

Advocate calls for palliative care services in Latrobe to set the benchmark for the rest of Victoria.

The Latrobe Health Advocate is calling on governments and local health services to work together with the community to make immediate improvements to local palliative care services and to strive towards building a system in Latrobe that becomes the benchmark for the rest of Victoria.

The Latrobe Health Advocate has released a report that outlines a future vision for palliative care services in Latrobe. This vision is founded in the voices of Latrobe communities who have courageously shared their stories of hope, gratitude and despair.

Latrobe communities have been clear in what they are asking for and why it is important to them. At the heart of it, their aspirations are about respect, dignity and kindness.

Through her research and engagement, the Latrobe Health Advocate has identified five priority areas for reform and twelve recommendations for action. These recommendations include;

- Immediate improvements to the hospital setting and consideration of a dedicated palliative care hospice in Latrobe.
- Delivery of palliative care services and medicines 24 hours a day 7 days a week
- A centralised model of care and shared access to patient records between Latrobe Regional Hospital and Latrobe Community Health Service
- Immediate and ongoing investment to attract and retain more palliative care doctors, nurses and volunteers
- More grief counselling, social and spiritual supports for people who are dying and their families

Over the last twelve months Latrobe communities have shared their personal experiences and the Latrobe Health Advocate has come to realise that community aspirations are consistent with the objectives of Victoria's end of life and palliative care policy.

With the Victorian Government's designation of the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone, the will of Latrobe communities and responsiveness from local services, the conditions for change exist.

The Latrobe Health Advocate has urged the Victorian Government to consider the resources required to adequately deliver palliative care services in Latrobe and has suggested the establishment of a **Latrobe Palliative Care Taskforce** to bring together communities, services and governments to determine a plan of action and way forward.

The Latrobe Health Assembly has indicated that it can play a key role in guiding the establishment of the Latrobe Palliative Care Taskforce working together with the local palliative care consortium to enable collaborative discussions and the development of an action plan to occur.

MEDIA RELEASE

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Quotes attributable to Jane Anderson, Latrobe Health Advocate:

"I am calling on governments and local health services to work together with the community to make immediate improvements to local palliative care services and to strive towards building a system in Latrobe that becomes the benchmark for the rest of Victoria."

"I want to acknowledge all the people who have shared their experiences with me and thank them for working together to create a vision for future palliative care services in Latrobe."

Quotes attributable to Professor John Catford, Chair Latrobe Health Assembly:

"This work is a great example of what we can achieve by doing things differently in the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone."

"The Latrobe Health Assembly brings together the local hospital, community health service, government and community. We are looking forward to engaging with the local palliative care consortium and to supporting the Government's response to the recommendations from the Latrobe Health Advocate."

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