

# Palliative Care



*Hospitality | Compassion | Respect | Justice | Excellence*



**ST JOHN OF GOD**  
Health Care

# St John of God Health Care – leading the way

St John of God Health Care is a leading provider of Catholic hospitals, diagnostic and outreach services, basing its care on the values of Hospitality, Compassion, Respect, Justice and Excellence.

## What is palliative care?

Palliative care focuses on enhancing quality of life and encompasses all aspects of a person's care needs including the physical, social, spiritual, psychological and emotional factors. It aims to provide relief from pain and other symptoms. It also offers a support system to help carers cope during their loved one's illness and into bereavement.

Our specialist Palliative Care service offers an interdisciplinary approach to caring for those with life limiting illness. This means our service is made up of a range of health care professionals and specially trained experts.

Our Palliative Care philosophy is to give people with life limiting illnesses a reason to hope and a feeling of greater self-confidence and dignity. We embrace a holistic approach to care-giving, which respects the

dignity and worth of each person. We believe in creating an environment that nurtures the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual wellbeing of those in our care.



Palliative Care

## Palliative Care at St John of God Health Care

Palliative Care is offered at both St John of God Berwick and Frankston hospitals.

Berwick's service begins with an earlier-intervention program which allows patients to access support from the time of diagnosis. Patients will have access to regular clinical testing and assessment, along with symptom management to assist them in living a full and comfortable life for as long as possible

The Frankston service accepts patients closer to their end of life and offers a quiet and cosy sanctuary for them and their loved ones.

## People live longer when they have a better quality of life

Palliative Care focusses on improving the patient's quality of life and ensuring they are still able to do the things they love. Studies show that a good quality of life can also help people to live longer even when diagnosed with a life-limiting illness.

## Palliative Care compliments treatment

It's a common misconception that Palliative Care is limited to end of life. This is not the case. It's highly beneficial to begin Palliative Care at the time of the diagnosis of a life-limiting illness.

The benefits of the service will give patients their best quality of life for as long as possible.

Palliative Care can be engaged in conjunction with other medical treatments as a support and management tool. Our specialised clinicians can offer support in goal setting, community services and other supports which can make the clinical treatment process that little bit easier.

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**Palliative Care is about living well and providing the best quality of life**

## Our hospitals

Palliative Care is offered at both Berwick and Frankston hospitals. Both hospitals offer a variety of comforts and facilities for patients and their loved ones to ensure they can focus on what's most important- each other.



Spacious and well equipped patient rooms



Comfortable seating and room for loved ones



Gardens and outdoor spaces



Onsite cafes and family lounges

## Cuddle Beds

Generously funded by community donations, our cuddle beds allow loved ones to be physically close and lay together, deepening connection and providing comfort. Cuddle beds offer patients and loved ones a compassionate approach to end-of-life care.

Large patient beds, referred to warmly as 'Cuddle Beds,' can make a huge difference for palliative care patients and their families.

This compassionate approach to care can have a huge impact on patients who can often feel isolated and provides family members with the opportunity to feel close in a hospital setting.



## Supporting patients and their families

### Visitor Program

Trained volunteers provide a visiting service to patients enabling them to have some respite, safe in the knowledge that their loved one has some companionship while they are not in the room.\*

Volunteers interact with the families and patients to provide companionship and friendly support. This may include conversation, reminiscing, sourcing the patient's favourite music, service refreshments and more.

### Delta Therapy Dogs

The benefits of therapy animals are scientifically proven. Therapy dogs have a positive impact on social, emotional and physiological health, improving quality of life and well-being.

Therapy dogs visit our hospitals weekly\*, allowing patients to have some time with a specially trained therapy animal and helping those who may be missing their pets at home.

### Dignity Therapy

Dignity therapy aims to support patients by inviting them to reflect on things that are most important to them and memories they wish to pass on and leave for their family. Trained practitioners conduct a recorded interview and create an edited transcript to be treasured by loved ones. It has been shown to positively reduce stress and improve mood in patients at this time.

### Art and music therapy

Art and music therapy promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing through the creative process and can be very beneficial to improving mood and self esteem, as well as reducing stress.

Our qualified art and music therapists guide patients through music and art mediums like drawing, painting and collage.

\* (please note that some services may be temporarily suspended due to Covid-19)

# Dream A Little Dream

Dream A Little Dream is a special program for those facing a life-limiting illness. Generously funded by community donations, patients are able to have a small wish or dream granted.

## Making dreams a reality

These small acts of kindness are intended to bring some light to what can be a challenging and difficult time, creating beautiful memories for loved ones and bringing some joy to the patient by making a dream come true.

Patients and their loved ones can request a dream by discussing with their nurse or doctor.

**DREAM  
A LITTLE  
DREAM  
PROGRAM**



## Pastoral Care

Our professional Pastoral Services caregivers are an integral part of the multidisciplinary healthcare team, complementing and contributing to the overall person centred care provided to patients and their loved ones.

Our Pastoral Services caregivers provide a free service and are available to all patients regardless of their culture, faith and spiritual belief, including if they have no faith.

Pastoral practitioners listen with respect to stories, are sensitive to the vulnerability of each person and foster resources of hope, courage, faith, trust and love.

### Pastoral services

Our pastoral services caregivers endeavour to:

- create a safe, trusting environment that enables patients and their family to share experiences and assist in finding and establishing personal meaning
- assist patients and their family to adjust and cope with being in hospital, illness, diagnosis, mental health issues, injury and disability
- advocate on a patient's behalf for their ethical, spiritual, cultural and

religious needs and concerns

- provide support and counselling when there is grief and loss which may include end of life care, sudden death and terminal illness
- help patients access religious rites, blessings, prayer, sacramental ministry and spiritual support/resources, including chapel access and/or reflective space in our facility
- provide a comprehensive bereavement support service
- support patients and their family if a transition to aged care facility is necessary
- on a patient's request, facilitate visits from faith community representatives including from a priest, imam, rabbi or monk
- facilitate a Dream A Little Dream request



## About St John of God Health Care

St John of God Health Care is a leading Catholic not-for-profit health care group, serving communities with hospitals, home nursing and social outreach services throughout Australia, New Zealand, and the wider Asia-Pacific region.

We strive to serve the common good by providing holistic, ethical and person-centred care and support. We aim to go beyond quality care to provide an experience for people that honours their dignity, is compassionate and affirming, and leaves them with a reason to hope.

St John of God Berwick Hospital 75 Kangan Drive, Berwick VIC 3806  
T. (03) 8784 5000 F. (00) 8784 5100 E. [info.berwick@sjog.org.au](mailto:info.berwick@sjog.org.au)

St John of God Frankston Rehabilitation Hospital 255-265 Cranbourne Road, Frankston 3199  
T. (03) 9788 3333 F. (03) 8790 8747 E. [info.frankstonrehab@sjog.org.au](mailto:info.frankstonrehab@sjog.org.au)

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