

## **Nursing Co-Ordinator Abundant Life Palliative Care Annual Report 2014**

### **Sister E. Pitout**

#### **Staff News:**

**Dr Ros Doyle** rejoined us in January 2014 and returned to Australia in mid- June 2014. Her hard work and dedication was marred by the fact that her registration went awry due to bureaucratic red tape and was therefore unable to sign her own prescriptions.

**Sister Bee Van Reenen** dedicated her valuable time to our program as a volunteer, but left in August as her husband was seconded to work in Poland. We were very grateful for her contribution.

**Sister Rose Jooste** volunteered her services but as she already occupies a 5/8 nursing post was unable to give the program much time. We were grateful for her interest and look forward to the day when she will be able to commit more time to the program.

**Volunteer Naeema Luddy** organized our very successful memorial event in March 2014. She left us at the beginning of June 2014, pending the birth of her daughter. During this transition we welcomed **Kathy Booyesen** as a new volunteer. She has proved her worth time and again, and we hope her stay will be a long one.

A **winter preparation program** was initiated by Dr Ros Doyle and kicked off on 11/3/14. Our COPD patients benefitted from getting the flu injections, emergency packs and education on the use of their spacers and pumps. Transport was arranged with the co-operation of Mr C.Davids. This was a successful venture and one which we hope to repeat next year.

This was followed by our **memorial event** on 15/3/14. We had a turnout of ± 300 people for whom refreshments and entertainment (in the form of dance and signing) had been arranged. Dr Cupido acted as master of ceremonies and a priest and Imam gave spiritual support to the proceedings.

**Palliative Care training** for doctors and nurses commenced in March 2014. This was done via a partnership between **Sister M. Simpson** (Education), Hospice Palliative Care Association and **Joy Hunter** (Impact study co-ordinator). Unfortunately only 3 out of 20 doctors invited, attended the doctor training from 10-27 March. The nurses training was far more successful with 12 nurses completing the course. Their feedback was very favourable. Next year we would like to see sustained mentorship of those trained, by HPCA, Sr Simpson and Sr Pitout.

March 2014 also saw a visit by **24 international palliative specialists** (doctors and nurses). They were very interested in our program and international ties were forged. A further visit is in the pipeline for 2015.

Joy Hunter once again conducted an **IMPAQT study** from 31/3/14 – 31/7/14. This involved interviewing new patients and following up on the impact that Abundant Life intervention made in dealing with their life threatening illness. This study was followed up by an **INSPIRIT study** later in the year. There were 2 focus groups consisting of patients and carers. 100 people were recruited and 220 follow ups. Both these studies are collaborative international studies with King's College London.

In May 2014, **Dr Van Der Schyff** and I were interviewed on **Cape Talk** and jointly shared the prestigious **Lead South Africa** award for hero of the month. My special thanks went to Dr Cupido who nominated me.

The **Hospice Palliative Care Association** held their annual conference in Cape Town (Milneron) this year, and was attended by Dr Cupido, Rebecca Lazarus and Sr Pitout. It ran from 15-18 September 2014 and was found to be very informative and provided good networking opportunities. Dr Cupido and Sr Pitout also attended the launch of the butterfly campaign by HPCA. The motto chosen was "Who cares? We do!" and butterfly "tattoos" were handed out.

We celebrated **World Hospice Palliative Care Day** on 11/10/14 with a dinner at the Wynberg High School in Ottery Road. The event was initiated by Dr Cupido and organised by Mrs Jaffer (sister of one of our past patients). It was a great success and enjoyed by our invited dignitaries, patients, families and supporters alike.

After much soul searching I handed in my resignation on 30/10/14. However, during my exit interview it was decided to put aside my resignation for the foreseeable future and apply for a full time palliative care post. It then became evident that there were no posts available. It was decided by myself and Dr Cupido that I would record daily stats and submit all overtime (to be done at the hospital) regardless of the fact that there is no financial remuneration at this stage.

Dr Cupido and I attended the annual international palliative care conference in New York from 20-25 November 2014. We then headed to London where we spent a very informative day with palliative care staff at Queens Hospital in Barking. Dr Cupido also visited King's College London and I spent a few hours at the Florence Nightingale Museum.

Volunteer Kathy Booyen organised an outing for the patients on 6/11/14 to "Fish on the Rocks" in Hout Bay. An enjoyable lunch was had by all, after which I took our 2 accompanying American students on a visit to Living Hope. One of our patients Gina Gilbert, collected 50 food parcels together with family and friends. These were delivered to our patients by Kathy Booyen, before Christmas. Our final patient program for the year was celebrated at Lady Michaelis. The patients supplied most of the refreshments, and in turn were entertained by singing from patient, Sarah Van Der Merwe's two sons.

Dr Cupido and I were invited to case studies seminar at UCT from 22-23 July 2014. This was especially for those professionals doing the palliative medicine course. I found it of great interest and once again strengthened ties with Groote Schuur Hospital, Dr Turner (Private physician) and other doctors from around the country. The discussion lead to an interesting workshop at St Luke's Hospice on "caring for the carer" i.e the healthcare professional.

## **Miscellaneous**

An information brochure was drawn up by Jody Vlotman as part of her final assignment to become a social worker. It has not gone to printing yet, but we are grateful for her input.

Our Toyota Quantum Vehicle is being used very effectively for patient transport and from 4/7/14 the Retreat Taxi Association came on board to assist Mr C. Davids in transporting our 'Friday' patients.

Stats were submitted to HPCA via Brendon Kindo, on a monthly basis. This worked well. Next year I will be completing stats for submission to Victoria Hospital Management as motivation for a full time post.

Rotary Claremont supplied us with an additional 20 wedges and 17 egg boxes during the year, for which we were very grateful.

After 5 years of waiting we still do not have a computer as we are waiting for a line. Management are aware of this problem.

I continue to have a good working relationship with the community sister at St Luke's Hospice, and the AL team continue to be invited to St Luke's educational meetings once a month on a Wednesday evening after work.

Planning for next year is such that I will work on a Tuesday afternoon in MOPD and see our palliative care patients as well as "newly diagnosed" patients. I am looking forward to this.

Two dynamic 5<sup>th</sup> year medical students spent some valuable time with us during the year, Candice Daniels and Clio Bax.