

Palliative Care NSW Incorporated

Annual General Meeting

Date: Friday 4 November 2022

Time: 5:30pm

Venue: Crowne Plaza Terrigal

MINUTES

ITEM 1 Welcome and apologies

Linda Hansen, Therese Smeal, Felicity Burns, Nicole Sutton, Janelle Sanderson, Larissa McIntyre, Deborah Parker, Carmen Sanchez, Scott Read, Colleen Carter, Janeane Harlum, Peter Cleasby, Annmarie Hosie, Joan Ryan OAM,

Minutes: Emma Scott-Stevenson

ITEM 2 Confirmation of Previous Annual General Meeting Minutes December 2021

Motion: That the Minutes of the AGM of December 2021 be accepted

Moved: Peter Cleasby

Seconded: Scott Read

Minutes Accepted

ITEM 3 Business Arising - None

ITEM 4 President's Report

The President started her report by acknowledging our members in the field of palliative care, as well as more broadly in healthcare as they have worked incredibly hard over the past few years through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fortunately, PCNSW as an organisation has weathered the storm reasonably well. Though we certainly suffered from a lack of in-person contact with our Management Committee, staff and members, we made significant efforts to maintain contact virtually.

We would like to note the PCNSW team led in the office by Linda Hansen, as well as Megan Asbury, Carolyn Frichot who was our Communications Officer before moving on to another role, Maria Lopez who joined as our Communications Officer following Carolyn's departure, Emma Scott-Stevenson who joined as an intern from Macquarie University, and Kate Bowman who has continued her work in the Manager role of the Volunteer Support Services Programme. Thank you to all of you, and I know that you are sometimes invisible in the office and our members don't frequently see you all, but throughout the 2022 Biennial Conference people have really gotten to know who the PCNSW team are, so thank you very much to all of you.

For the Management Committee, it's been wonderful to work closely with all of you over the past year. We're gaining members from different sectors of palliative care which has been really beneficial for us. We've been meeting virtually every month, and I think we've managed really well. It goes without saying we do need to acknowledge Linda, and the advocacy role that she plays in NSW can't be understated. Linda certainly played a strong part to be a voice for all of us as palliative care clinicians. She was such a pioneer in this association in many ways, especially looking at how far palliative care has come in NSW as of 2022. Thank you Linda, and we hope to work with you for many more years to come.

While it's important we acknowledge the challenges we have faced in palliative care throughout these past two years, I think we've learnt a lot of lessons and developed new skills, and I hope that these skills and lessons will improve how we provide palliative care going forward in NSW.

I finish my term as President as of today, and my lovely colleague Felicity Burns is the President Elect. For those of you who don't know, we vote in the previous AGM for the President Elect for the following term, so it means we cover all bases, so we always have someone leading the show. Many, many thanks to not only Linda but also everyone I have worked with, because people are incredibly supportive in this organisation, and I really wish Felicity all the best.

ITEM 5 Executive Officer's Report

The EO presented the following report:

Welcome everyone. I would like to start my report by acknowledging the year that was, the continuing waves of COVID that still impact your work heavily and the challenges that continue to be presented for healthcare workers.

I would like to say a big thank you to the entire management committee for their commitment to PCNSW throughout the year. The time and expertise you generously share with this organisation is invaluable to how we develop our education platforms, policy ideas and advocacy throughout the year. I would also like to especially thank Therese Smeal who is standing down as President of PCNSW today. Therese has been a wonderful President and tireless advocate for you all – especially the nurses! Every opportunity she has had to use her platform to push palliative care she has grabbed with everything she has. Only the Parramatta Eels could get in the way of her advocacy! The introduction of the VAD legislation fired her up to speak to every politician and bureaucrat she could find and made them listen to her and look what's happened. We have a huge injection of funds into palliative care across NSW as well as – finally – an increase of funding to this organisation. It's still not enough but it's because of her relentless advocacy that we are here at all. And that I'm still here – she's a joy to work with and I'll miss you as President Therese. No pressure Felicity!!

The office team has changed and grown and we are all working together to improve the reach and impact of PCNSW in the community and as a membership based peak body. Kate continues in her role as manager of VSSP with the enthusiasm and passion that she shows for everything, with very real challenges of getting palliative care volunteers back to the front line following COVID.

We now also have a new comms person – Maria Lopez who is amazing and our Social Science student Emma is staying on and learning so much! She will be invaluable in supporting us all and Kate in particular with her research skills.

Megan has been recognised for her tireless work and become Deputy CEO for PCNSW. She has definitely enjoyed the step up and is providing invaluable support to the organisation.

Over the course of 2021/22 we were still very much riding the COVID wave and as we couldn't hold our conference or conduct many face to face education or other interactions our budget bottom line suffered but we are sticking to our strategic plan with emphasis on supporting you – our members – as well as the general public to the best of our capacity. The funding agreement for additional funding unfortunately did not come through until this FY so I am unable to report on that but we are very keen to make the most of that additional funding and are working hard to implement the agreement we have with the Ministry as quickly as possible.

I continue to liaise regularly with the Ministry for Health, and we are fortunate to have some representatives here at this conference. I think this is a positive reflection of our ongoing relationship with the department and I look forward to working with them in the future. I would like to acknowledge the outgoing Health Minister Brad Hazard who has really championed the palliative care cause during his long tenure and we sincerely wish him all the best in his non-parliamentary years.

In Kate's absence, I will give a brief overview of the Volunteer Support Services Programme and other projects we have been working on, however, if you would like more detail have a look through the Annual Report when you get a chance.

Our VSSP run by Kate, continues to thrive. It was unfortunate that many services reduced or completely cancelled their volunteer programs during COVID outbreaks. We have advocated strongly for the resumption of these in NSW and hope to report on some improvements in the near future.

Despite this, Kate kept volunteers busy by continuing to run training workshops, and forums online. The feedback for these events was always positive. The workshops often had waiting lists due to capacity limit. It has been wonderful to see palliative care volunteers around NSW so keen to take every opportunity to build their skills and knowledge.

Kate organised the postponed Volunteer Managers conference with an in-person meeting – always greatly appreciated by those holding those incredibly important positions.

Capacity HELP is a project in partnership with La Trobe University that we have been working on. It's a public health approach to end of life and palliative care that aims to link formal and informal networks and delivers education sessions for communities. Much of this was delayed due to covid, but is gaining more traction now.

In conclusion I would just like to reiterate how thrilled I am to be holding this AGM in person and thank you for all coming tonight. It has been another long and challenging year for everyone, and it seems only right to cap it off with a night together sharing a and laugh and a well-deserved glass of bubbles.

ITEM 6 Treasurer's/Auditor's Report and recommendation to appoint auditor for 21/22

The Treasurer tabled the audited financial report from 21/22.

She noted that COVID-19 continued to cause disruptions, especially regarding the postponing of the Biennial Conference, and the impacts this has had on our financial position. As a result, there was an increased reliance on our relatively small core funding, though she noted that the EO has maintained a stable financial position while still managing to grow the team. Looking forward, the Treasurer noted that it is fantastic that the Ministry has provided more in terms of core funding, as it is essential for allowing Linda and the team to focus on delivering on the Strategic Plan and can also lead to more sustainable revenue streams, such as membership drives. Despite the disruptions from COVID-19, she feels hopeful that we're heading in the right direction and are at a stable financial position.

Motion: That the Audited Financial Report be accepted.

Moved: Peter Cleasby

Seconded: Deb Parker

Motion accepted.

Motion: That R and G Consulting be reappointed as Auditor for 2022/23

Moved: Nicole Sutton

Seconded: Deb Parker

Motion accepted.

ITEM 7 Elections of Office Bearers and General Members

As of now, Therese has stepped down as President of Palliative Care NSW. We'd like to thank you so much for being such a great President. You're never afraid to step in, you've been a tireless advocate for palliative care, and you always attend all the events on behalf of PCNSW. We have really appreciated your support, and we really will miss your support and advice.

As of this meeting Therese is now the immediate past-President, and Felicity is now the President of Palliative Care NSW. We would like to welcome Felicity to the role, and we look forward to working with her moving forward.

This year is the year that the Board is re-elected. For the incoming members, we had 11 nominations for 11 positions, so we don't need to have a vote. We would like to congratulate the new members on their positions. **The Executive Members now include Felicity Burns (President), Therese Smeal (Vice President), Nicole Sutton (Treasurer) and Joan Ryan OAM (Secretary). The General Members now include Deb Parker, Scott Read, Sandra Sullivan, Carmen Sanchez, Janelle Sanderson and Colleen Carter.**

ITEM 8 Other Business

Felicity Burns said a few words as the new President Elect of PCNSW. She noted that she's very excited to serve as President for the next two years, and that there are some incredible opportunities to make some really big, positive changes in palliative care going forward. With the additional funding coming, we have things that need to be done in residential aged care, home care, specialist palliative care services and rural areas of NSW. She said she thinks we have lots of opportunities and challenges, but it's very exciting with our position to advocate for better services going forward.

Therese Smeal also noted that Theresa Plane, who was a pioneer of palliative care in the Western suburbs of Sydney during the early 80s, was nominated for the New South Wales Senior of the Year.

Meeting Closed: 6pm