



**KATHRYN A. LAURENT  
BLUE CARE BRISBANE  
REGION**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, who funded this project under the Caring Communities Program. Blue Care have received nothing but support and encouragement from the department at both the state and federal offices. Thanks especially to Rita Evans who came from Canberra to officially launch Caring Connections. Also, a thank you to the national evaluators at the Centre for Health Services Development. Thanks especially to David Fildes and Alan Owen for their support and advice during the early stages of the project.

Secondly, this project would not have been possible without the support from the management, staff, and volunteers of the project partners: Blue Care Brisbane Region, Mt Olivet Hospital, The Wesley Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital, and the Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education. The author would like to thank the various members of the steering committee over the duration of the project. Thank you especially to Dick Turner, Lorraine Angeli, and Rosemarie Klingberg from Blue Care Brisbane Region who instigated the project and were there to support and advise me for the duration of the project. I would also like to thank the partner's representatives on the steering committee. The success of this project is due to your support and encouragement. To name them, thanks to Sue Chaffey, Yvonne Jones, and Nicole Milazzo who at differing times have represented Princess Alexandra Hospital Volunteer Services. The support of Tracey Hunter, Simone Kurtz and DJ Cronin at The Wesley Hospital has been appreciated. I would also like to thank Susan Bunning, Jill Tilson, and Julie Walden from Mt Olivet Palliative Care Volunteer Service. They, together with Denise Haseman and Robyn White have been great supporters of both myself and the project. The other partner in the project, Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education have also contributed greatly to the project. Thanks to steering committee members Debbie Canning and Deborah Prior and also to Professor Patsy Yates for her advice and support.

The reference group formed for this project were an integral part of the development of the Caring Connections model. I would like to thank each member of the group for their contributions. So thanks to the following organisations and staff members who contributed to the consultative process:

- Karuna Hospice at Home: Margie O'Kane
- Southside Palliative Care Service: Debbie Kirkup and Lesley McLeod
- Mt. Olivet: Colin Apelt and Monika Wilson
- Ozcare: Moira Collie
- Wesley Hospital: Louise Clark
- St. Luke's Nursing Service: Margaret Robertson and Ruth Rowan
- Zoe's Place: Pamela Barker, Diane Williams
- Community Consultation: Elizabeth Mosely, Carol Edwards and Judith Smith
- Blue Care: Eleanor Hanhiniemi and Ann Evans

- Palliative Care Queensland: Liz Unkles
- University of Queensland: Dr Judith Murray
- Queensland Cancer Fund: Brian Amos.

Thanks also to the various people who contributed to the development of the training materials. This part of the project has mainly fallen on the shoulders of Lorraine Angeli and Deb Olive (Volunteering Queensland) and the end result of the content is largely due to their efforts. Thanks also to Judith Smith who has not only contributed to the contents of the materials, but has spent many hours formatting the materials and designing Facilitator notes and Power Point Presentations. Other people involved in the development of these materials include:

- Blue Care: Rosemarie Klingberg, Dick Turner, Eleanor Hanhiniemi, Nerida Jones, Cheryl Thelning, Joanna Lee, Ruth Wishart
- Centre for Palliative Care Research Education and Education: Debbie Canning
- Karuna: Margie O’Kane
- Princess Alexandra Hospital: Susan Chaffey, Debbie Kirkup
- Mt. Olivet: Jill Tilson, Colin Apelt
- Ozcare: Moira Collie
- Wesley Hospital: D.J.Cronin, Louise Clark
- St. Luke’s Nursing Service: Margaret Robertson
- Zoe’s Place: Pamela Barker, Diane Williams
- Community Consultation: Elizabeth Mosely, Jane Fair, Marg Bliss, Jill Thorning, Carol Edwards.

Thanks to Margaret Robertson, Volunteer Program Manager for St. Luke’s Nursing Service, for sharing their resources in volunteer palliative care support. Special Thanks to Chris McCann and the Education Department, Murray Institute of TAFE for permission to reproduce parts of the “Palliative Care: Volunteer Training Manual” written by P.A. Gallasch. 1996.

During the project, I have interviewed and/or surveyed staff and volunteers from within the partnership as well as Volunteer Coordinators of Palliative Care Volunteer Programs throughout Australia. Thank you to those people who gave of their time to assist me in this way. This information formed the basis for the development of the Caring Connections model. Thank you also to those who shared their resources and wisdom with me.

Thank you the management of Blue Care Brisbane Region, the various staff members at Blue Care Head Office, and Uniting Care Queensland who have given this project their overwhelming support. I would especially like to thank Kerry Andersen and Steve Muggleton for the support that they have given me during this project.

Kathy Laurent  
Project Officer

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Palliative Care Volunteer Network Initiative was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's Caring Communities Program. The goal of the project was to enhance, develop and expand volunteer palliative care support services to more effectively meet the needs of people with a terminal illness and their families in the community. Research methods were used to identify the existing gaps in the palliative care services within Brisbane and a model for a new service was developed using a consultative process. The new service was launched in February 2005 and was piloted for six months. A service evaluation reveals that volunteers and clients appear to be satisfied with the operations of the service but the results are unreliable due to the small size of the sample. It is recommended that the service be reevaluated in June 2006. The project plan has been completed with all the performance indicators having been met, albeit late in some cases. Caring Connections faces an uncertain future for various reasons. As was predicted, sustainability is the biggest threat to the continuity of the service.

