

Whakatane Hospital Chaplaincy

Report to Anglican Diocese of Waiapu

The Chaplaincy ministry at Whakatane Hospital is not only alive and well, it is flourishing and I give God thanks for that. Indeed, I could not bring about such flourishing in my own strength.

Our beautiful Chapel is being well utilised by staff, patients and families. Some staff members have discovered that the Chapel is a place of quietness and refreshment as they take their lunch break from the frenetic busyness of the ward/department.

More and more families are accepting the offer to bring their deceased loved one to the Chapel as they await the arrival of the Funeral Director. I'm not sure if this practice will continue when we move into our new hospital next year as the Chapel will be some distance from the new point of entry for Funeral Directors.

During the 18 months I have been in this role, I have found that those attending Chapel services are virtually all from the community. Very few patients attend. This may be due to those who are fit enough to attend being discharged before Sunday and those remaining either not being inclined or too unwell. Recently, the decision was taken to hold services on Thursday afternoon. It will take a little time for people to adjust to worshipping on a day other than Sunday and this 'try it' will be reassessed in September. I continue to be profoundly grateful to the three musicians who regularly assist with worship.

I have appreciated many opportunities to speak to community groups about the Chaplaincy ministry and enjoy having other Church groups - Anglican, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist Youth, Salvation Army, Catholic and Baptist lead our Chapel worship.

While the major focus of this ministry is the patients and their families, another very significant aspect is ministry to and with staff members. There is a great need for this care. While I am caring for a staff member I am vicariously caring for their patients. A staff member who is more at peace within themselves will be more able to offer optimum care for their patients. I believe that care of the staff is an essential and crucial aspect of this ministry. It is particularly so for us over the next two years as we transition from the old hospital context to the new.

In an effort to have staff become more comfortable about being in the Chapel and coming to see it as a sacred place, a place of rest and refreshment for every person, I invited staff members who are artists to show their work in the Chapel. Art in the Chapel was born. It was a pleasure to hear staff members expressing delight as they crossed the threshold for the first time and discovered how beautiful their Chapel is. Further to the display of work in the Chapel, with the artist's permission and participation a 2013 calendar was created to raise funds for our local ministry with a third of funds going to our local Hospice service. We raised around \$1500. Not a bad first time effort. We plan to repeat the exercise next year for 2015.

Our Chaplaincy team is quietly growing. At present we have one person who holds both Voluntary Chaplaincy Assistant (VCA) and Locum contracts; there is one other Locum and a trainee VCA. It is my hope that our team will embrace three more people in due course.

I consider it a privilege to be in this ministry in this hospital and couldn't want for better support from management, staff, patients, their families and my husband Rob.

I continue to be grateful to Waiapu Diocese for your financial support of this ministry. Thank you.

Grace and peace

Rev Anne Griffiths