Palliative Care Ward uses words, actions and art to keep memories alive even when the patient is no longer in Hospital.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Psychologist and GroundSwell Project founder Kerrie Noonan said this initiative will complement the holistic care of patients in palliative care while enhancing and positively changing their physical environment.

The Groundswell Project, a not-for-profit arts and health organisation leading the conversation around death and dying have been working with the staff at the Palliative Care ward in Liverpool Hospital to implement a new arts and health program.

"Visual artist Robyn Wilson known as Flutter Lyon uses a number of storytelling exercises to capture life stories of people through ink pressed artworks and sound recordings," Ms Noonan said.

"The artwork and sound recording are then given to the patient and their family as a gift of art and legacy," she said.

After months of planning, Reflected Legacy will launch its book and open its doors on Thursday 26 November from 6-8pm to the art exhibition in Liverpool Hospital's Palliative Care Ward 4C.

Ms Noonan said the launch will be complimented by a range of powerful artworks and stories on the night.

"This is an opportunity to see the artworks in person and to meet some of the families who have been touched by the experience," Ms Noonan said.

Dr Jennifer Wiltshire, Director of Palliative Care, Liverpool Hospital said the project has enabled patients to form a deeper sense of connection with their families and with each other at a time that can otherwise be difficult.

When reading these stories, Ms Noonan said it's easy to see the beautiful artworks but is also important to understand the true impact of Arts in Health.

"We are extremely thankful to all those who supported our goal of providing an Arts in Health program to promote wellbeing, resilience and healing for people who are dying, their families and staff," she said.

"We are grateful to have received a MATCH grant from Creative Partnerships Australia and financial support gained through contributions to our crowd funding campaign on Pozible. The crowd funding rewards will be distributed on the night and then subsequently mailed out to all those unable to attend," she said.

For more information, head to <http://www.thegroundswellproject.com/>