

# NURTURING THE SPIRIT

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL CARE AT  
TE KAHU PAIRURI HOSPICE TARANAKI

Spiritual wellbeing in palliative care is about assisting people to connect with ideas and practices and 'things' that are important to them and give meaning to their life. Fiona McCabe, Spiritual Care Co-ordinator for Hospice Taranaki connects daily with those who are facing not only the physical changes that come with a terminal diagnosis but also the emotional and spiritual issues that can arise.

*“Humans are holistic by nature, we are on a continuous journey of self-identification and awareness which only compounds when faced with our own mortality”*

After supporting both of her parents through hospice care, Fiona witnessed first-hand, the importance of having discussions around spirituality. Spirituality, in its very nature is hard to define as it is so dependent on the patient, their background, culture, history and what they view as important to them at that time. This could be a relationship with a God, deity or other higher power, a recognition of another realm, or a deep connection with nature, art, creative writing or music. As an accomplished pianist, Fiona often weaves music into her work if requested.

*“Music is part of life's journey and across all cultures carries a sense of identity, memories, experiences and emotions”*

Bereavement spiritual care is integral to the holistic care Hospice Taranaki provides, and Fiona is often called upon to bless families' homes, rooms or hold reflective discussion. She is also called on to bless Te Rangimarie in-patient building and any other events that require a significant moment of reflection.

Fiona works closely with other members of the Hospice Taranaki cultural team, the kaiawhina and kaitakawaenga. Together they ensure spiritual care is provided according to tikanga Māori or any culture which a person may identify. Aotearoa / New Zealand is culturally diverse, and Fiona respects the need for flexibility and achieves this by working alongside local cultural, spiritual and religious leaders to ensure a person is guided in the way they require.

Years of experience as a counsellor allows Fiona to place a lot of importance on just being present with patients and family, and providing them with whatever it is they require at the time. Fiona describes herself as 'a conduit for inner peace which can be achieved through prayer, discussion, reflection or sitting in silent meditation'. Being there is sometimes enough to bring calm to a persons' mind and Fiona will be there, with her grace and kindness to support the moment in a genuine, respectful way.

*Fiona McCabe  
Spiritual Care Coordinator*



## END OF YEAR MESSAGE

As 2024 draws to a close we can reflect back and see another year of much organisational challenge mixed with much organisational success.

Despite glacial progress with addressing our central government contracting and funding issues we have managed to meet our indicators for acceptance of new patients, timely provision of our services and having the needed resources in place all while maintaining excellence in care across our communities.

This year has been a period of continuing to support our staff and volunteer teams to carry out their best work and to care for each other. Economic headwinds facing many in our communities have also impacted upon our business activities with rising costs and fundraising challenges. Overall as we look to a new year we are reminded of the fantastic support our service receives from the communities we work within. Our sincere thank you and best wishes for your support this year.

Paul Lamb  
CE

Manaaki whenua  
manaaki tangata  
haere whakamua

Care for the land  
care for the people  
go forward