

Media Release

31 March 2014

The District Nurses

hospice@Home launched

Increased opportunities now exist for Tasmanians to die at home supported by experienced palliative care staff.

The District Nurses has commenced providing state-wide in-home palliative care through a new project called hospice@Home, funded under the Australian Government's Tasmanian Health Assistance Package.

Chief Executive Kim Macgowan said The District Nurses is operating hospice@Home across all Tasmanian regions, in consultation with all Tasmanian Communities. Offices have been established in Launceston and Burnie with seven staff across both centres. Hobart office staff numbers have been increased to cover the Southern region.

"We have been aware of the need for in-home, patient-centred palliative care for a number of years, and until now it has been difficult for families to be supported at home with their loved ones during the end of life process."

"Armed with our extensive experience we designed hospice@Home to provide wrap around care and support for patients and their families."

"There are many benefits for Tasmania from hospice@Home. Firstly, and most importantly, families and patients are fully supported; secondly, hospital beds are being freed up" said Mrs Macgowan.

Mrs Macgowan added that even though hospice@Home has only been operating for a short period of time, the service has already assisted thirty two patients and families through the dying process, twenty two in the south, six in the north-west and four in the north.

She also added that so far more than 99 clients had received, or are currently receiving, care packages across Tasmania, with fifty eight packages in the south, twenty four in the north-west and seventeen in the north.

The Australian Government is providing the District Nurses with \$35.26 million for the period 2013-14 to 2015-16 to deliver 2,000 packages of community based palliative care through hospice@Home. To achieve this, Mrs Macgowan said that The District Nurses had hired fifteen staff so far and is continuously recruiting state-wide.

For more information contact Richard Gerathy on 0419 203 075

Additional information:

- hospice@Home is aligned with the World Health Organisation definition of Palliative Care and The District Nurses is committed to providing impeccable in-home care that neither hastens nor postpones death.
- As of the 14th of March 2014 hospice@Home has 99 registered clients statewide
- hospice@Home has contracted over 11 organisations across the state to deliver brokered care to patients in their homes, to assist them with carer support, nursing and alternative therapies. This is expected to expand in coming months.

Some of the initiatives that have been developed to support the h@H packages are an:

- Emergency medication kit ·
- After Hours support phone line
- Clientranet Tablet

All of these initiatives are to empower clients and their carers to manage symptoms and reduce unscheduled after hours hospital presentations.

