

# Service Streams

The Palliative Care Service offers an inter-disciplinary approach to patient care, which includes medical, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, social work, pharmacy, pastoral care, diversional therapy and volunteer care.

The following services are available:

- Consultancy Service
- Outpatient Clinic
- Outreach Service
- Day Hospice Program
- Mercy Hospice Inpatient Unit

## Consultancy Service

A palliative care consultancy service offers medical and nursing assessments, periodic review and suggestions for pain and symptom management for the patient. The responsibility for ongoing care remains with the primary health practitioner who may be the GP, medical specialist and/or community nurse, residential or hospital nursing staff.

The Consultancy Service will liaise with the relevant community and hospital health professionals and in particular with the patient's general practitioner about the palliative care of the patient.

Patients may be seen in all facilities (both public or private), in their home as well as residential aged care facilities when located beyond the outreach service (more than a 20km radius from the Mercy Hospice).

Telephone advice is available to health professionals from any of the multi-disciplinary team by contacting the administrative officer on (02) 4921 1900.

## Outpatient Clinic

Outpatient Clinics are conducted on a needs basis. Medical consultations are provided for advice regarding pain control and management of other symptoms.

## Outreach Service

This is a 24 hour, seven day a week nursing and medical service which covers an approximate 20km radius from the Mercy Hospice, Waratah.

## Day Hospice Program

The Day Hospice Life Enhancement Program provides support, communication and opportunities for participation in activities that contribute to meaning or quality in living. The service also provides respite and support for carers. The program also endeavours to address and meet patient goals through involvement in an activity-based program.

Attendance provides opportunities for patients to improve their quality of life through activities which foster the sharing of information, exploration of physical, social, spiritual and psychological issues in a creative and supportive environment. Carers also benefit from the program in the respite they receive as well as the additional support and education provided by staff.

Currently the program offers

**The Day Hospice** is a centre-based respite program at the Mercy Hospice.

**Day Hospice in the home** - a home based program.

**The Wishes Program:** In this way, patients are able to participate in the area which will best meet their needs and/or goals.

In this way, patients are able to participate in the area which will best meet their needs and /or goals. In order to meet both the individual and group goals, the program is flexible and varied and may include creative arts (pottery, painting, sculpting), support/discussion groups, gentle exercise, craft work (stamping, card making), relaxation (meditation, music, story-telling), massage, social and recreational (outings, games, quizzes), educational (back care, legal issues, fire safety), special individual projects (life journals, gifts, dinner parties for loved ones).

The aim of the programs include:

- Creating an environment where patients and families feel supported by each other and by the staff
- Increasing social contacts and interactions with people who may share similar issues or concerns

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- Providing creative, social and 'every day' activities
- Providing therapies to maintain or promote a person's independence and comfort
- Providing practical and emotional support to assist patients and families in keeping patients at home.

If a patient is not already registered with the Palliative Care Service a medical referral is required.

For patients already registered with the service, referrals are made directly to the Day Hospice Co-ordinator who will conduct an assessment in the patient's or in the inpatient setting. Referrals may be made by general practitioners, specialists, other health care professionals, the patient or their family. If the referral is made by a person other than the patient's primary medical officer, the patient's primary medical officer must be informed of the referral.

### **Mercy Hospice Inpatient Unit**

The Mercy Hospice was established in 1993 from funds raised by the Hunter community through the NBN Telethon fundraising initiative. The Hospice is located at Calvary Mater Newcastle and offers a 20 bed facility with large patient rooms which open onto courtyards. Palliative Care provided in the Hospice offers a choice which affirms life and all it has to offer, as well as understanding that dying is a part of living.