



Karuna was a precious gift to us

At the age of 73, Carmel's mother was diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer. It was at this point Karuna came into their lives. This is Carmel's story.

Mum's terminal diagnosis came as a shock to all of us, given our, I guess unspoken, assumptions that since her mother lived to 97, nothing like that was going to happen to our own mother so soon. But it did, and we didn't have any idea there was an alternative to hospital care with the goal of sustaining life. Or even that dying and death could be anything other than an unspeakable terror. We were products of the death-denying society that came with the wonderful advances in healthcare.

Then, at a consultation at Mum's oncologist, a life-changing moment occurred for me. As we listened to the gentle explanation that everything possible had been done, we were handed a card with the details of a community-based, in-home palliative care service. This was our first introduction to Karuna. We called Karuna not really knowing what to expect at such an uncertain time.

While no one can deny the pain and grief of bearing witness to a loved one's dying and death, Karuna offered a calm and steady flow to the rivers of our lives bringing with it a different way to think about dying and death.

Karuna reminded us that death and dying are part of life and living. That we can aspire to die well, and importantly, to live well until we die. That in dying, we have many different needs, not just medical but

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Message from the CEO

Since accepting the role of CEO, I have taken the opportunity to delve into the day to day operations of our unique organisation and get to know the team of people who deliver the “kindest care” to those facing a most challenging time. Seeing first hand the commitment and passion for the service Karuna provides to our community, and will continue to do into the future, has been a meaningful experience.

Our future is a key theme now and as our work with clients in the community continues it will be important to set a course for the future with a realistic plan that ensures service continuity and sustainability. Working with the board and staff we will set a strategic direction in the context of our heritage and values, along with consideration of our current and future environments. This will include determining our strategic priorities and focus areas.

Some key initiatives we are looking at include establishing a bequests program and increasing our public profile towards greater awareness of the care we provide and the value this brings to our community. We’re also looking at developing an education program that encompasses a wider geographical boundary so that

we can offer comfort and support to those who can benefit from our expert and unique services beyond our current region.

In this spring newsletter we asked Dr Michael Bolton, a Karuna board member and well-respected palliative care physician, to reflect upon what Karuna means to the community. We also recall Carmel Dyer’s beautiful words from her speech at our 25th anniversary celebration as a reminder of what Karuna means to families.

Stepping into the role of CEO for Karuna has been an honour for me and I’m looking forward to my next three years in the role. Whilst I focus on our future, it will always be with an eye on our heritage and our core values as a unique organisation.

Tracey Porst Karuna CEO



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psychological, interpersonal, issues of meaning, emotional healing, to trust, to laugh, and to cry.

From that first phone call, followed by an initial assessment at the family home, we were offered nursing and volunteer support. This included information for Mum and the whole family about what to expect, in a gentle and timely manner that included guidance and suggestions regarding aids to support Mum as she became frailer. Beyond the practicalities, we as a family were also offered bereavement and counselling support to help us through the inevitable.



Above: Esme Dyer

On 18th March 2004, Mum died comfortably at home, in the living room. The family were around the dining table nearby, and were alerted to her transition by the lengthening space between her breaths. It was a very special time for us all.

I will be forever grateful to Karuna for the care and attention given to us by everyone from that special team of people.

Karuna was a precious gift to us from the beginning right through to the end. So much so that in 2012, the time was right for me to become a Karuna volunteer.

Carmel Dyer

Christmas Market

Where can you find the spirit of Christmas? The Karuna Christmas Market is one festive tradition that reliably generates warmth and good cheer, with many willing hands and smiling faces coming together to put on this Christmas event.

This year the Market will be held on **Friday, 30th November, from 1pm to 8pm.** The event is held in Karuna’s beautiful heritage-listed building in Windsor and in the inspiring adjacent gardens.

What can you expect if you’ve never been to a Karuna Christmas Market? A warm greeting, handmade Christmas crafts and yummy homemade treats, gift items of every description, refreshments and enticing raffle items. You will also experience the kindness and generosity that is Karuna’s lifeblood.

You can participate, you can help! You can donate baked treats and craft, vounteer on the day or come and shop for the dear people on your Christmas list.

Save the date: FRIDAY, 30th November, and contact Verena if you’d like to help (3632 8300).

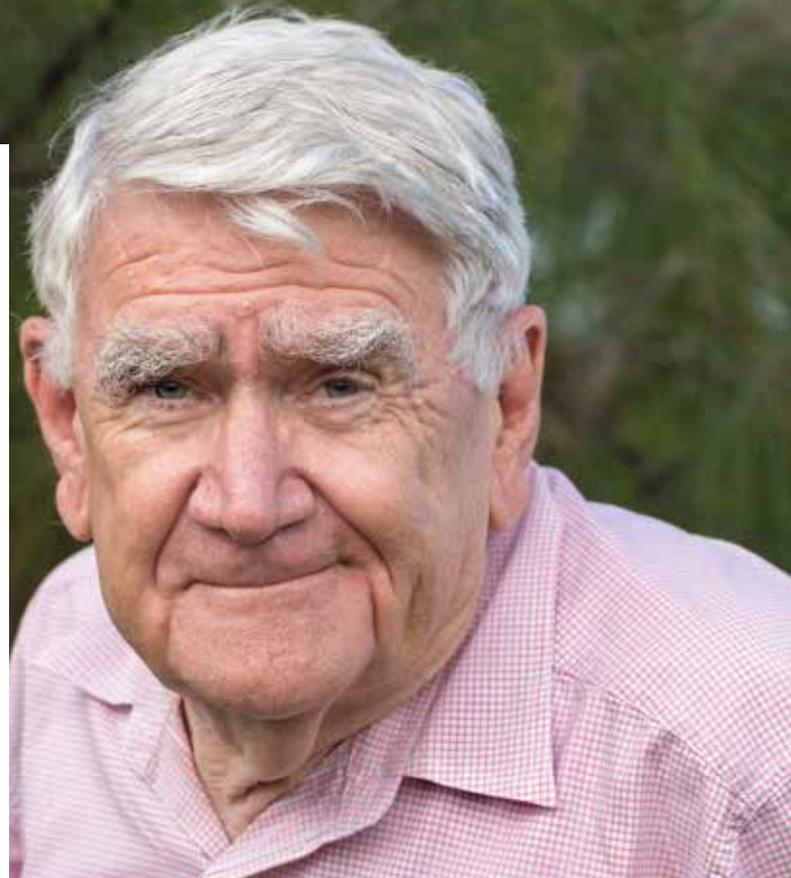


My experience of Karuna

I was first introduced to Karuna when I was working as an Assistant Regional Director in the then Brisbane North Health Region of Queensland Health. My responsibilities were related to Community and Clinical Services and as such, I was visited by Pende Hawter, a Buddhist monk (having previously been a physiotherapist) and an associate of his, Margaret Gully, who was a senior nurse experienced in palliative care. Both were passionately interested in establishing a viable community palliative care service in the Brisbane North area.

This meeting took place in the early 1990s and the purpose of their visit to me was to seek support, and some funding, for the service they were developing. This service was called Karuna and was to be operated under the auspices of the Buddhist faith, in accordance with Buddhist tradition, philosophy and teachings. It was to undertake home visits to patients in need of palliative care at no cost to themselves and to be staffed by a multidisciplinary team of health workers. The altruistic motivation and commitment of both Pende and Margaret to providing a much-needed health service for patients who were suffering from incurable illnesses, and their families, were very clear.

Subsequently, Karuna did receive some financial support from Queensland Health to assist in the operation of its clinical services but has always maintained its own major emphasis on fund raising and self-sufficiency in order to ensure its independence and continued operation in accordance with its own philosophy, ethics and values. Karuna has subsequently thrived and its services and staffing have been progressively enhanced so that it enjoys a reputation for delivering high quality community palliative care services in patients' own homes where this is compatible with good clinical practice, and is in accordance with the wishes of patients and their families.



I subsequently trained as a palliative care physician and have now spent over 23 years working as a palliative care doctor in a range of settings. The great majority of my clinical work has been in community palliative care of the kind provided by Karuna. During my work in a variety of locations over the years, I have been aware of its continued development and commitment to the provision of quality community palliative care services. I now work with Karuna on a voluntary basis and have done so regularly since 2014.

Karuna staff continue to provide very professional, loving and high quality care and support to palliative patients in the community and to their families. It is a privilege for me to be involved and hopefully to provide some contribution to the wonderful services that Karuna provides.

Dr Michael Bolton

Karuna Board of Directors

Karuna's board of directors is a group of professionals dedicated to offering strategic guidance in support of the organisation. In 2018 the board remains chaired by Catherine Mickel, with Tracey Porst as CEO. The board members are (L to R) Phil Williams, Dr Stephen Ayre, Kay Powell, Tracey Porst, Hilary Clarke AM, Catherine Mickel, Ian Flint and Dr Michael Bolton AM.





Pet Memorial Day

Our animal companions are an integral part of our families so it is natural to sometimes be overwhelmed by feelings of grief and sadness when a beloved pet dies. Karuna will pay tribute to our departed furry, feathery, and scaly companions during a simple Buddhist memorial service to be held on World Animal Day on Thursday, 4th October, from 2:00-3:30pm at Karuna House.

Please join us in a ceremony of remembrance for our cherished pets. The service will be followed by a light afternoon tea. Suggested donation of \$5.00.

For catering purposes, please RSVP by Thursday 27th September via email karuna@karuna.org.au or phoning 3632 8300.



Brisbane Open House

Sunday 14th October
10am-3pm - FREE

Brisbane Open House is a free public festival that celebrates Brisbane's architecture and offers behind-the-scenes access to buildings across the city. Karuna is excited to be a part of the 2018 Brisbane Open House program. We will offer free tours of one of Brisbane's oldest homes, heritage-listed Rosemount House. You can learn about the history of the house and land around it and how the house is being used today by Karuna. We also welcome guests to enjoy morning and afternoon tea and a Teddy Bears' Picnic in the garden.



For more information: www.brisbaneopenhouse.com.au

Good Life Good Death Expo

No Taboos: Embracing all of life
Sunday 2 December, 10am - 3pm
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

We invite you and your family and friends to visit Karuna at the **FREE Good Life, Good Death Expo**.

Have you ever considered what is a 'good death'?

The aim of the Palliative Care Queensland Expo is to start conversations around loss, ageing, disability, dying and grief in an open, honest and friendly environment, to help people understand that end of life shouldn't be a taboo subject!

Hope to see you there.

For more information: www.goodlifegooddeathexpo.org.au

Crafting for a cause

Karuna's Evening Craft Circles are free workshops for the most butter-fingered of beginners right through to artisans who want to unleash their creative flare.

These fun and inclusive evenings are a great way to meet others in the community and you will be crafting for a great cause as all craft will go on sale at Karuna's Christmas Markets.

Do you need to get your teenager off the screen and out of the house? Do you not know what to do with your evenings now that Family Feud has been cancelled? Then Karuna's monthly Evening Craft Circles are for you!

You are also welcome to join the regular Thursday daytime craft group which has recently moved back into Karuna House.

For more information please contact 07 3632 8300.



We are humbled once again by the generosity of our supporters

Our fleet of vehicles has grown by one with the addition of a brand new Hyundai i30 in memory of 'Jon-O'. The new vehicle will be used for visits to our clients by members of our clinical care team.



A voice from the heart

After our experience with Karuna, I became curious about different ways of approaching life and death and I wanted to explore my own mortality. To be more self-aware and mindful of the choices I make moment to moment and I was curious about what my best self might be. With this in mind, in 2012 I began volunteering at Karuna.



Since then I have participated in a number of roles, which have unfolded gradually and to their own timetable. I've provided bereavement support for the loved ones of our clients and have been part of the team making delicious treats for the Christmas market and Bridge Day fundraisers. Like Mum, I love cooking and with Karuna I can share my passion for a worthy cause.

In 2017, 13 years after Mum died, I completed Karuna's Palliative Care Support Volunteer training. In this role I have found yet

another way to be of service that feels like a natural expression of my best self, although I have much to learn! I am new at this and I wonder at the privilege of being with clients and their families at this time in their lives.

I often reflect on the complexity of such a role and what it is to do it with compassion, presence and lightness. What it means to enter the world of a person, their family and their shared history, their present and their future.

Much of my adult life has been filled with self-doubt and lots of 'shoulds'. In Karuna's family, I found roles I love where I can contribute from the parts of me that most seek expression. This is my gift and I understand now, that I only had to have my eyes opened to see properly into my heart.

I would like everyone to know the power of the kindness and graciousness that Karuna so freely provides, and of the wonderful palliative care provided to Mum and all our family.

I always say Karuna's gift is a gift that keeps on giving.

Volunteering offers the potential for each of us to find our way of being in the world and to be of service to others. The potential benefits of this are enormous.

Thank you Mum, and thank you Karuna.

Carmel Dyer



Have you considered receiving an electronic copy of our newsletter? It's easy to make the switch and it helps save postage and paper. If so email us at community@karuna.org.au.



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2018 - DONATION

I would like to continue to help Karuna provide essential care to the community.

Title:..... First Name:
Surname:.....
Address.....
.....
Suburb: State: Postcode:
Phone: Mobile:
Email:.....

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 or \$ _____

Please tick preferred payment option:

- Cheque/money order payable to "The Karuna Hospice Service Ltd"
- Please charge my credit card for the amount above
- Please deduct the regular amount of \$ _____ each month from my credit card
- Please send me details on making a gift to Karuna in my Will

Mastercard Visa Diners Amex

Name on card:

Credit Card Number:

Expiry Date: ___/___/___ CVC:

Signature:

Date: ___/___/___

Donations to Karuna of \$2 and over are tax deductible. Our Privacy Policy is available at www.karuna.org.au.

ABN 28 055 211 473

The Karuna Hospice Service Ltd
27 Cartwright Street
Windsor QLD 4030
Phone: (07) 3632 8300
Email: karuna@karuna.org.au
www.karuna.org.au





Community Workshops

Workshop - 4 Attitudes for Happiness

Foster your own happiness by developing the four immeasurable attitudes, a set of positive mental habits that can enrich your life and those around you. Attend these workshops with Carolyn Mason and learn how to develop your loving kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity.

WHEN: Every Wednesday night in September 2018

TIME: 6.00pm - 7.30pm

COST: \$25 per session

PRESENTER: Carolyn Mason

Retreat - Spiritual Care with the Dying

This six day residential retreat, held high in the mountains of Springbrook, focuses on understanding death and dying from a spiritual perspective, drawing from the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and its application to end of life care. The course is intensive and deeply experiential. The more we face and prepare for our own death, the more present we can be with others in preparing for theirs.

WHEN: Thursday 18 October - Tuesday 23 October

FACILITATOR: Ven. Tenzin Chödrön

Workshop - Rewire Your Brain for Happiness

Happiness. It's something we all desire, but it can be elusive. In this experiential seminar Venerable Drolkar will share simple research-based exercises, including a gratitude exercise and mindfulness meditation, that can contribute to improving your level of well-being and overall quality of life.

DATE: Sunday 21 October 2018

TIME: 10am - 12 midday

VENUE: Karuna House

COST: \$25

PRESENTER: Ven. Lozang Drolkar

Workshop - Kindness, Compassion and Forgiveness

"The minute you cherish others, you have happiness and peace in your life" - Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Ven Tony Beaumont will gently guide you towards happiness and peace, showing you how to tap into your innate qualities of kindness, compassion and forgiveness.

DATE: Sunday 4 November 2018

TIME: 9.30am - 4.00pm

VENUE: Karuna House

COST: \$95pp

PRESENTER: Ven. Tony Beaumont

Panel - It's Time to Talk About Dying

Are you curious about dying? Do you have questions about the physical or spiritual aspects of dying? Would you like to know more about Advanced Health Directives, Wills or Funerals?

Our panel of experienced professionals will answer all of your questions.

DATE: Wednesday 13 February 2019

TIME: 6.30pm - 8.00pm

COST: \$25

Monday Meditation

Each session begins with a relaxation meditation followed by Tibetan Buddhist meditation suitable for everyone. Bookings not required. By donation.

WHEN: Every Monday

TIME: 4.00pm - 5.00pm

