



Palliative Care NSW Incorporated Annual General Meeting

Date: Thursday 5 December 2024

Venue: Online (Zoom)

MINUTES

AGM commenced at 5:03pm with a quorum in attendance.

ITEM 1 Welcome and apologies

In attendance:

Members: *Felicity Burns (Chair), Nicole Sutton (Treasurer), Therese Smeal (Vice President), Joan Ryan (Secretary), Sandra Sullivan, Peta McVey, Julie Mecham, Carmen Sanchez, Scott Read, Janelle Sanderson, Deb Parker, Josh Cohen, Lara Johnson, Janeane Harlum*

PCNSW Staff: Kirsty Blades, Megan Asbury, Kate Bowman, Anthony Bui, Emma Scott-Stevenson

Minutes: Emma Scott-Stevenson

Apologies: Emma Beattie, Kerri-Ann Arnott, Colleen Carter

ITEM 2 Confirmation of Previous Annual General Meeting Minutes November 2023

Motion: That the minutes of the 2023 AGM of Palliative Care NSW Incorporated be accepted.

Moved: Scott Read

Seconded: Nicole Sutton

Minutes Accepted

ITEM 3 Business Arising - None

ITEM 4 President's Report

President Felicity Burns began her report by reflecting on her journey in palliative care over 25 years ago, noting that while much has changed, the passion and commitment of those in the field to provide skilled, compassionate, and holistic care remain constant.

Felicity expressed her sincere thanks to the dedicated members, healthcare workers, and services across NSW who continue to deliver palliative care in their communities.

She also acknowledged the continued support of the NSW Ministry of Health, highlighting the organisation's strong working relationship and shared vision of equitable access to palliative care for all NSW residents. Felicity noted that this collaboration, led by CEO Kirsty Blades since her commencement in September 2023, remains vital as ongoing challenges and opportunities arise.

Leadership and Organisational Changes

- Appointment of CEO Kirsty Blades in September 2023.
- A focus on strengthening relationships with government, members, and the broader sector.

New Branding

- Launch of the new orange heart logo, aligning with other state and territory peak bodies.
- The refreshed, modern brand has been positively received by both the sector and the community.

Membership Growth and Engagement

- Introduction of new organisational membership levels, passed by resolution in April.
- Six organisations have since joined as members, strengthening sector connections.
- Ongoing focus on member engagement and collaboration opportunities.

Community Engagement

- Increased outreach and visibility within communities across NSW.
- Further details to be presented by the CEO in the operational report.

Advocacy Achievements Felicity outlined several key advocacy efforts undertaken during the year, including:

- NDIS Reforms: Collaboration with Palliative Care Social Workers NSW/ACT and national partners, contributing to the introduction of the Priority Access Application Pathway.

- Aged Care Reform: Active input into national advocacy, with continued focus on supporting implementation of the new Aged Care Act and reforms.
- Oral Liquid Morphine Shortages: Advocacy with the TGA and NSW Health to address critical supply issues, particularly impacting community palliative care.
- NSW Pre-Budget Submission: Meetings with the Minister for Health resulting in the extension of the Comprehensive Palliative Care in Aged Care funding.
- Public Hearing Participation: Presentation by Felicity and Kirsty at the Portfolio Committee No. 2 hearing on the delivery of specialist care in remote, rural and regional NSW, informed by member feedback.

Sector Developments

- Introduction of Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) legislation in November, marking a significant change in the end-of-life care landscape.
- Palliative Care NSW remains neutral on this topic, supporting members and organisations to navigate their roles and responsibilities within the new legislative framework.
- Commitment to ongoing engagement, information sharing, and professional discussion on VAD.

Felicity concluded by reaffirming that Palliative Care NSW is the association for its members—individuals and organisations committed to delivering quality palliative care across the state. She encouraged members to continue connecting, sharing feedback, and collaborating as the organisation moves into 2025, ensuring that their voices remain central to advocacy and service development.

ITEM 5 Chief Executive Officer's Report

Kirsty Blades report focussed on the operational achievements of the Association and the Associations funded projects, programs and activities.

Volunteer Support Services Programme

- Supported 38+ services and 1,000+ volunteers across NSW.
- Secured three-year funding extension (2024–2027) from NSW Ministry of Health.
- Delivered 11 education and professional development events.
- Hosted 2023 Volunteer Conference and quarterly network meetings.
- VolunteerHub achieved 15,000+ page visits and 17% growth in eNews subscribers.
- Produced new video resource and initiated post-COVID volunteer recovery research.

Communications & Reach

- Published 100 news stories and 12 e-Newsletters with strong engagement.
- Social media campaigns reached 5,900+ impressions across key events.

Community Engagement

- Guidance Manager handled 400+ calls, 75% seeking clarity on palliative care.

- Distributed 1,800+ Palliative Caring booklets and 300+ ACD booklets.
- Hosted 7 Community Conversations (100+ attendees).
- First Death Café event with story screened nationally on SBS.

CALD Engagement

- Launched Non-English language resources page (800+ views).
- Developed “10 Questions to Ask” series in multiple languages.
- Established CALD Palliative Care Professional Network.

National Palliative Care Week

- Delivered statewide awareness campaign with street banners in Sydney CBD.
- Distributed 60 promotional kits to services and 140 heart pins to Parliamentarians.
- Minister for Health provided video message and media release.
- Hosted multiple Community Conversations and awareness events across NSW.

Sector Development

- Held annual Professional Education Day with 55+ clinicians.
- Launched careers video and ‘A Career with Purpose’ LinkedIn campaign.
- Supported members through Voluntary Assisted Dying implementation.
- Maintained PACN and CALD Professional Networks.

Research

- Published 2022 Snapshot: Palliative Care Volunteering in NSW
- Released Homelessness and Palliative Care Scoping Study; findings presented at Concord Hospital and featured in *Partyline* magazine.

Kirsty concluded by acknowledging the Management Committee and their important contribution, and the outstanding work, passion and commitment of the Palliative Care NSW Team in this financial year.

ITEM 6 Treasurer’s Report including Audited Financial Statement

The Treasurer, Nicole Sutton, tabled the audited financial report from 23/24. The organisation recorded a significantly smaller deficit than anticipated, following a surplus in the previous year. This is a positive outcome as this year was a non-conference year. Revenue for this period was primarily derived from grants and project funding, which continue to form the core of PCNSW’s operations.

Expenditure was consistent with expectations, with the main cost areas being staff salaries and wages, project delivery expenses, as well as rent, utilities, and IT. These items collectively support the delivery and management of PCNSW’s projects and services. Financial performance and expenditure are closely monitored through regular review, and the organisation continues to maintain a strong financial position.

The Treasurer concluded her report by noting that PCNSW successfully consolidated PCNSW's general ledger, increasing transparency of spending.

PCNSW CEO Kirsty Blades and President Felicity Burns thanked Nicole Sutton for her time and dedication as Treasurer of PCNSW.

Item 7 Appointment of Auditor

Motion: That the Audited Financial Report be accepted.

Moved: Deb Parker

Seconded: Sandra Sullivan

Motion accepted.

Motion: That Robertson & Greenwood be appointed as the Auditor for 2024/25.

Moved: Nicole Sutton

Seconded: Scott Read

Motion accepted.

ITEM 8 Appointment Treasurer, Secretary and general members

President Felicity Burns handed this agenda item over to Chief Executive Officer Kirsty Blades, as it would be a conflict of interest for her to lead this item.

Chief Executive Officer Kirsty Blades explained that this agenda item relates to the elections of Treasurer, Secretary and General Members. Megan Asbury will be the Returning Officer for this section.

The election of office-bearers and general members is as per Rule 18(1-6) in the rules of Palliative Care NSW.

18. (1) Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of the Association or as ordinary members of the management committee:

(a) must be made in writing, signed by 2 members and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of nomination); and

(b) must be delivered to the secretary at least 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual general meeting at which the election is to take place.

(2) If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the management committee, the candidates nominated are taken to be elected and further nominations are to be received at the annual general meeting.

(3) If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining on the management committee are taken to be casual vacancies.

(4) If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated are taken to be elected.

(5) If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot is to be held.

(6) The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary members of the management committee is to be conducted at the annual general meeting in such usual and proper manner as the management committee may direct.

Nominations were called for prior to this meeting noting a requirement for all nominations to be endorsed by 2 current members of Palliative Care NSW.

Returning Officer Megan Asbury announced the nominations.

"We received one nomination for the position of Secretary from Joan Ryan. This nomination was endorsed by Melissa Cumming and Janeane Harlum. As only one nomination was received, I declare that Joan Ryan has been elected as Secretary."

We received one nomination for the position of Treasurer from Nicole Sutton. This nomination was endorsed by Deborah Parker and Felicity Burns. As only one nomination was received, I declare that Nicole Sutton has been elected as Treasurer."

We received seven nominations for the positions of General Members. As seven nominations each with 2 endorsements were received for seven positions, I declare that the following people have been elected as General Members.

- *Deborah Parker*
- *Sandra Sullivan*
- *Scott Read*
- *Carmen Sanchez*
- *Lara Johnson*
- *Julie Mecham*
- *Josh Cohen*

All of these people have been elected for a 2-year term until the 2026 AGM."

In addition, it was reconfirmed that Felicity Burns was elected as President Elect at the 2023 AGM and at the conclusion of this AGM will start a new 2-year term as President until the 2026 AGM.

At the 2023 AGM, Therese Smeal was elected as Vice-President for a 2-year term, and so will continue in her current position as Vice-President until the 2025 AGM.

ITEM 8 Other Business

President Felicity Burns expressed that she is delighted to have been given the opportunity to continue in the role of President until 2026, and congratulated Therese Smeal for her election as Vice President.

Felicity also thanked the committee members who stepped down this year for their time, expertise and dedication over the years: Janelle Sanderson and Colleen Carter. Janelle has served on the committee for the past 2 years and was recognised for providing an important regional and rural voice on the committee. Colleen has served on the committee since 2016, and was recognised for dedicating 8 years to the committee and for providing a significant amount of support and guidance in this time, serving on conference committees and also providing a connection to ambulance and paramedics and their important role in palliative care.

PCNSW did not receive in writing any other business, so Felicity declared the 2024 AGM of Palliative Care NSW Incorporated closed.

Meeting Closed: 5:41pm