

# MEDIA RELEASE

## For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Officer, Mercy Health

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## Mercy Health Albury to mark National Palliative Care Week

Mercy Health Albury will acknowledge National Palliative Care Week with an event for volunteers and a networking and information session for services that support clients with chronic diseases.

National Palliative Care Week (22-28 May) is held every year to raise awareness about palliative care in the community. The theme for 2016, 'living well with chronic illness', highlights the fact that four out of five deaths in Australia are currently caused by a chronic disease.

Palliative care is defined as specialised care and support for people with a life-limiting illness, their families and their carers. Palliative care looks after the physical (including treatment of pain and other symptoms), emotional, social, cultural and spiritual needs of the patient and those supporting them through their journey.

Mercy Health Albury will host an afternoon tea on Wednesday 25 May for service providers who support clients with chronic illnesses in the local area.

Mercy Health Albury Palliative Care Nurse Unit Manager Linda Todhunter said the aim of the afternoon was to allow people to tour the palliative care centre and share information.

"We are mindful that we co-support a lot of patients and their families with other organisations," said Ms Todhunter.

"We hope by opening our doors to these services we can learn from each other and in turn provide an even better palliative care service to the local community."

Mercy Health Albury will also host a volunteer networking session on Thursday 26 May for its 56 active volunteers and palliative care staff.

The day will include guest speakers from the Advanced Care Planning Initiative and Albury Wodonga Health's Hospital Admission Risk Program (HARP) to discuss chronic disease management and planning for future health and personal care.

Ms Todhunter said a number of volunteers would also be presented with certificates to acknowledge five and 10 years' service with Mercy Health Albury.

“Our volunteers play such an important role in the work we do and it’s important we acknowledge their generosity with a small token of our appreciation,” said Ms Todhunter.

“Staff have also offered to cook lunch for our volunteers as their way of saying thank you for the hundreds of hours of goodwill they contribute each year.”

Mercy Health Albury has been providing a palliative care service since 1984.

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