

# Hospice News 2024

Otago Community Hospice Newsletter | August

## CEO Message

Kia ora koutou,

I write this as we come out of the darkest hours of winter. It can be a tough time for anyone, let alone those who are or have loved ones facing end of life.

At the Hospice, we are very aware of the responsibilities shouldered by family members, with largely no experience in caring, who are thrown in the deep end of looking after a loved one who is dying at the same time as living through their own grief and trying to maintain their own lives, work and families.

While we, the hospice team, can do a lot to help patients and their whānau navigate their way through this journey, ensuring they make the most of their time, we know we cannot do it all. A huge amount of effort, empathy and hands-on-care will fall to family members. With this in mind, we have created an incredibly useful podcast series for carers – available in bite sized episodes, and focused on the things we know families and carers struggle with. Its tips of the trade to equip carers with the confidence and skills to care for their loved ones at home.

We are only able to offer these precious free resources, and in fact our range of services, because of your generosity.

I know things are hard out there, but please continue to support Otago Community Hospice. We are making a meaningful difference for so many patients and their families across the region, with your help.

*GINNY*



GINNY GREEN  
CEO Otago Community Hospice

PS: If you are donating in response to this newsletter, please use the code AUGNL when depositing money to the Otago Hospice account or if you are donating via our website.

**THANKS!**

## Carer Programme Helps Family Navigate End of Life Journey



A special family have experienced hospice services twice now: with their late father in 2002 and earlier this year their mother was referred after a terminal bowel cancer diagnosis.

A referral to the hospice service always begins with a face to face meeting with a hospice care co-ordinator, who is a specially trained health professional.

Part of the paperwork from that first meeting included information on the Kōwhai Programme, the family promptly enrolled to attend the focused carer education sessions. These sessions cover everything from managing medicines to getting enough sleep. Kōwhai also provides a valuable opportunity to connect with others who are sharing similar experiences.

*"As a family we really enjoyed the Kōwhai Programme. Although it has its sad moments, there is also laughter as you share your stories. It was lovely to meet some other families going through similar challenges with navigating end-of-life journeys. We came away from each weekly topic with some new and useful knowledge, and enjoyed sharing lunch with the other families."*

*"Our Care Coordinator Suny has been fantastic with her advice and expertise. She's arranged some equipment to be available at home and helped with the needs assessment visit. Denise, through managing the Kōwhai Programme, has brought both professional and personal expertise. Both Suny and Denise have been great to talk to and act as sounding boards, particularly when navigating what is required or what might be coming up."*

*Dr Anne McGregor, Suny and Denise have all been incredibly empathetic as well. We really appreciate the role that Hospice staff play as intermediaries and assisting with getting services underway. We are most grateful that the service is free due to the hard work and generosity of donors, grantors, staff and volunteers. We encourage support of any form to the Otago Hospice."*

Otago  
Community  
**hospice**

Te Kahu Pairuri ki Ōtākou  
Living Every Moment

293 North Road | North East Valley | PO Box 8002 | Dunedin  
Phone 03 473 6005 | Email [contact@otagohospice.co.nz](mailto:contact@otagohospice.co.nz)



## HOSPICE STREET APPEAL 2024

Thanks to our incredible Otago community, over \$31,000 was raised during our Annual Street Appeal. It's heart-warming to feel the support and appreciation for our service. To everyone through the region that volunteered their time or dropped money into one of our buckets - THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts. And a huge shout out and thanks to our fabulous regional coordinators who ensure the day runs smoothly.



**\$31,000  
raised**



**\$973.90  
raised**

Wānaka A & P Show – Staff from Aspiring Village Wānaka collected donations & wowed the crowd with their unique "Human Fruit Machine".



**\$16,000  
raised**

Harcourts Hospice Degustation at Glenfalloch.



**\$14,300  
raised**

High Tea for Hospice – The Lindy Chicks hit it out of the park at their High Tea event in April.



**\$2,250  
raised**

Otago Early Falcon and Fairlane Car Club supporting Hospice.



**\$5,000  
raised**

Dunedin Kick-Boxing Prize Fight Championship.



**\$23,700  
raised**

Taieri Lions and Rotary Annual Crop Competition and Charity Auction.





## SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

### Podcast Providing Reliable Advice to Thousands

Ending Life Well – the Otago Community Hospice produced podcast series for family carers – has hit 8,000 downloads since launching in 2022. The podcast was created to provide accessible information for family carers who have been thrown in the deep end caring for loved ones who are dying. There are now 29 episodes, with recent episodes diving into areas like Can We Talk? – Opening Up Conversations About Dying with UK specialist Dr Kathryn Mannix, whose practical experience shows that whether we like it or not, sometimes we have to take a deep breath and get into a conversation that we might have preferred to avoid. Also, an episode with Dr. Ira Byock – a palliative care physician from the USA and author of “The Four Things That Matter Most” – who talks about the power of the phrases “Please forgive me,” “I forgive you,” “Thank you,” and “I love you” – to mend and nurture our relationships and inner lives. Other new episodes include topics such as Relationships and Intimacy at the End of Life, Supporting Teenagers and Young Adults Going Through Grief, Moving Into Aged Care – Practical Tips and Dementia with Dignity.

Supporting this huge workforce of carers – unpaid, untrained and in uncharted territory, is one of our most important roles as a specialist provider, says senior palliative care nurse and podcast producer Denise van Aalst.

“With this podcast series we can provide reliable advice and information for carers who may not have the time or headspace to read the on-line resources available to carers. Please share with anyone who could use some help while navigating this very tricky terrain.”

The series is available on all good podcast apps or via our website under carer education.



### Rural Team Helping Patients Have More Life in Their Days and More Days in Their Life

For people on the Hospice service in South Otago, their first point of contact will be OCH Care Coordinator Tracy-Lee Fisher, who spends two to three days a week travelling the region, which stretches from Waiholo to Clinton, and includes the Catlins and Lawrence.

“The care coordinator’s role is to be the main point of contact for the patient and family/whānau, to have an overview of their needs and supports, and refer them to the services they might require,” says Tracy-Lee.

When Tracy-Lee made first contact with a patient recently to explain the OCH care coordination role and how Hospice can support her, she could hear the relief in her patient’s voice, “She was so relieved. She said ‘I now feel I can be at my safe place which is my home’.”

Tracy-Lee explains that the aim of OCH’s community service is to make sure patients and their whānau get the right help they need at the right time.

“We’re fortunate that we can give the time to allow people to talk,” says Tracy-Lee, “time to have the difficult conversations, time to answer challenging questions, and find out what they need, and what they want.”

Hospice doctor Chris Hopkins joins Tracy-Lee on the road once a fortnight. Chris describes his role as having two priorities – firstly to find out how patients and whānau are feeling and help them feel as comfortable as they can, and secondly to help plan for the future and discuss what that might look like.

“This two-pronged approach helps with symptoms but also with fears and anxieties. People are usually afraid to face the ends of our lives, but it’s important to know that being well taken care of is good for you and can actually help you live longer. With good palliative care, our patients not only have more life in their days, but also more days in their lives,” says Chris.

Chris and Tracy-Lee work closely with local health providers, including rural hospitals, GPs, practice nurses, district nurses, occupational therapists and physios. The wider OCH team, including counsellors, social workers and night carers, are called in if needed.

As Tracy-Lee says,  
“It takes a whole community to help a person die at home.”

# Hospice News

## HOSPICE EVENTS COMING UP

**Wednesday 11 September**

BNI Bingo Bonanza

**Saturday 5 October**

Mornington Taphouse Charity Car Run

**Friday 11 October**

Central Otago Dinner Club

**Friday 1 November**

Aotearoa Gaming Trust Golf Tournament

**Thursday 14 November**

Farmers Christmas Campaign

**Friday 22 November**

Edinburgh Women's Golf Tournament

**Sunday 24 November**

Charity Car Cruise

**Mid November**

Rotary Christmas Trailer Raffle

Go to our events page to keep up to date on these events and much more.

[otagohospice.co.nz/support-us/events](http://otagohospice.co.nz/support-us/events)

# THANK YOU!

Our heartfelt thanks to the following trusts who recently supported us with extremely generous grants:

Blueskin Trust

Central Lakes Trust

Holmes Charitable Fund

William Sherriff Charitable Trust

William Downie Stewart Charitable Trust

Un Cadeau Charitable Trust

NZ Lottery Grants Board

Dunedin City Council

The Jessie Hill Charitable Trust

HOSPICE AWARENESS WEEK  
SPONSORS 2024



## BECOME A FRIEND OF HOSPICE TODAY



Consider becoming a Friend of Hospice by setting up an automatic payment.

Contact our Fundraising Administrator  
Amy McDonald

**0800 682 464**

or email

[friends@otagohospice.co.nz](mailto:friends@otagohospice.co.nz)