

Allied Health Report - 23/9/19

This year Allied Health continued to support Little Haven's model of compassionate care in many ways. Our art therapy program, guided by the talented Cathy Strajnar, supports patients and families to gain insight beyond the spoken word into their experiences and emotions. "Social Gatherings" have continued to be well-attended. These are an opportunity for people to connect to others who have also experienced a significant loss over a casual lunch. The increase in funding has meant an increase in hours making a social worker available at Little Haven five days a week. This has increased our ability to offer psychosocial support to patients and their families and ensured the sustainability of our bereavement support program. Allied Health also now oversees co-ordination of our respite volunteers and I look forward to working with those who volunteer their time to make such a difference to our patients and their families in their time of need.

There have been some changes in our team. Thank you to Cobi van der Es who stepped in to fill the gap left when our bereavement support nurse Sally McDonald retired. Cobi made a significant contribution to shaping our social work and bereavement policy in her time here and I am very grateful. Cobi was with us for a year before stepping down to travel and focus on her private practice and I am hopeful we will still be able to utilise her extensive experience and knowledge for many years to come. A further thank you to Sally McDonald who continues to volunteer her time to support our service.

We have continued to accept students from the University of the Sunshine Coast completing their study and needing practical experience. This year we have had the advantage of having Josie Fennell join the team to complete her Masters of Counselling. Josie's knowledge, experience and cheerful outlook have been a valuable asset to Little Haven and she will be continuing with our team when her placement finishes. We hope to accept another student for internship next year.

Finally, I am often the one who speaks with families after a loved one has died. This means I have the privilege of hearing the overwhelming gratitude families feel for Little Haven's care. I would like to pass this onto the wonderful team I work with - from our admin staff, to our complementary therapists, our volunteers, to our CEO Sue Manton and, of course, to our talented nurses – THANK YOU - your compassionate care does make such a difference. And to the families in Little Haven's care - thank you for allowing us into your lives and trusting us with your care – you inspire us every day.

Thank you

Lisa McAulay
Social Worker