

Media Release

1 December November 2014

First overnight home care service on Eyre Peninsula for people approaching end of life

For the first time, a seven day a week, overnight home service is now available for people approaching or reaching the end of life on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula.

A joint venture between the Eyre Peninsula Home Hospice Association and Calvary Community Care, the trial home-based service will be provided to patients registered with Port Lincoln Palliative Care who meet specific criteria living in the Lower Eyre Peninsula region.

The after-hours/overnight program is designed to provide much needed respite for the patient's carer, while also maintaining the crucial care and support the patient needs in their own home environment.

The trial will be monitored and evaluated over a 12-month period, and if successful, it is hoped it can be rolled out more broadly across Eyre Peninsula subject to ongoing funding and suitably qualified staff being available.

"The trial is a much needed service in rural and regional areas and we are proud that Eyre Peninsula is now able to benefit from this service," Eyre Peninsula Home Hospice Association Chair, Mrs Liz Penfold, said.

"It is no secret that people who are dying, if they are able, would choose to spend the remaining days of their lives in their own homes surrounded by their loved ones in an environment in which they feel safe and happy," she said.

"The impact on the person's carer(s) is intense, especially after hours when many of the support services available during the day are not accessible.

"This program will allow a patient to get the support they would normally get from their carer overnight, while allowing the carer some well-earned time off for a sleep, or just to have some 'time out' for a moment to help them recharge their batteries.

"People can be assured that their loved ones will be in safe and experienced hands and can enjoy quality time with their family while receiving palliative care in their own home".

"We are absolutely delighted to be partnering with Calvary Community Care - such an experienced, well known and highly respected group - to deliver such a vital home service."

Calvary Community Care supports people to live independently at home and in the community by delivering individually tailored 'in home' support to clients, family and carers in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Calvary Community Care CEO, Ms Cheryl De Zilwa, applauded the local partnership and the opportunity to deliver support care directly to people in their own homes.

"Community care plays a vital role in keeping families and communities together when someone is approaching the end of their life," Ms De Zilwa said.

Calvary Community Care Area Manager, Flinders Far North, Ms Rosemary Taylor, also emphasized the importance of community care services in isolated communities.

"It is important to extend this choice to those in remote and regional areas," Ms Taylor said.

"Delivering professional services directly to the home can relieve some of the burden on clients and their families, and ensures that people approaching end of life stay connected to the community they have lived in and loved for so many years."

Mrs Penfold expressed special thanks to Luana Kraft, Palliative Care Coordinator with Port Lincoln Community Health Service, and Mike Leech who recognised the need for this service. Mike Leech's donation initiated the Home Hospice Association Funds with the Eyre Peninsula Community Foundation.

She said the significant contributions of \$50,000 and \$25,000 from Port Lincoln and Cummins branches of the Bendigo Bank respectively, together with ongoing fundraising support from the Eyre Peninsula Community Foundation Board, the hard working and dedicated volunteers of the Eyre Peninsula Book Bazaar and their customers, the Port Lincoln Rotary Club and the many other organisations and individuals who have donated goods and funds to our cause enabled the trial to take place.

The Eyre Peninsula Community Foundation announced last week that a total of \$154,000 is being held by the Foundation to finance the trial.

"The huge amount of community support indicates there is a great need for this service within the community," Foundation Chairman, Mr Kamron Clark, said.

"The Foundation Board is anticipating the trial will be successful and ongoing funding will be required to help spread it across the region, and maintain it into the future," he said.

To find out more and for referrals to participate, call Port Lincoln Community Health Service (08) 8683 2211.

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The Eyre Peninsula Foundation. The Foundation is a community initiative that contributes to local needs through charitable grant-making and encouraging philanthropy. To find out more go to <http://www.epcf.com.au/fundsandpartnerships/named-fund-hospice/>

Calvary is a Catholic, charitable organisation with more than 12,000 staff and volunteers operating public and private hospitals, aged and retirement communities, and community care services across Australia. We are a leading provider of palliative and end of life care, continuing the Mission of the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary.

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