

# MERCY MATTERS

JUNE 2021

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**Mercy  
Hospice**

Te Korowai Atawhai

**Hospice Awareness  
Week**

# Meet Gerard, one of our most devoted volunteers

**G**erard Lynch has been volunteering for Mercy Hospice, mainly in transport, for almost eight years, which makes a real difference to our patients' day-to-day lives. Gerard is always willing to get behind the wheel and drive our patients to wherever they need to go, whether it's our weekly Manaaki Programme (Day Programme), to specialist appointments, or a hair appointment. He also provides companionship, bringing light and good company to patients, while also giving respite to tired caregivers. Gerard is a Justice of the Peace and never fails to respond when we call on his services.

Gerard revealed that in his work for Mercy Hospice, it can be quite heart wrenching to move between enjoying new friendships and then letting those go. However, he finds a lot of meaning in helping people in their last stages of life. A few years ago, for instance, a gentleman who loved fishing had a wish to go for one last angling adventure.



Gerard helped him fulfill his wish and swing his fishing pole for the last time, even while sitting in his wheelchair.

Gerard's empathy allows him to acknowledge others' humanity and helps our patients to live with dignity. Thank you, Gerard, for having such a positive impact and bringing to life Mercy Hospice's values of Compassion, Respect and Dignity. You are the embodiment of the difference we can all make in others' lives.

**Update:** As a result of Gerard's story being posted on our Facebook page, we received almost 40 supportive comments from our followers. One of them came from Martin Dobson, who shared how touched he was. Martin had also been the recipient of Hospice care at an earlier stage in his life when he was "surrounded by people like Gerard".

520 donations were made by cheque last year.

A total of **\$85,004**

Banks are stopping cheques in June. Please choose an alternative payment method. See back page for details.



*Now live!*

# *Last Days of Life E-Learning series*

*Expand knowledge. Embrace empathy. Provide effective support.*

**A**s you can see, our Learning and Development team are delighted to report that our new E-Learning series: Last Days of Life has launched! A great deal of hard work and planning has gone into this, and so here's our opportunity to acknowledge all the skill, experience and passion that has gone into making this a reality. Thank you everyone involved. You know who you are! The series covers three modules:

- **Recognising and Acknowledging Dying**
- **Family Support and Holistic Assessment**
- **Ongoing Assessment, Pre-emptive Prescribing and Documentation**

Learners have the choice of taking individual

learning modules, or for a reduced price, all three as a comprehensive Learning Plan. Similarly, organisations with teams of health professionals can access group discounts by sending their enquiries to [learning@mh.org.nz](mailto:learning@mh.org.nz)

This series will be welcomed by so many health professionals and hospice staff, who can find it challenging to make time to expand their palliative care knowledge. It's also another example of innovative fundraising, as all funds raised from each E-Learning module will enable Mercy Hospice to continue providing free palliative care to central Aucklanders.

We look forward to letting you know about future courses and developments.



# What does 'Hospice' mean to you?

In honour of Hospice Awareness Week and International Nurses Day, we asked our staff to share their thoughts on the meaning of 'hospice'...

"to cloak with care"

"to be held"

"a hug"

"a sense of pride"

"providing care on patients' terms"

"a privilege"

"Pallium - to cloak (wrap around)"

"an environment which encompasses total, holistic care"

"for staff - rapidly evolving speciality area"

"a caring home life environment providing end of life care of a high standard"

"constant struggle for funding to create an ideal end of life care"

"a care facility specialising in Palliative care, symptom management and End of Life care for client and family"

"a specialist area"

"a discipline of holistic, multidisciplinary symptom management and care for dying patients and their families"

"all encompassing care"

"safe place to face"

"a centre of excellence for end of life care"

"respect for the intrinsic worth of a person"

- From Nursing IPU team



**Celebrating International Nurses Day 2021**

Search

**Mercy Hospice**  
May 12 at 3:26 PM

Today is International Nurses Day 2021 so we're recognising our amazing nursing team at Mercy Hospice. Here's the message they received from our Nursing Leadership Team:

"To all the incredible nurses at Mercy Hospice. The care that you deliver to each and every one of your patients makes such a difference to their journey towards the end of their life. The compassion that you share with patients, whānau, friends and each other is second to none and I am very proud of all of you for the work that you do. On behalf of the Nursing Leadership Team may I wish a great International Nurses Day".

7 comments 3 shares

76

Like Comment Share

**248**

**Admissions to Inpatient unit**

April 2020 - March 2021 data

Mercy Hospice  
in a world of needs

**1,216**

**Unique referrals**

April 2020 - March 2021 data

Mercy Hospice  
in a world of needs



# Staff Spotlight with Jennifer Sykes

*Taking on the Auckland Marathon challenge*



## **H**ello Jennifer. Could you tell us what your role is at Mercy Hospice, and a little bit about your background?

Sure. I originally joined the team during Level 2 lockdown on the 25 May last year as an E-Learning developer where I mainly focused on the implementation of our Mercy Learning Zone and designing bespoke E-learning. Then, more recently I was promoted to Learning and Development Specialist. In this role I focus on creating blended learning solutions, E-learning design and workshop facilitation. My role means I take all the clinical and non-clinical content and come up with ways to present accessible blended learning solutions for both internal and external people. Prior to Mercy Hospice, I worked in the

hospitality industry in Human Resources and Learning and Development. For me there's a bridge between my experiences caring for people in different ways and ensuring people have the best possible experiences.

## **What gets you excited about your role at Mercy Hospice, and could you give us an example of how your department is making a difference?**

I get really excited when I'm working alongside my team on bigger projects. An example of this is our recent Last Days of Life E-Learning series, where it's all about improving access to equitable learning and expanding people's palliative care knowledge. Providing access to education where there was limited accessibility

previously is really important to me, and that's where I see such added value when I'm working collaboratively with other subject matter experts. Turning clinical content into something interactive and accessible for a wider audience is so exciting. Prior to implementing Mercy Learning Zone, we were only able to reach approximately 25% of nurses in Auckland with our face to face workshops. Now it is accessible 24/7 via the virtual platform complemented by face-to-face learning. In the current climate that we have all been in since last year, this is now more important than ever. It's really about helping our teams and clinicians provide best practice care, and how the Learning and Development team can play a pivotal role in supporting them.

- STAFF SPOTLIGHT -

**Another way for staff at Mercy Hospice to make a difference is getting involved in activities outside of their core responsibilities. Now the rumour is you've set yourself a big goal this year; can you tell us more about that?**

That's right. Well, my partner and I love big adventures, and things like walks in the great outdoors. And as the big theme of 2020 was 'cancellation', we decided to set ourselves a big goal that couldn't be cancelled and which centred on health and adventure. So, we signed up for two half marathons! That's in Queenstown and Auckland. We'll both run the half in Auckland, and my partner will aim to do the full marathon in Queenstown and I'll do the half, as long as I've survived the first one!

**That's awesome Jennifer! And have you done this before?**

Never! That's why it had to be something that gave us a big focus. I also wanted to do this before I turned 30. So my partner is my training buddy, even if he is faster than me. We signed up in March and secured the early bird registration because this way we can't back out! We're

running up to three or four times a week, usually, but it's all about being healthy, being the best versions of ourselves and having a goal to work towards. We both work hard and so it's nice to have something outside of work that we can both focus on. My partner works long hours so it's also nice that we have that running time together. He's also a big goal-setter, and reaching these goals is really important, so this will be our big adventure too.

**And it's so great that you're combining your big adventure with fundraising for Mercy Hospice. How much are you hoping to raise?**

Thank you, and like I said, with so much being cancelled last year due to COVID-19, including so many fundraising events, we just thought any opportunity people have to do something has to be helpful for organisations like Mercy Hospice. Every little bit helps. And it means I can combine doing something that makes the most of our lives with a fundraising activity that also helps others make the most of their lives, right until the very end. And in terms of how much we're planning to raise? As much as we possibly can. I

know there are a lot of people out there on tight budgets, so we'll be grateful for whatever we can raise.

**Well I think you're both an amazing inspiration for us all. Do you have any thoughts you'd like to share for anyone else who might want to do something similar for Mercy Hospice?**

Just do it. Sign up for something you love doing. Make a plan, and if you can, do it with someone else so you've got someone who can motivate you when your motivation is flagging, and who you can just have fun with. And if you can combine achieving a personal goal with supporting a great cause, that's the best of both worlds. And psychologically, signing up for something really helps with commitment and motivation.

**Many thanks for your time and passion for Mercy Hospice Jennifer. You are an example to us all. If you would like to join Jennifer in walking or running the Auckland Marathon or half Marathon for Mercy Hospice, please contact the fundraising team on [getinvolved@mh.org.nz](mailto:getinvolved@mh.org.nz).**

A total of

**\$145,330**

was donated in memory of loved ones in the last year.





## The Power of Friends

It all started over a glass of wine. Maria Ryder was enjoying a Chardonnay with her friend John Penny of Penny Homes and telling him about her involvement with Friends of Mercy (FOM), the Trust formed last year by Chrissy Douglas and friends, to help raise funds for Mercy Hospice Auckland.

John's response? "So, what if I gave you a house at cost?" "What!" Maria exclaimed. "Really? Wow, that would be incredible".

And so the Houspice Project began, the start of an amazing effort which will ultimately raise many thousands of dollars for Mercy Hospice.

The house would immediately deliver much needed funds. But the FOM team decided they would go one better; they would aim to lower the cost price of the house even further by reaching out to their many contacts to donate goods to the house. Every item donated would reduce the final cost of the house and increase the return to Mercy Hospice.

With that in mind Friends of Mercy quickly got to work on the Houspice Project, as did John Penny and his team, who have also approached many of their suppliers.

The response throughout has been humbling, the sheer generosity, amazing! In some cases there has been a connection with Mercy Hospice through family, but even where there was no such connection, people have come back with very positive responses and massive support for the project. All of which will bring the total costs of construction down and increase the amount going to Mercy Hospice.

The FOM team even plan a working bee to complete the garden, hopefully, all plants, ready lawn, bark, top-soil and other garden requirements all provided at cost.

The house is being built right now and the final amount of funds raised is still to be confirmed as building progresses and more items are achieved for the home. But it is safe to say the total will be considerable, all of which will go directly to patient care at Mercy Hospice. This is all made possible because of the power of friends working together with John Penny to achieve an incredible outcome for Mercy Hospice.

### Thank you to our Donors:

**Carters** framing and trusses, **Gib, Base Up** for the concrete slab, **Premier Contracting** for the Roof, ECC Lighting, Tonic Tile Lounge - tiles, Harrisons - carpet and Z & C Flooring carpet layers, Warm-Up NZ - underfloor heating, Tranquillity - heated towel rails, Paintfectionist - paint and painting, E>Stone for kitchen bench, a DVS system, a heatpump from Greenside Energy Solutions. Wiretech for the electrical installation. Plant Market, **Proscapes**, Bridgeman and Bunnings Warehouse for the landscaping and pavers and Placemakers Takanini for clothesline and letterbox.

**For more information contact:**  
**hello@friendsofmercy.co.nz**  
**or visit friendsofmercy.co.nz**





## *Volunteer Voices*

**M**ercy Hospice held its inaugural **Volunteer Voices** meetings in April. These events are designed for our volunteers to give feedback and provide suggestions on how we can improve their experiences, and where they can support each other. We had approximately 40 people attend over the two sessions. We hope the numbers will grow over time as those that attended spread the word!

Our volunteer coordinators, Sue Campin and Nix Grigg, hosted the sessions along with Cheryl Kenwright, HR Manager, Anna Baird, Marketing & Funding Manager, and Peter Buckland, CEO of Mercy Healthcare and acting CEO of Mercy Hospice.

From the feedback we received, we have started to explore ways to create multiple optional learning modules to expand volunteers' skills if they wish.

We also had requests to get a sponsor for our drink trolley mixers (we currently use soda stream, which loses its fizz more quickly; try a gin and tonic with flat tonic!). Another request was for an ice crusher. These tangible

suggestions are things that can make our volunteers' roles so much simpler when providing direct care for our patients and their families.

We aim to hold Volunteer Voices twice a year as they are an excellent way for volunteers to meet one another, share their experiences and stories.

Volunteer roles are many and varied. Some of these include working in the retail shops, transporting our patients to appointments, companionship, writing life stories, and helping at our fundraising events. Whatever it is you think you could offer, we are pretty confident we can find a role that would interest you.

At Mercy Hospice, volunteers do have a voice and we are always looking for ways to improve. Thank you to all our volunteers; we simply could not provide the services we do without you!

To find out more about Volunteer Voices or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please visit [mercyhospice.org.nz](http://mercyhospice.org.nz) or email [volunteer@mh.org.nz](mailto:volunteer@mh.org.nz).



“

***At that moment in time I felt helpless, but the irony is, I can stand here with you today and say going to hospice made me fall in love with my wife all over again.***

”

## David Boyes

Husband of Michelle.  
Father to Phoebe and Chloe.

*The following was a speech given by David Boyes at the 2020 fundraising event, Ten. Thank you, David, for sharing your story.*

**T**hank you for inviting me to speak at this wonderful event, it is such a privilege and honour to be here after what hospice has done for my family.

My name is David Boyes, currently I am an advisor for boards and executives and have previously been COO of Westpac NZ among other things, this means I can guarantee I have probably at some point been sitting where you are today. I have attended many charity events as an executive and like some of the partners in the room, my poor wife got dragged along to many, however, she never complained as she loved them.

Let's think about that for a minute, not even as many as three years ago, I was sitting where you are at an event with my wife. Things happen and in a blink of an eye, things change and that's what I am here to talk to you about today.

Michelle and I were married for 34 years.

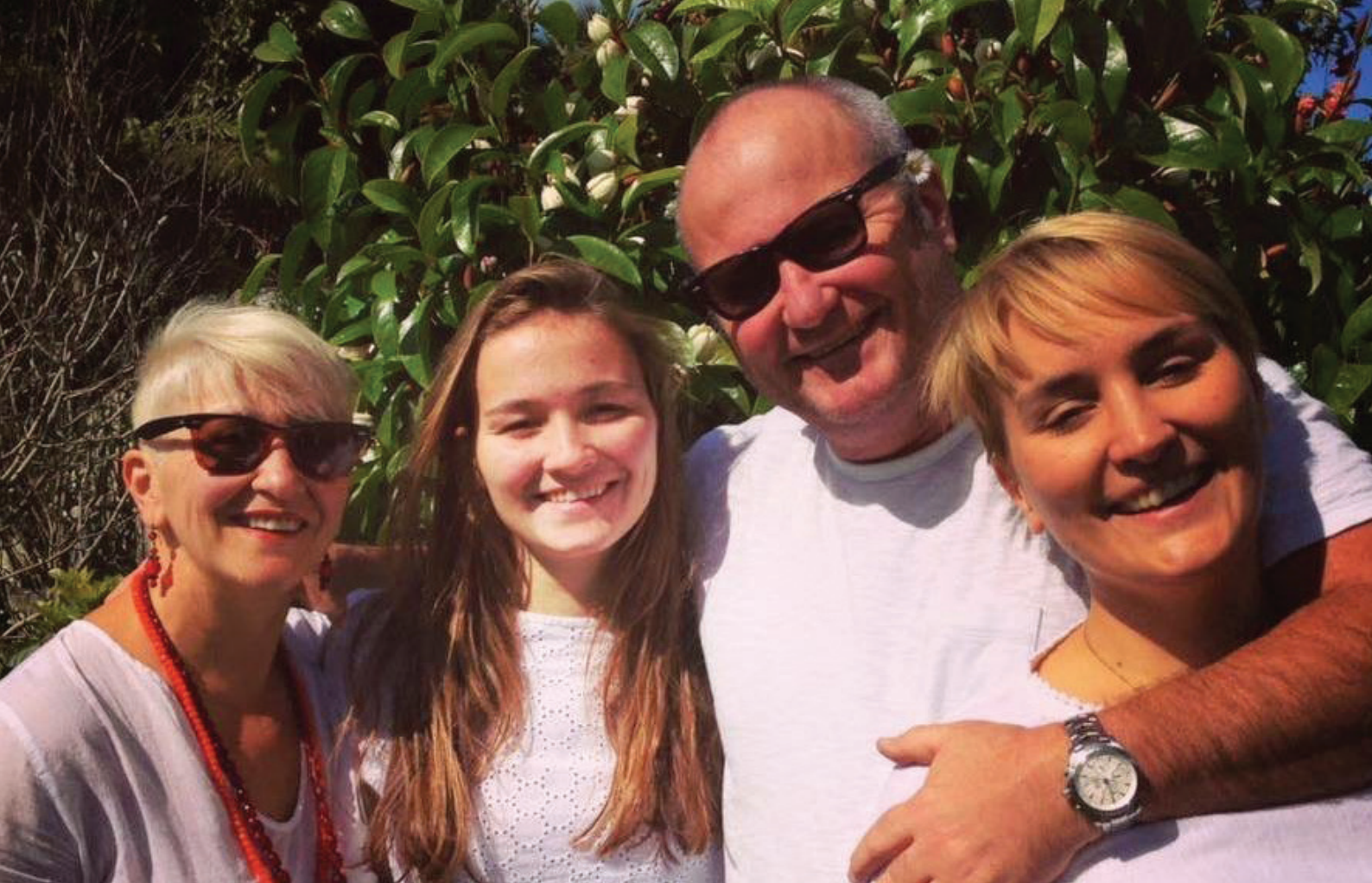
We had 2 beautiful daughters, Phoebe and Chloe, both here to support today. I would say life was good. I am not going to get into too much detail but after Michelle had a black line on her thumb nail for a while that wouldn't go away, I encouraged her to go to the doctors. Yes, as you have all guessed, a black line like that was not great news, she had Melanoma.

Michelle fought hard for 6 years, she had many operations and treatments and we thought that she had beaten it, but unfortunately for us this was not the case, and we were told it was terminal.

Imagine it. Think about the person you are with or the person at home and try to imagine what that news would be like.

My wife, the mother of my children. The person I had beside me for most of my life, was dying, and there was not one thing I could do about it. I can honestly say it was just devastating.





So, when hospice was eventually suggested, we didn't want to go. It was like we would be admitting that was it, it was over. But we had a wonderful nurse and she explained it would be best that we went, so along we went.

At that time I felt helpless, but the irony is, I can stand here with you today and say going to hospice made me fall in love with my wife all over again.

That sounds strange. You associate falling in love with going for meals, romantic walks, holidays and all those other things that us men need to do to woo the women of our dreams. But here I am saying going to a hospice with my wife did that for me.

Working the way we do, at the level we do, you lose sight of things. You forget, you get busy, you become so busy that you forget the little things and when Michelle was sick at home I was so busy doing the caring things that I never had time to just be with her.

We came to hospice and that changed. Everything was taken care of, the medication, the personal care. They even gave me someone to talk to when I needed.

I realised what the doctors and nurses had given me was the time and space to really be with her. We talked and talked in a way that I don't remember doing since we were teenagers. We talked about the girls, things we had done, places we had travelled. We discussed all of our ups and downs that we had over the years, and I remember sitting one night and thinking we hadn't seen each other properly in a long time.

It was a bittersweet experience, because I realised that we had gotten lost, through no fault of our own, you get caught up in life but now that we had found each other again, the realisation that I was going to lose it again was devastating.

Michelle died on the 16th November 2019. Yes, it was the anniversary of her passing this week and I am here, **but I look back at the time we had in hospice with love and fondness. It really did change my life and not just for the obvious.**

The way the doctors and nurses are there 24/7 caring for you and I would say loving their patients so beautifully, these moments are so powerful for family members because it gives us what we really need and that's time. Time with the person you love most in the world in





their final moments.

I have no doubt you all know the work of hospice but I want you to think today about how much that time is worth to you. Think back to what I said at the start. I was you. I was sitting here with my wife, maybe 4 years ago, not to make anyone feel uncomfortable but if you are with your partner today, look at them (or don't if you think that's weird) but either way I want you to think about how you could put a price on your last moments with them.

**If I did not have those last moments with Michelle at hospice with these amazing doctors and nurses working away in the background, caring for all her physical needs, I can honestly say my emotional state would be in a hell of a place right now. But because they were there, I got the gift of time back.**

Mercy Hospice only receives 58% government funding. That means they need to find from somewhere 42%. That's just over \$4 million dollars. I do not know about you but those last moments with my wife were worth a whole lot more than \$4 million dollars.

Lastly, I am going to leave you with this today. I am 59 years old and now a widower. This is young in my eyes, and it isn't fair. I couldn't do anything to stop it.

So I would urge you all to not wait for time in a hospice like I did, use the time you have now to hug your partner tighter, reminisce about when you started dating, laugh about how young and naive you both were and plan what you are going to do when you retire together.

I never got to plan these things, but I would give anything to be given one more day.

One of the things hospice does is sing a waiata for every patient to say goodbye. This means when a patient dies and they are getting taken away to the funeral parlour, a bell is rung at hospice and that is a sign to staff to go to the back entrance. It's unbelievable as all the staff come out and the family are supported by the entire hospice. The staff then sing a song. They do this for every patient.

My wife when she left hospice was sung out and it was one of the most surreal and beautiful experiences of my life, so I have asked the hospice staff to share with you this song today.

It's these extra things the team at Mercy Hospice do that makes the place so special, it makes you as a family member feel surrounded by support and love at all times, I was given

the time with my wife until the end and even now they are still caring for me.

“

*It's these extra things the team at Mercy Hospice do that makes the place so special, it makes you as a family member feel surrounded by support and love at all times, I was given the time with my wife until the end and even now they are still caring for me.*

”



# Ryan's Story

**A**s you know, millions of people around the world have experienced the devastating effects of COVID-19. Many have lost loved ones or know of those who have. And for some, it's not the virus that impacts them most. It's the other effects of lockdowns, like isolation, anxiety, loss of freedom, that can sadly make people physically worse. And yet somehow, something wonderful is still possible.

When we met Ryan, he was suffering from a severe brain condition, a cancer that affected his ability to talk and eat, and a long-term mental health issue. In addition, Ryan was separated from his partner. Thankfully, his relationship with his 12-year-old son was good.

However, as Ryan's condition worsened, his appearance became frightening to his son. This made it difficult for them to meet up. Ryan's family was overseas, and unfortunately because

of COVID-19 travel restrictions, this meant they were unable to visit either. Zoom video chats were the only way for his family to connect, and although these were helpful, it made it hard for staff to deliver the news that Ryan was very unwell and unlikely to be alive at Christmas. This was extremely upsetting to hear for his family, and as you can imagine, even harder in lockdown. All they could communicate was that they wanted him to be comfortable and not in pain.

COVID-19 was stopping this family from coming together at a time when they needed each other most. Faced with this, Mercy Hospice staff had the absolute honour and privilege to be there for Ryan and his son, when his family could not. Sometimes, even out of the worst situations, there are moments that enable us to be present and compassionate with the people we care for. What a gift this is to each of us.



**6,225**

**Community nurse visits to people in the community**



**514**

**People volunteered their time for Mercy Hospice services in 2020**



**1,619**

**Family support visits to people in the community**



**300**

**Average number of patients cared for at any one time**

# Thank you!

Thank you to all our Mercy Hospice supporters including our volunteers. We could not do it without you.



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## The reasons to support are all around us.

## Ways you can help...

### Volunteer

Become a volunteer and support us through providing your time. Volunteer roles are many and varied. They include transport, companionship, massage, life story services and working in our amazing retail shops.

### Leave a gift in your will

After taking care of your family, consider leaving a portion of your estate to Mercy Hospice. Your gift, no matter the size, will ensure all those in our community needing palliative care receive it with utmost professional skill and respect.

### Making a financial donation

Donations can be made online at [mercyhospice.org.nz](http://mercyhospice.org.nz) or by calling 09 361 5966.

### Donating goods

Donations of quality secondhand clothing, furniture and household goods can be made at any of our Mercy Hospice retail stores.

### Corporate supporters

There are many ways you and your business can get involved, through sponsorship or attendance at events, funding of critical services and medical equipment, volunteering or payroll giving.

### Be part of our online community

Facebook @mercyhospice  
Instagram @mercyhospiceauckland  
LinkedIn @company/mercyhospice  
Website [mercyhospice.org.nz](http://mercyhospice.org.nz)

To find out more about how you can support Mercy Hospice visit [mercyhospice.org.nz](http://mercyhospice.org.nz)



# 2021 DATES TO DIARY

## Get involved with Mercy Hospice!

[www.mercyhospice.org.nz/events](http://www.mercyhospice.org.nz/events)

August 22	<b>TEN - A Celebration of Tastes</b>
October 2	<b>Leap for Life</b>
October 31	<b>Auckland Marathon</b>
November 5	<b>Tennis for Mercy</b>
December 1 - 24	<b>Trees of Remembrance</b>

You are receiving this newsletter because of your previous support of Mercy Hospice. If you don't want to receive it in the future or you would prefer to receive a digital version, please contact the fundraising team on [getinvolved@mh.org.nz](mailto:getinvolved@mh.org.nz) to update your preferences.

### Note

We need you more than ever.  
**Get involved.**

## 4 easy ways to donate



**1** Mail the coupon to  
Mercy Hospice  
61 College Hill, Ponsonby  
PO Box 47693, Ponsonby



**2** Call **09 361 5966**



**3** Donate online at  
[www.mercyhospice.org.nz](http://www.mercyhospice.org.nz)



**4** Internet banking  
**BNZ 02 0100 0815020 00**  
Please confirm your gift by email to:  
[donations@mh.org.nz](mailto:donations@mh.org.nz)

### Cheques are no longer accepted from June 2021.

If you would like to take this opportunity to set up an alternative donation payment method, please consider one of the 4 easy ways to donate highlighted on this page.

**Yes!** I would like to make a donation so that every patient feels safe and protected by our highly specialised palliative care.

### Step 1 My Gift

My choice \$

### Step 2 Donation Frequency

- One-off  
 Join our Hospice Care Club (HCC)

or

### Step 3 My Payment

- Debit my credit card (circle):  
Visa or Mastercard or AMEX  
Card number:

Name on card

Signature

Expiry date  /  CVC

### Step 4 My Details

Title  First name

Surname

Date of birth

Address

Email

Phone

Donations of \$5 and over are tax deductible and will be receipted.  
Charities Commission # CC31621

