Media release

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New Victorian end of life care plan is everyone’s business

Palliative Care Victoria welcomes the new framework for end of life care announced today by the Victorian Minister of Health, Hon. Jill Hennessy.

“This visionary and ambitious plan recognizes that end of life care is very important to all Victorians and that we need to re-design and strengthen our services to meet community expectations and growing demand much more effectively,” said Dr. Judi Greaves, Chair of the Victorian peak body for palliative care.

Based on extensive community consultations, the framework aims to provide the best palliative care and end of life care in ways that are tailored to each person’s needs and preferences.

“Importantly, the framework recognizes that achieving this goal is everyone’s business. It starts with engaging communities and encouraging individuals to discuss their end of life care wishes. It also means all relevant health and care staff in a broad range of services across Victoria must have the skills needed to contribute to high quality palliative care and end of life care,” said Dr. Greaves.

“Palliative Care Victoria strongly supports the vision, goals and directions outlined in the framework. Achieving these at a practical level will require significant innovation and collaboration, supported by investment that will ultimately deliver better outcomes more effectively and efficiently,” she said.

“We welcome the proposed strategies to strengthen the availability of specialist palliative care expertise and consultancy across Victoria, to improve support for carers, to develop effective and efficient home-based models of care and to support valued community contributions by volunteers.

“The framework provides a clear set of goals and priorities that will help to guide service innovation and better integrated and coordinated services. We also welcome the commitment to measure progress and ensure greater transparency about how well our services are meeting community needs and aspirations into the future”, concluded Dr. Greaves.

The need for change

- As a society we are hesitant to talk about death. This inhibits planning and may result in a person’s end of life wishes not being followed.¹
- There are general misunderstandings in the community about palliative care.²
- Demand for palliative care is steadily increasing and is expected to continue to do so.³
- Victoria’s palliative care sector is overburdened and needs better support from government.⁴
- Although most people in Victoria wish to die at home, in reality most die in hospital.⁵

Available for media interviews:

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About Palliative Care Victoria

Palliative Care Victoria Inc. is the peak body representing palliative care providers, consumers and their families and those with an interest in palliative care in Victoria. Palliative Care Victoria’s vision is for all people with a life limiting illness and their families to be supported to live, die and grieve well.

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ii Ibid, p 11
iii Ibid, p 14
iv Ibid
v Ibid