

## Palliative Care Week 2019



National Palliative Care Week is an annual awareness raising week organised by Palliative Care Australia.

Barwon Health Palliative Care are arranging some fabulous events to celebrate National Palliative Care Week so keep a look out for advertisements and invitations or contact us at Community Palliative Care if you are keen to participate.

### Tuesday May 21

Death Over Drinks at the Telegraph Hotel, Geelong.

How we want to die – the most important conversation we are not having! Come along for a lively discussion that transforms difficult conversations while you enjoy a drink and a bite to eat. Facilitated by Rebecca Bartel, Deakin University and funded by The Barwon Health Foundation.

### Thursday May 22

Story Time at the Geelong Library. This event was a wonderful success for little people last year. It will take place from 4pm for an hour and is a wonderful, interactive session for young children.



### Friday 24 May

Last Cab to Darwin – its Movie Night! Join us at the Pivotonian Theatre, Cnr Moorabool & Verner Street.

South Geelong for a 6pm screening of this classic Australian movie starring Michael Caton and Jackie Weaver. The film was inspired by the true story of Max Bell, a taxi driver who travelled from Broken Hill to Darwin to seek euthanasia after he was diagnosed with a terminal illness.



## Meet our Community Palliative Care Staff Members

### Supportive Care Worker (Spiritual)

Russell Armstrong

In facing a terminal diagnosis, many of our patients and their families find themselves reflecting on life and death and their beliefs and values, trying to make sense of their experience, and seeking emotional and spiritual



resources to help them cope with their unwelcome situation. My job title - Supportive Care Worker (Spiritual) - nicely reflects the breadth of my role in supporting those endeavours, both within our inpatient Palliative Care Unit and our Community Palliative Care program.

Sometimes I offer a metaphorical ear to chew, shoulder to cry on, someone to let off steam with, or a safe place to wrestle with big questions. When requested I provide overtly religious support to patients who identify with a particular faith; more often I'm supporting patients who identify as 'spiritual but not religious.'

Co-leading our fantastic team of Dignity Therapy volunteers is a particularly rewarding facet of my work, as are the (necessarily rare) occasions when I lead the funeral service for a patient I've worked with. As a former teacher I also welcome the opportunity to contribute to education about spirituality and palliative care with our volunteer and staff teams and the wider community.

Outside of work I enjoy relaxing with my darling wife Lucy, seeing our adult kids find their place in the world, the connections within our own faith community, and indulging my passion for family history.

### Surfcoast Trek 2019

The Surf Coast Trek is a 40km fundraising walk along the Surf Coast Walk from Aireys Inlet to Torquay, raising valuable funds for the Kids Plus Foundation and the Give Where You Live Foundation.

On Saturday, 6 April 2019 five members of the Community Palliative Care Team completed the trek in just under 8 hours. Jacqui White (Manager), Kim White (Grief & Bereavement Counsellor), Jill Carter & Melanie Davies (Clinical Nurse Consultants) and Ruth Morrison (Community Palliative Care Nurse and MND Shared Care Worker) raised \$2850 for the charities by holding a music festival and silent auction. All recovered well after the walk and look forward to taking it on again next year!

