

NEWSLETTER

30 YEARS OF *Karuna care*

As 1992 approached, the Cramb family felt on top of the world. But a visit to the doctor for what they imagined would be a simple diagnosis turned their world upside down: Brian, beloved husband and father, had a large and invasive cancer in his chest and lungs. Without treatment, he was expected to live for only a month.

The Cramb family's journey with Karuna began when Brian was admitted to Ward 4B at The Prince Charles Hospital to undergo treatment for his disease. It was during this difficult period that Brian and his family were introduced to two nurses who would change their lives and guide Brian's end of life care.

These nurses were Margaret Gulley and Margaret Evans, and alongside Hilary Clarke and Buddhist monk Venerable Pende Hawter; they saw a need in the community for an in-home palliative care service. Their vision grew from Pende's conviction that people living with a terminal illness should be given the option of dying in a place of their own choosing; surrounded by comfort, peace and love. In the beginning, they would discuss their plans around the kitchen table of a small flat, and it was from these discussions that Karuna Hospice Service was born.

In late 1992, after a difficult conversation with the nurses, Brian became one of Karuna's first clients. His wife Cath and their daughters were devastated by the swift progression of his disease, but the dedication and support of the fledgling Karuna service helped them to navigate Brian's end of life care and left a lasting impression on the family.

Something that stood out to Cath from her family's time with Karuna is the kindness they were shown by nurses



Brian Cramb, one of Karuna's first clients.

Margaret Evans and Margaret Gulley. She remembers with fondness that sometimes it was the simplest gesture, such as stopping for a chat before they left at the end of the day, that reminded her she was not facing her husband's illness alone and she had someone to lean on for support.

"Karuna was the rock supporting us, a pillar to lean on, and Karuna walked beside us all the way, smoothing the road to make it as easy as possible to travel," Cath said. "I have always said we could not have managed without their support, caring love and devotion."

"It was a year in our lives we will never forget. The one shining light was meeting Karuna and having them beside us all the way."

Brian passed away on November 2nd 1992. Almost 30 years on from his death, Karuna continues to guide families through end of life care with the principles of compassion and care that were established by Pende Hawter and the original Karuna team.

Right now, someone is being cared for
by Karuna thanks to your generosity.

Message from the CEO

Dear Karuna Friends,

Another busy six months have passed and the demand for Karuna's specialist palliative care continues. In fact, Palliative Care Australia's Roadmap for 2022-2027 indicated the need for palliative care support is in fact increasing, such that it is expected to rise by 50% between now and 2035.

All Australians deserve to be cared for appropriately when diagnosed with a life-limiting illness.

We know all too well that unpaid carers often provide loved ones with untold hours of care and support. Yet they also need access to support services and respite options, especially in the under 65 years demographic. Mary's story illustrates the role of holistic palliative care in the support of quality of life for loved ones, and there is evidence to support this.

Recent data tells us that our population is growing and ageing and as people are diagnosed with chronic illnesses, the demand for palliative care will grow. As part of our role in serving the community, we have been advocating in the media with the goal of helping more people understand that palliative care offers dignity and choice at end-of-life, but more resourcing is needed and prioritised to ensure this.

People living with a life-limiting illness deserve high-quality care. They and their families, carers, and loved ones want to know that care will be available when they need it. Karuna has done this for thirty years and we will continue to, albeit in ways and means that ensure our clients and their families continue to have a choice.

It was our pleasure to welcome our new patron, Her Excellency the Honorable Dr Jeanette Young to Karuna during our Palliative Care Week celebrations.

I would also like to thank our retiring Chair, Catherine Mickel for her years of service and support for Karuna. We wish Catherine a happy and fulfilled future.

Best wishes



Tracey Porst

Chief Executive Officer | Karuna Hospice Services



Tracey Porst
CEO/Managing Director

Celebrate 30 Years with Karuna

Morning Tea | Thursday 1 September | 10am – 12pm

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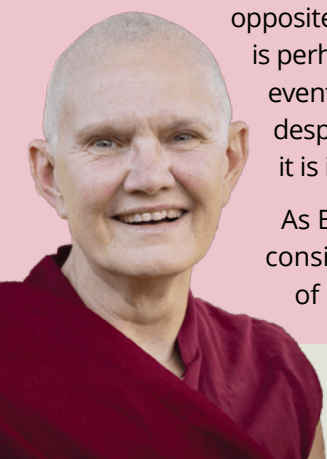
Spiritual Care at Karuna

The death of a loved one or considering the inevitability of our own death, can bring such a range of experiences, thoughts and emotions. But as Haruki Murakami wrote in his book *Norwegian Wood*, "Death exists, not as the opposite but as a part of life." In truth, death is perhaps one of the most significant events that life bestows upon us. And despite our keenness to try and avoid it, it is inevitable for every living thing.

As Buddhists, we spend time considering this life event with a sense of curiosity and open mindedness.

You might ask, "why on earth would you do that?" Well, sometimes we fear even the idea of death, which can effect our level of suffering when death approaches us directly. But by contemplating death and impermanence we can reduce that suffering. It may not lessen our sadness, but it might assist in reducing the pain that often walks hand in hand with the grief and loss that we feel.

It certainly won't reduce the unpredictability of life and death, but perhaps by understanding that everything changes moment to moment, we can embrace this life event that is called death, not as way to give up but as a means to live in every moment that we have been offered.



Live in every moment that we have been offered - Venerable Tsultrim

Support for the entire family

You may remember Mary, whose husband Doug was cared for by Karuna, from our Autumn Newsletter. Mary had her own struggles after Doug's passing: not only was she grieving her husband, but she was learning how to live independently for the first time since they married 47 years ago. With the help of one of our social workers, Janie, Mary was able to work through her grief and make plans for her future.

Mary remained in regular contact with Janie and the other members of Karuna's Family Support team in the months following Doug's passing. However as Mary continued to process her grief and adjust to life without her husband, she became concerned for another family member who was struggling with Doug's loss.

Laura, Mary and Doug's only daughter, was living and working overseas when her father received his diagnosis. Although they remained in frequent contact during his end of life care via phone calls, Covid restrictions prevented Laura from returning home before her dad's death.

When she did return to Brisbane a few weeks after his funeral, Mary noticed a change in her normally outgoing daughter. Laura was withdrawn from her friends and extended family and expressed frustration or distress when people tried to talk about Doug.

"I could tell she wasn't herself, but I didn't know how to talk to her. I felt helpless that I couldn't reach her," Mary said.

After listening to Mary's concerns for Laura, Janie recommended that they connect Laura with Lani, another counsellor on the Family Support team, for some one-on-one support. Laura was initially reluctant, but eventually she agreed to meet with Lani.

Laura has now met with Lani for multiple sessions over the course of several weeks and is working through her grieving process.

"I miss my dad terribly, and I felt guilty that I hadn't been present with him and my mum during his last days. Talking about him with other people only reminded me of my grief, and I thought I wanted to forget it.

I'm so glad I listened to my mum and sat down with Lani. He helped me realise that I want to remember every part of my dad, even the hard bits.

I've been trying to talk about him more often and I love hearing everyone's different stories. It feels like a part of him is still here with me and mum."

Laura and Mary recently shared with us that they had been able to go through Doug's belongings together.

"We shared laughter, happy memories and a lot of tears," Mary said. "It felt like I had my daughter back for the first time in months, and that wouldn't have been possible without Karuna."

A visit from the Governor

Karuna welcomed Her Excellency the Honourable Dr. Jeannette Young, PSM, Governor of Queensland as our patron earlier this year. We were delighted to host Her Excellency at Karuna House in May as part of our celebrations for National Palliative Care Week.

The Governor spoke with Karuna staff, volunteers and supporters about the importance of palliative care and thanked them for their hard work in the community.



Fundraise with Karuna!

Walk to remember Helen

and all those who have been cared for by Karuna.

Helen Wilson was just 55 years old when she was diagnosed with bowel cancer. Helen was a beloved wife, mother and social worker who spent many years caring for children and families who were affected by cancer.

Throughout Helen's illness, she and her family received care from the Karuna team. The compassion and care they provided to the Wilson family did not go unnoticed.

After seeing the compassion Karuna provided to Helen, her daughter Sarah wanted to do something to honour her mother's memory and thank Karuna for their care. She teamed up with Ingrid, one of Helen's long-time friends, and gathered a group to walk in the 2022 Bridge to Brisbane. The route holds special memories for both Sarah and Ingrid from the many times they have walked it with Helen.

"I'm so glad to have the chance to support Karuna through the Bridge to Brisbane this year," Sarah said. "Karuna provided incredibly warm and professional support throughout her end of life, as well as to my grandmother a year later through her own cancer diagnosis. Their care really was invaluable."

We'd be delighted to have you join Ingrid, Sarah and the rest of Team Karuna at the Bridge to Brisbane. Sign up now at: <https://karuna.org.au/donate/bridge-to-brisbane-2022/>



Host your Karuna fundraiser

Your support as fundraisers is a vital part of what keeps Karuna caring. We couldn't do our work in the community without your generosity.

Karuna has a **FUNDRAISING KIT** full of simple tips and tricks to help you plan your amazing fundraiser. We even have free, downloadable resources you can use to promote your fundraiser online and/or in person!

Can you help fundraise for Karuna? Download our fundraising kit online at <https://karuna.org.au/donate/fundraise> and see how easy it is!



Win BIG with Play for Purpose!

For every \$10 ticket you purchase with Play for Purpose, \$5 is donated back to Karuna: it's the win-win raffle! Purchase your tickets before **Thursday September 15** and go in the draw to win TWO fully electric cars as part of the incredible first-prize pack.

Tickets are available at

<https://playforpurpose.com.au/karuna/>



Crafters host Bridge Day for Karuna

The day was a big success, with a lot of fun had by all attendees. At the end of the day the group generously donated entry and craft sales back to Karuna - an incredible donation of over \$6000!

We are thankful for our supporters who advocate and fundraise for Karuna in the community.



*'The more we care for the happiness of others,
the greater our own sense of well-being becomes.'*

From His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Karuna's Spiritual Patron

