



# Clinical Connections



## Pastoral Care Awareness Week: Workshop

On October 25th 42 participants gathered at Melbourne Citymission Palliative Care to attend the Diverse Spiritual Views workshop. Melbourne was enjoying an unusual and much welcomed early morning downpour, so there were several stories of major traffic jams, choked freeways and elongated travel times, weaving amidst the buzz of chatting and greetings.

At the sound of a singing bowl reverberating throughout the room immediate silence descended. An atmosphere of deep listening arose as guest speakers and participants took time to centre and connect with the prevailing stillness.

For the next one and a half hours the group listened as the six speakers shared their reflections on questions about their tradition. The focus of the questions centred around perspectives on how life is viewed in the context of death and after death, the particular needs of a family at the time of death, and on the obstacles to a peaceful death that have been en-

countered by members of their community. Collectively the six members of the panel were representative of spiritual traditions that can be broadly aggregated into eternalist, re-birth and nihilist views. Specifically the speakers represented the Pagan, Humanist, Christian, Gnostic, Buddhist and Chinese Buddhist traditions.



A rich atmosphere of openness and respect permeated the morning. After morning tea, the group broke into rotating discussion groups that explored several questions about how we could use the information from the morning to improve our delivery of spiritual care in palliative care. A synopsis of themes from the group work will be available for download from the North and West Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium

website in the near future.

The responses from the participants were all very positive.

“This was a great initiative that has given me greater insight and sensitivity. Thanks”

“Diversity within each of the traditions or faith groups was highlighted which was most helpful.”

Most people expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to ask members of specific traditions about why and how things are done. 96% requested a similar forum be repeated in the near future, with an emphasis on being able to have in depth discussions with spiritual leaders of local spiritual communities. It was a very uplift-



ing morning of learning, sharing and support for each other in the work that we all do.

Many thanks to the panel members who gave generously of their time and to the sponsors of the workshop, the North and West Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium, members of the Spirituality Focus Group and the staff and management of Melbourne Citymission Palliative Care.

Written by:  
Barbara Dobson  
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## Farewell Michael Bramwell

It is with much sadness that we farewell Michael Bram-

well from the North and West Metropolitan Region. Michael and his partner are moving to Ireland in January 2008 to take up senior positions in mental health and palliative care.

Michael has been a prominent personality in our region since joining Mercy Hospice Inc. and Mercy Western Palliative Care as Manager in 2006. Prior to this, Michael has worked as a Project Officer in the Cancer and Palliative Care Unit at DHS, so he came to our region highly credentialed. A qualified Social Worker, Michael has an eclectic background in health having worked in intensive care and trauma whilst volunteering with the Victorian AIDS Council. Michael then became a consultant counselor with the Victorian HIV/AIDS Palliative Care Consultancy Service. Michael completed a Master's in Public Health and subsequently worked with the Cancer Council Victoria before joining DHS in 2004.

Michael has held the position of Chair of the North and West metro-

politan Region Palliative Care Consortium for the past year and during that time has represented the region on a number of statewide working parties and advisory groups. Michael has brought his own style of leadership to the role of Chair and has worked closely with all members of the Management Group to progress the work of the consortium for the benefit of clients and families.

Michael's ongoing interest in counseling has seen him complete a Masters in Couple and Relationship Counseling and this has clearly informed his unique and open communication style. Michael's move overseas is a great loss for our region but a great gain for Ireland and for Palliative Care internationally. We can only hope that once he has seen enough of the rain and dreary skies and tasted enough Guinness, he will return to us with lots of new ideas about how we can improve palliative care service provision in our region.

The best judges of the impact of Michael's leadership in the region are his colleagues and there was no shortage of people willing to "sing his praises" when asked:

**"Why will you miss Michael Bramwell?"**

"Michael is a great collaborator and has a good understanding of all of the issues within our sector." Anne Oakley, Melbourne Citymission Palliative Care

"I will miss Michael's practical, down to earth approach, great smile, sense of humour and friendly manner." Karen Conte, Banksia Palliative Care

"I will miss Michael for lots of reasons on a professional level—but most of all I will miss him for his snappy dress sense!" Jackie Kearney, DHS

"Michael's ever positive approach and sensitive attention to those around him will be a great loss to us all." Kevin Larkins, Palliative Care Victoria

On a personal note, Michael has been a great friend and colleague. I will miss his open and honest style, his compassion and support and his wicked sense of humour!

**Go gcuire Dia an t-adh ort!  
Micheal (Best of luck to you, Michael)**

Written by:  
Molly (Mairin) Carlile  
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## The Regional Plan

### Priority 6: Improving Services for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

The North and West Palliative Care Consortium should aim to deliver palliative care services that are sensitive and responsive to the needs of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (CALD) using multiple strategies, including: -


- ⇒ Access to and use of trained interpreting services;
- ⇒ Provision of cultural awareness training;
- ⇒ Provision of resource materials
- ⇒ Recruitment and training of CALD volunteers

## Consortium Award for Leadership and Excellence

The North and West Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium values innovation and committed leadership. We are privileged to have established and emerging leaders in our region, many of whom contribute enormously to the work of the consortium in addition to their work responsibilities for their employing agency. In order to acknowledge those leaders who contribute above and beyond the requirements of their position descriptions, the Executive Committee will be awarding an annual prize for Leadership and Excellence, commencing in 2007.

Nominations are being called for this award, and all staff in the region is encouraged to nominate a leader who has inspired and motivated their colleagues via work done for the consortium. This could be by contributing to a number of consortium committee, by involvement in consortium projects or by supporting staff from outside their employing organization.

Details of how to nominate are contained in the nomination form which is available for download from the consortium website [www.northwestpalliative.com.au](http://www.northwestpalliative.com.au) under 'News'




### Getting to know YOU .... Kerrie Chambers

Kerrie joins the health services after nearly 10 years within the Freight

Forwarding and Shipping Industry after being previously employed by large international companies such as Dunn & Bradstreet.

Kerrie brings with her extensive experience as a Personal Assistant to Senior Executives and Board members to multi million dollar international shipping companies and freight forwarders.

She has been involved with basketball for many years, both playing and as a referee, where she was involved in championship competitions for a number of years.

Kerrie completed a Bachelor of Business Management in 1992 and achieved an Advanced Certificate in Office Administration in 1994 and has been involved in many large projects in the shipping industry.

Being new to Palliative Care, is proving to be interesting and challenging for Kerrie, who always thrives on a

challenge and being able to make things "happen" without fuss. Kerrie is currently working 2 days per week and is enjoying it.

Married for almost 6 years, Kerrie and her husband, John are the very proud parents of their one year old daughter Talia Jayne.

Kerrie is the administrative assistant to the consortia and is often seen going to and from meetings.

In Kerrie's spare time she enjoys catching up with girlfriends, going to the gym and being outside.

### SUBMIT YOUR NEWS!

Do you have a photo from an activity conducted in your organization? Do you want to promote an upcoming education session? Do you have a symptom management issue you want explored? Please send for inclusion in the next edition

We're on the web!  
[www.northwestpalliative.com.au](http://www.northwestpalliative.com.au)



### Christmas Message!

To you all and your families many happy times over this festive season! Take this time to enjoy the time with family and friends and be safe on the roads.