

Caring for you: body, mind and spirit

All those ideas you have about a chaplain? You might want to rethink them. Jacqui Ryan may be a Catholic Sister, but if you think she is only interested in praying, then you might be surprised.

“For people of all faiths and for those who have none”

“I work with people of all faiths and with those who have none,” says Jacqui. She has a way of getting to the heart of a subject. “At Hospice we care for a person’s body, mind and spirit. Unless all three needs are met that person is not receiving holistic care. My work here at Hospice North Shore is to complement the work of our clinical staff and our family support workers, to help people walk whatever spiritual journey is true for them.”

Jacqui explains that spirituality for some might be about a relationship with God, or an ‘Other’; while for others it may be about connection to nature, listening to music or serving others.

Spiritual peace

Jacqui says her purpose at Hospice North Shore is to help people achieve spiritual peace. She explains: *“This can happen when someone is in a place of acceptance that their life is coming to an end; that they have done what they needed to do and that they can say goodbye in a way that gives them peace of mind.”*

Spirituality takes on unprecedented significance as we approach the end of life

According to Jacqui for many people it is not until our life is coming to an end that we begin to fully appreciate and understand the significance of a spiritual journey. *“For those people, to have someone walk beside them can be a profound and transformative experience,”* she says.

Jacqui’s work – or ministry – includes discussing any issue of spiritual significance to the person with whom she is working. She works with people both in Hospice North Shore’s inpatient unit and those using our Care at Home service.

The quiet room is Jacqui’s second ‘office’

For Jacqui quiet is as crucial to the soul as food and water is to our bodies. *“It’s often in those quiet moments of*



reflection that we begin to think and explore what our individual journey might be,” she says. *“It is so important that our quiet room is warm, welcoming, and beautiful. This is a place where people give reverence to quietness and their own thoughts and prayers.”* The room is also a place where Jacqui interacts with the many people in her spiritual care; patients, families, staff and volunteers. Here she can give people uninterrupted time and space to talk through their spirituality.

You can imagine, then, how excited Jacqui is at the prospect of our planned upgrade to the inpatient unit and the quiet room. *“Our vision is to have comfortable chairs, beautiful images, soft, relaxing music and readings from a range of faiths and persuasions.”*

The chaplaincy is an essential part of the service Hospice provides; ensuring we meet all of the needs of our patients and their loved ones; body, mind and spirit.