

## CEO Report 2019 AGM

I know a lot of you in the room are long-time supporters of Little Haven and have been here at our AGM for many years. Well you can all breathe a sigh of relief as this year you don't have to listen to me complaining about the lack of Government funding or recognition of our community based model of Palliative care.

Nor this year will you be subjected to the timeline of activities undertaken over the past 12 months to achieve recognition and equitable funding. Suffice to say this work has been unrelenting, exhausting but ultimately effective, with the first round of new funding hitting our bank account on June 30<sup>th</sup> \$250,000 (the first instalment of the 3 year \$750,000 federal grant) and in July our new beaut contract with Qld Health came into play, our first 1/4ly payment of \$230,000, and with it a huge lifting of burden from the shoulders of our community, our board and mine in particular. You can imagine what a relief it is to start this year not wondering where the \$850k funding gap will come from.

Ticking off the big ticket items on our strategic plan and future proofing the organisation for the years to come. Shoring it up against the increased challenges we face, increased admissions with greater clinical and psychosocial complexities in care, an aging population struggling to access care packages, more people living in the outer regions of our vast district and an aging workforce. Funding secured ✓

Thank you Llew O'Brien MP and Sharon for continual advocacy and ultimately arranging our meeting with Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt. The opportunity to tell the Little Haven story to the top of the health tree proved invaluable, as it did when Brandy and I met with the Qld Health Minister Steven Miles. In doing so we not only received the funding but we raised the tide for community based palliative care services elsewhere. I thank Qld Health for their investment into the future of our hospice models of care. Our Little Haven, born of this community, demonstrating the economic and societal benefits of care in the right place at the right time, setting the standards for Australia. Is it too late to change Phyl's last name to Big!

We celebrated briefly in LHW 2019, capturing this momentous time in our history on film – A 5 minute snapshot of the service – Acknowledging our history, the diversity of our patients, families caring for their loved ones, the warmth our respite carers provide, our incredibly committed volunteers, the Market Place – what a great success story, the community always there giving us a hand up, like the Gympie Rotary club who donated the \$20000 raised at last years Quilt and Craft spectacular to LH and highlighting the care and compassion of our clinical team – “a model of kindness” ([Link to video https://youtu.be/fmwW1CEUZAww](https://youtu.be/fmwW1CEUZAww))

And yet we were busier than ever .... because of course increased funding brings increased accountability.... annual plans, budgets and reporting schedules needed submitting, policies and procedures needed reviewing or writing in preparation for our accreditation against the National Safety and Quality Health Standards. This is a requirement for all Government funded health services from 2020 and will be ticked off our strategic plan come October 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>. With it the safeguards in place to continue to thrive into the future and a blue print for other services who wish to emulate our model.

It's been **a time of change** and the team have rolled with the challenges –

Taking on the new computer based patient management system in their stride and embracing the benefits of having the patients file accessible at anytime of the day and night when they may receive a call for help. With 1769 after hours contacts this year, the system has proved its worth already. Thank you to Chris Keeler for all her hard work in the implementing this system and to the team for your patience amidst these changes.

**There's been a changing of the guard too**, with Narelle, Fran and Gen, their combined service of 50 years plus to the organisation taking well-earned retirement, whilst first providing the opportunity to share their knowledge and special brand of caring with our new nurses Leanne, Sharon and Eleanor. Amongst the chaos, at an incredibly busy time documented earlier in Bronwyn's report these nurses slotted in beautifully. They are our future and the future looks bright.

Never one to arrive at the end of a story quickly, last week Bronwyn handed me her 12 month notice of retirement. In the blink of an eye it seems I'll have gone from the youngest on staff to the oldest. We have 12 months to absorb all the know-how and nurturing Bronwyn has provided in coordinating the care for around 2000 families in her time with us. Our rock – albeit a glistening mystical one. Thank you Bronwyn, Carolyn, Amy, Kelly and Kath for your steadfast commitment to the end of life care of 235 families last year. Your talents are boundless.

Our team do incredible work – like the 2am call out to a property 40kms from their home to support 3 young adult children who've come half way around the world to care for their dying mum. They leave our shores with heavy hearts but absolute gratitude for the care received to support their mums' wishes at end of life. Our funding allowing us to finally reach pay parity with comparable services. Though to be fair our team are beyond comparison.

Our social worker Lisa, thank you for always being there to step up whenever needed to support the clinical work our team provides. It's beautiful to watch the gentle way you work with these families in shifting the heaviness of grief. Our complementary therapists and art therapies a Godsend in this process too.

### **Opportunities and Challenges**

As we move into the next phase of our history we do so with a renewed vision for the future, recognising the opportunities our increased funding provides and also the challenges of keeping engaged the aspects that makes our service so special.... Our deep rooted connection to our community and our wonderful model of volunteering. With our clinical care budget funded, the donations and funds raised will continue to enable us to evolve our service to fill the gaps in the health care system. Opportunities to

- Update and maintain our range of equipment readied for delivery by Vinnies at a moment's notice
- Funding LH care packages for families waiting on the Aged Care system to keep pace with needs, and
- Working with Coinda to finally realise our vision for a stand-alone hospice for those without the support system in place to remain at home for their final days.

The more things change the more they remain the same. We will continue to care for all who enter our door with an open heart, with increased capacity to do so. As always raising the bar for others to aspire to.

I thank Brandy and the Board for continually supporting our Mission and Vision and look forward to working with you again in the coming year to progress this vision.

I acknowledge the Admin team, our backbone, Narelle, Susan and Kris (Volunteer coordinator) and our admin volunteers for all your hard work carried out with a special brand of gentleness despite constant interruptions to your scheduled tasks. Often the first to greet a family in crisis or take the harried phone calls you give them your full attention and care.

An enormous thank you to our volunteers - admin, clinical and fundraising who have contributed 16,780 hrs and raised \$280,000 (Events \$95K, Raffles \$23K, Booksale \$12K and the MarketPlace \$148K), and our generous donors (documented on the back 2 pages of the booklet). Your generosity is transported into our families' homes by our team and makes a difference.

I'll close this report with recent feedback received from one of our families;

*Lorraine thanked LH for our care and openness - it was nice to have an honest appraisal, when she felt that they weren't always given that previously. Stated that knowing the true extent of her husband's disease had allowed her and the family to prepare themselves for his death.  
She was very grateful to have had the involvement of LH.*