

# MERCY MATTERS

MAY 2025

***“It was the  
best place  
for us to be.”***

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**Mercy  
Hospice**

Te Korowai Atawhai

# *“We could just be with him”*

Driving along the motorway from Auckland Airport, Ross Duncan told Anne - his wife of 39 years, daughter Emma and granddaughter, that he wasn't feeling well.

“He would never say something like that, unless something was very wrong,” Emma said.

Ross had a major seizure and was rushed to hospital, where tests revealed he had a brain tumour - a metastatic melanoma which appeared after having had an initial melanoma removed from his back seven years earlier.

Ross had a deep love of the ocean, surfing and swimming. Even during gruelling treatment, he resolved to get out of bed and swim in the ocean somewhere warm again.

“He did just that,” Emma said.

Thinking he was in remission, the family travelled to Rarotonga, where Ross enjoyed the crystal-clear waters.

But then he had another seizure.

The family was informed Ross likely had about eight weeks to live.

It was important to the family that Ross be at home, and Emma wanted to nurse her dad in his final weeks. Together, they laughed, sang, and cried.

When Mercy Hospice first connected with the Duncans, they didn't feel ready for hospice support. They tried to protect Ross from even hearing the word 'hospice'.

“We wanted to support him thinking he was going to beat this,” Emma said.

One day, Ross suffered an “awful” seizure, followed by hundreds more through the night. It was then Emma realised they now needed a hospice's help to care for Ross.

Arriving at Mercy Hospice's Inpatient Unit, Emma felt devastated. She felt like she'd failed.

***“But we got here, and I remember seeing a drinks trolley. And although we were crying, I laughed with my sister.”***



Ross was cared for by Mercy Hospice in the Inpatient Unit for a week, “and it was just such a beautiful week”.

Emma believes there are no words to explain the care they received, and their experience of being at Mercy. Within hours, it felt like a home-away-from-home.

Having the space and time to be with her father, without the responsibility of caring for him, was significant - “We could just be with him.”

***“When you come here, you just get to be the daughter, or the partner... you don't have to be the caregiver. To be able to just love that person, and to not have to do the other things, is amazing.”***

The love and care from staff and volunteers, and the facilities, were beautiful, she said.

“It was the best place for us to be - we hadn't failed at all.”

Ross passed away on April 27, 2017, aged 61.

Emma describes her father as kind, thoughtful and gentle: a pillar of their community. He loved the outdoors, farming, fishing, and family.



Ross and good friend Dave Wood had long dreamed of swimming from Alcatraz Island to San Francisco. “I remember thinking, who in their right mind would want to do that?! The distance, the cold, all the stories you hear about sharks – who would do that?” Emma said.

However, at his wake, Emma and her sisters, with Dave and some family friends, decided to do the swim for Ross, in his name.

Being “so in awe of hospice after we left,” they wanted the swim to have another purpose too – raising awareness of hospice services and raising funds for Mercy Hospice.

During their first training swim – at Narrow Neck on a winter’s evening – two swimmers became caught in a rip, and Emma struggled to breathe due to the cold, requiring them to be rescued.

“It’s funny now,” Emma reflected, but was a bit of a reality check!

In the weeks that followed, the group of 11 – including Ross’s friend Vincent, who was 70, Emma’s 14-year-old daughter, and a friend who couldn’t swim prior – trained hard.

On the day of the swim, alarms rang at 5.30am. Emma remembers feeling churning excitement and nerves as they were told to jump in.

***“The water was amazing. It was the calmest day. Dad was looking down on us.”***

One-by-one, the swimmers made it to shore, hugging as they arrived, before honouring Ross with a champagne toast.

“It was an out-of-body experience for me... it was a huge high.” In total, ‘Team Rossie’ raised more than \$30,000 for Mercy Hospice.

Completing one of her dad’s final Bucket List wishes, and sharing about hospice, was an important part of Emma’s healing.

When her dad was unwell, the concept of hospice was frightening at first. But it became “amazing”.

***“You think that [hospice] means the end. But it doesn’t, what it means is support... beautiful support.”***



# Fundraising & Retail News



## ***A fresh look and new location***

In November 2024, we unveiled our refreshed retail brand For Mercy, after months of work!

While our store exteriors have changed, inside you can still find the same high-quality preloved, affordable goods you know and love.

We are grateful to Jodi Williams, who led the rebrand marketing strategy and connected us with agencies ThoughtFull and True, working largely pro bono to help make it happen.

We were also excited to open our ninth store, in St Heliers, in November, and are loving being part of such a welcoming community!



## ***Bags for Mercy***

October saw the first-ever Bags for Mercy event – selling stunning, designer donated bags of all shapes and sizes. Overall, Bags for Mercy raised \$10,000. It was such a hit, we're already planning the next one!



## ***Runway for Mercy***

In March, 24 models (volunteers, customers, and staff) strutted the catwalk in our St Heliers store wearing stunning clothes donated to our retail shops, all of which were for sale. The event raised \$4,400 to support the compassionate care of Aucklanders.



## ***Barfoot & Thompson clothing drive***

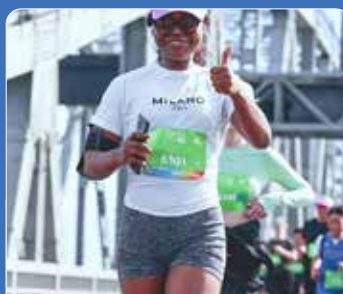
Throughout September, 25 Barfoot & Thompson branches collected clothing for our For Mercy shops. The quality of the clothing, and amount of menswear donated, was amazing! A big thank you to Barfoot & Thompson for their support.



This year's Round the Bays saw more than a dozen fundraisers and teams cross the finish line and raise more than \$5,600 for Mercy.



November's Tennis for Mercy was a grand slam success – with exciting matches and delicious food. The sold-out tournament raised over \$23,000!



Year-after-year, our wonderful runners smash the Auckland Marathon – in October, Team Mercy raised more than \$30,000!



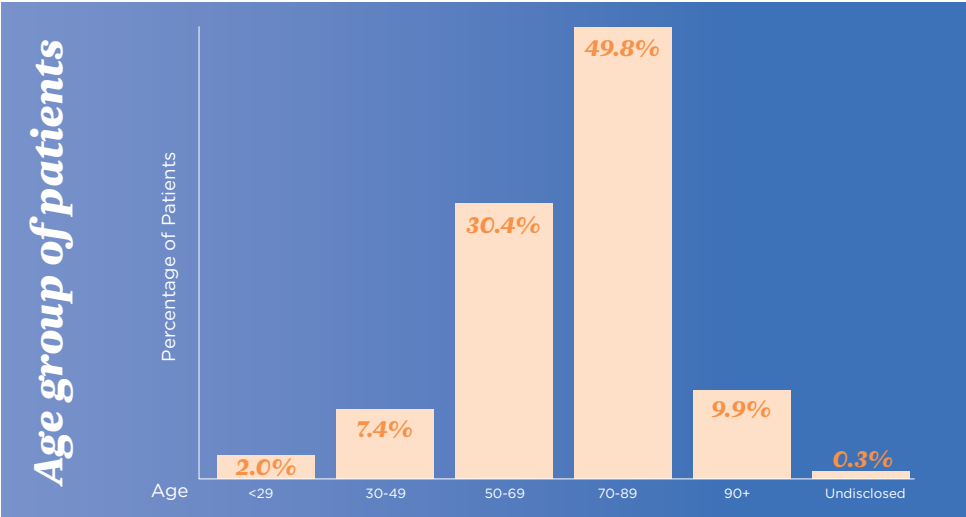
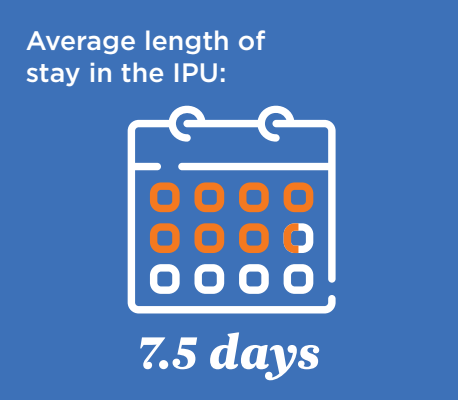
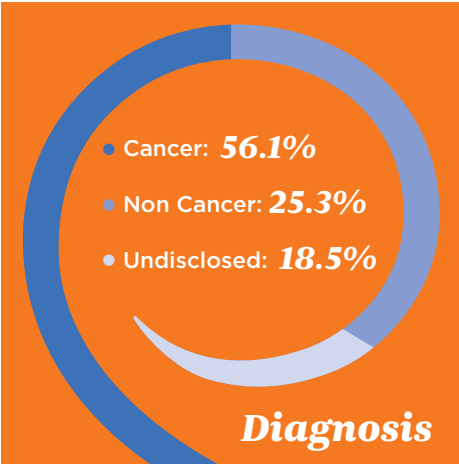
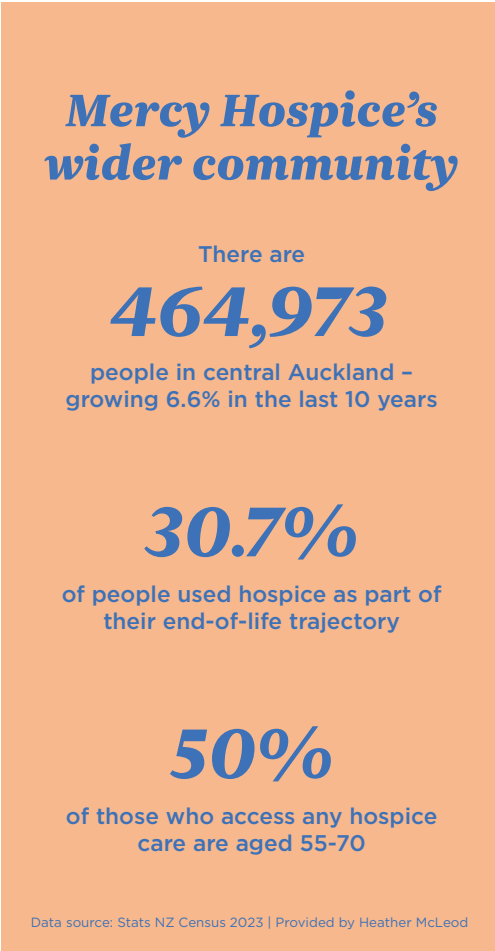
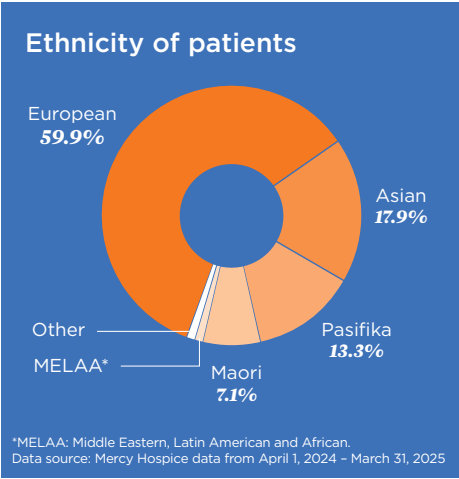
Hundreds of supporters came together to remember loved ones in our stunning lit-up garden during Lights to Remember. Together, you raised over \$55,000.

# Who your support helps

Te Korowai Atawhai Mercy Hospice provides specialist community palliative care and hospice services for people facing life-limiting illnesses, and their family – caring for people with compassion, dignity and quality of service, to ensure quality of life.

All services are offered free of charge, but they come at a cost. More than ever, we need your support to be able to continue providing the same level of care and compassion to Aucklanders who need it most.

Here’s a snapshot of who Mercy Hospice cares for, and who your support impacts.



# Capturing what matters



**For award-winning documentary photographer Adrian Malloch, photography is all about being engaged with life.**

This is at the heart of his work as a Mercy Hospice volunteer, photographing patients in palliative care, and those close to them.

Many of us have wished we could stop time for one moment more with a loved one. For Adrian Malloch, a photo does something similar: showing a moment in time. Adrian has been volunteering for Mercy Hospice for about 12 months, after being approached by volunteer coordinator Debbie Stevens.

His late mum was cared for by hospice on the North Shore, after being diagnosed with lung cancer. Their experience with hospice was “amazing”, and his mum passed away at his home, where he was caring for her.

***“So, when Debbie asked me if I was able to do this, I understood.”***

Adrian’s first time photographing for Mercy Hospice was at the wedding of a patient and his long-term partner, held in the garden at College Hill. It was an incredibly moving experience for him, and after leaving “It just felt good. I felt, I’m so part of life here.” He’s photographed a moving karakia by 100 colleagues of a man who worked in community support, and quiet moments of a mother and her young daughter sitting on a park bench in the sun. Every interaction is different, as it’s “life unfolding”.

There’s often a sense of creating a legacy, he says: Capturing everyday moments of celebration, of family connections, to become something tangible to be held onto once a person is gone.

The opportunity to connect with whānau in that way is a gift, he says.

***“They’re always so thankful and say, ‘thank you so much’. I say, it’s the other way around – ‘Thank you for allowing me in.’”***

Outside his volunteer work for Mercy Hospice, Adrian regularly has his photos published in magazines and has a ‘A Day in the Life of Your Family’ photography service – candid moments in black-and-white of everyday life.

***“Photography is about being there... of bearing witness. It isn’t just about noticing something – it’s about actually passing on the story, and telling, showing, what matters.”***



**Mercy Hospice always needs committed and passionate volunteers. We’d love to hear from you: [getinvolved@mh.org.nz](mailto:getinvolved@mh.org.nz)**

# Upcoming Events

## Hospice Awareness Week

Hospice Awareness Week is upon us. This year's theme is: **Hospice services are at risk of disappearing.**

Now more than ever, Mercy Hospice needs your support to ensure we can continue to provide care for the growing number of people who need our help, and their families and communities, for free.

Mercy Hospice volunteers will be out in the community taking donations at the following locations. Please stop by to show your support if you can:

### Friday May 16, from 9am-5pm:

- Westfield St Lukes
- PAK'nSAVE Mt Albert
- New World Eastridge

### Saturday May 17, from 9am-5pm:

- Westfield St Lukes
- PAK'nSAVE Mt Albert
- New World Eastridge
- New World Remuera

## Counting down to '10'!

We are just **one month away** from Mercy Hospice's 18th annual '10 - A Celebration of Tastes', an afternoon of delicious food, wine, and giving.



On **June 15th** at the Grand Millennium Auckland, guests will enjoy some of the finest foods on offer from our incredible participating restaurants, while helping to raise critical funds for those facing life-limiting illnesses. Restaurants include:

DES HARRIS  
- Chef -

Events | In Home Dining | Consultancy

ParisButter  
★ ★ ★ ★



cibo

BADUZZI



With more to be announced soon...

For more information visit [galabid.com/ten2025](http://galabid.com/ten2025)

## 2025 dates for your diary:

**May 12-18:** Hospice Awareness Week

**June 15:** 10 - A Celebration of Tastes

**October 18:** Bags for Mercy

**November 2:** Auckland Marathon

**November 14:** Tennis for Mercy (\*new date\*)

**November 28-29:** Christmas Community Collections

**November:** Remembrance Service

**December 4:** Lights to Remember Switch-On

**December:** Trees of Remembrance

# Thank you to all our Mercy Hospice sponsors and supporters



## Thank you to the following Trusts and Foundations, who have supported Mercy Hospice through generous grants

- Akarana Community Trust
- BlueSky Community Trust
- Dragon Community Trust
- Duo Trust
- E M Arnold Foundation
- Ernest Davis & Ted & Mollie Carr Legacies (Perpetual Guardian)
- Four Winds Foundation
- Francis Fennell Hospice Trust
- Heathcote Trust
- Hugh Green Foundation
- Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust
- Louisa & Patrick Emmett Murphy Foundation (Public Trust)
- Mike Bakker Charitable Trust
- North and South Trust
- N R & J H Thomson Charitable Trust (Perpetual Guardian)
- One Foundation
- Peter and David Picot Charitable Trust
- Pub Charity Limited
- Ralph and Eve Seelye Charitable Trust
- Society of Mary Order of Marist Priest & Brothers
- The Jogia Charitable Trust
- The Lion Foundation
- The Moonshine Charitable Trust
- The Sir William and Lady Lois Manchester Charitable Trust
- The Trusts Community Foundation
- VMD Collier Charitable Trust (Perpetual Guardian)

**Yes! I want to help Mercy Hospice doctors, nurses, social workers,  
counsellors and more to provide quality care for Aucklanders.**

I would like to donate: \$

☐

I would like to make this a monthly gift.

☐

Please contact me about leaving a gift in my Will.

## Payment methods

MM - May 2025

☐

Credit card - Please debit my:

☐

Visa

☐

Mastercard

☐

AMEX

Expiry date:

Card number:

CVC:  
(required)

Name on card:

Signature:

☐

Directly into Mercy Hospice Auckland's bank account:

BNZ: 02 0100 0815020 00

Particulars:

Code:

Reference:

<SF ID>

I would like to receive my receipt by:

☐

Post

☐

Email (Please confirm email address below)

<Email>

## Update details

Please update or correct your details below. Thank you!

Name and Address:

Preferred phone number:

Preferred email address:

Please return this form in the enclosed freepost envelope, or send to  
**Mercy Hospice, PO Box 47693, Ponsonby, Auckland 1101**

If you have any questions, please call **0800 888 474**  
or email [hello@mh.org.nz](mailto:hello@mh.org.nz)

Mercy Hospice Charities Commission Number: **CC31621**

**Thank you for your  
generosity and for your  
continued support of  
Mercy Hospice.**