



Third Annual Report: Abundant Life Palliative Care Program at Victoria Hospital

A successful public-private partnership

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2014 Another Successful year

Introduction

I am pleased that in 2014 we continued our new approach to Abundant Life. Our aims and objectives of 2009 have been met and we continue to strive towards fulfilling our aim of integration into Victoria Hospital. This report has to be read in conjunction with previous annual reports of 2011/2012 and 2013.

Patient care

In 2013 we achieved the 1000th patient in our program. In 2014 we saw close to 500 patients in one year. The reason for this has been the success of previous years' perseverance to highlight the need for Palliative Care for all patients. Also the second phase of our IMPAQT Study which increased awareness by the training of 12 nurses, 2 social workers and 3 doctors in Introduction to Palliative Care. This led to an immediate increase in referrals and increased our workload dramatically.

Despite this increase we maintained high standards and continued to provide 2 weekly telephone calls, to all patients, to keep in contact. Allowing us to intervene earlier if needed. Our volunteer Kathy Booyesen made a big difference to ensure our calls were made and that we now have better access for patients. Sr Pitout has only been employed 5 hours per day, Kathy stays till 4pm ensuring longer hours of service for patients to call us.

Kathy has also done an enormous job in ensuring better access to our group sessions by organizing all patients transport, to attend. Group sessions grew so big that in 2015 we have to move to a new venue.

Staff Care

Dr Cupido had a fantastic year with no time off work for burnout!!

Sr Pitout also had a good year and the support from nursing management is improving. It was only in the last 2 months of the year that the pressure of this work took its toll on her, but we supported her through this time. She handed in her resignation but with intervention from nursing management she stayed with us. Accessing staff counselling has also made a big difference.

Unfortunately our Social worker Rebecca Lazarus had a motor vehicle accident and this was a blow to the team. She has made good progress however is not yet 100%. We wish her a full recovery. Please see her report. We lost our auxillary social worker as she resigned in the latter half of the year.

Kathy Booyesen joined us in 2013 and what a pleasure to work with her. This volunteer has by far exceeded our expectations and her maturity has taught us that in Palliative Care maturity is crucial. Kathy has helped us to improve many things in our administration department, our second hand store has never done this well, our group sessions have grown and we are grateful for her commitment.

Naeema Luddy our outgoing volunteer, had some well supported events in 2013. A successful memorial event and World Palliative Care Day. Sad to see her leave but motherhood called and she has a beautiful daughter keeping her very busy.

Joy Hunter has been employed by the UCT department of Family Medicine/Palliative Care as a full time researcher and was based at Abundant Life. She has completed the IMPAQT Study in 2014 with enormous success. This partnership has grown and improved understanding of palliative care in our setting. We eagerly await the results of this study. Unfortunately with the research ending Joy has had to move on and is no longer available full time. She has been volunteering her services for our group sessions and attends weekly meetings when available.

Our Volunteers were once again paid a stipend from the funds we raised through the second hand shop.

Students

We continued our partnership with Connect-123 and had another 2 groups of Students over the winter months. These American elective students participated in our group sessions and went on home visits. They also visited Living Hope Hospice to see where we send our patients that need hospice care.

What an exciting year having our first University of Cape Town elective student. Candice Daniels was amazing and her report on her experience got her 100% on her project. She saw the potential Abundant Life has and grew our Social Media footprint by showing us how to use Facebook effectively.

Candice opened the door for Clio Bax, also from UCT, who spent her December holiday volunteering at Abundant Life. Clio was enthusiastic and helped us tremendously.

Doctors

Dr Doyle spent another 6 months with us and we loved the help. An enormous amount of gratitude for her generous contribution. This has been the 3rd year she has donated her precious time and expertise. She has really been a major factor in Abundant Life's survival.

This year we improved the teaching of doctors Victoria with our IMPAQT study we definitely increased the awareness. Dr Cupido also adopted the principle of teaching others to do, instead of doing all himself. This led to more patients being seen more appropriately. The doctors still find this work extremely difficult and teaching needs to improve in 2015.

I think in order to integrate better into the hospital system, the teaching program needs to be more organized. This year I taught on a case by case basis. We managed to get 3 doctors attend and complete the Introduction to Palliative Care Course. However there should have been at least 16 doctors completing the course.

Nursing

Sr Pitout has always been our nurse co-ordinator but the reality has been that she does all the palliative care nursing and co-ordinates no other nurses. She definitely sees that the doctors and volunteers are co-ordinated. IMPAQT Study changed this, somewhat less than hoped for. Each of our wards sent a nurse on the Introduction to Palliative care course. The hope was to increase nursing capacity but this did not really materialize. We increased awareness but not the palliative care nursing work force. We suspect that theory and practice is very different. Despite the excellent course attendance and enthusiasm shown it is enormously difficult work. There was no follow-up or mentorship program after the course. This is our next step for 2015.

Financials

Most of our expenses were covered by the hospital, except for the volunteers' stipend which was paid by funds from our events and second hand shop. The Connect-123 partnership brought in money again. We however did not concentrate on raising funds in 2014. We concentrated mainly on awareness and patient care.

Our monies are in the Academic Fund and the Hospital Board.

Despite not trying to raise money we had new monthly donors and continued to receive collections from the funerals. We also received significant donations to assist us in attending conferences this year. Appreciation from families for the care provided was shown in many letters and some larger donations as well.

Dr Cupido donated the conference fees for the Hospice Palliative Care Conference for both Sr Pitout and Rebecca. This was the first time Rebecca attended and second time for Sr Pitout. Dr Cupido was sponsored by HPCA SA.

Integration into the hospital

We continue to aim to increase our presence in the hospital. We invited more staff to our meetings, events and teaching. Our moto is that "Palliative Care is not Special Care. It's just GOOD MEDICINE"
"Every Ward Round is a possible Palliative Care Ward Round".

Research

We started and completed phase 2 of the IMPAQT Study. The results of IMPAQT is pending.

We participated in the In-Spirit study, a look at spirituality in our care we provide.

Dr Cupido and Sr Pitout attended the NEW York International Primary Care Research network where we presented our published study.

Events

We were lucky to have Mrs Jaffer, again assisting us in the World Palliative care day and Partnered with the Wynberg Senior Secondary High School. This art and drama school then put on a 2 hour show interpreting their view of health and hospital. We built up such a very important partnership.

2014 Memorial Event was the biggest ever. Over 200 people attended. African Ablaze dance school put on few dance acts. We had a minister and imam come represent the Christian and Muslim patients we care for. We are grateful to Naeema Luddy for organising this event.

Our First attempt at Humanitarian Awards was successful as we awarded the following:

Doctor of year

Carer of the year

Nurse of year

Social Media

2014 we were given the advice from students that social media is critical in today's society. We have had a Face Book page Abundant Life Hospice Palliative Care Victoria Hospital for a few years but Candice Daniels put us on the map. She increased our Likes from 200 to over 700 in 2014. This has now been used for information and promotion of Abundant Life.

The Abundant Life Palliative Care Web page www.abundantlife.victoria.yolasite.com has been in use for years and designed by Dr Cupido. A free website and done by a doctor who should stick to his profession. However if you Google Abundant Life Palliative Care out of 17 million hits we come up No 1 without any payment, a free website. This is how we put Palliative Care into Health Care in Victoria Hospital.

What a year 2014 was with many more ups than downs.

Well Done Team!!!

Goals for 2015

1. Increase our teaching of doctors and students by:
Introduction of a special clinic on Tuesdays with Sr Pitout and Dr Cupido ensuring all doctors in medicine will see patients with a palliative need.
2. Encourage the translation of nurse training into practice by:
Working with Hospice Palliative Care Association of SA to fund mentorship, providing added support for these nurses
3. Increase our international exposure by:
Dr Cupido will try attending the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Care Conference, as he awaits an application for a scholarship to attend.
Dr Cupido will seek funding to attend the European Palliative Care Conference in Denmark.
Host the international group that will visit in March 2015.
4. Increase our local footprint by:
Working with Groote Schuur Hospital and HPCA to ensure that Palliative Care gets spread into other hospitals as the Abundant Life Model.
5. Improve our capacity in terms of staff by:
Raising funds to employ Kathy Booyesen, increase Sr Pitout's hours of work and look at getting another clerk to assist the Team.
Grow our volunteer base and improve management of volunteers.
Send Kathy on a volunteer course with St Luke's Hospice.
Increase our student interaction from UCT by advertising better.
6. Increase our social media footprint by:
Getting a marketing team to assist us hopefully as a Corporate Social Initiative project.
Get our own paid Website that allows us to have a better WWW. Domain.
Getting a professional to manage our website.
7. Increase our income by:
Focusing on fundraising and having a budget for 2015 in order to plan a better financial year.
Getting involved with a media organizations and celebrities to promote our organization.
8. Consolidate our position in our Hospital, in the Department of Health, and within HPCA.
9. Continue our research in palliative care
10. Care for our Staff and their own families

Acknowledgment

This program would not have been possible without the support from staff at Victoria Hospital, the Hospice Palliative Care Association, and St Luke's and Living Hope hospice.

Our patients and their families that allow us to provide a service that is not available at other hospitals. We wish those who lost loved ones, a prayer to remember them as they were before their illness took them to the end.

We the Staff wish to thank our own families, wives and husbands, children and extended families. It is a not without sacrifice from our loved ones, that allow us to spend more than working hours to do our jobs. That allow us to travel and be away from home over weekends. That support us at all our Abundant Life Palliative Care Events. They are the workers behind the scenes that make all of our care possible.

We also wish to thank our new Victoria Hospital Management Team that have embraced Abundant Life Palliative Care like never before. The encouragement and the advice has been welcomed. It is with great leadership that the entire hospital staff has been supporting our program and adopting our philosophy of healthcare.

“We were once a small team but now we have a community behind us.”

I've told my children that when I die, to release balloons in the sky to celebrate that I graduated.

For me, death is a graduation.” Elizabeth Kubler-Ross