

Past, Present & Future
directions of palliative care



Grampians Regional
Palliative Care Team



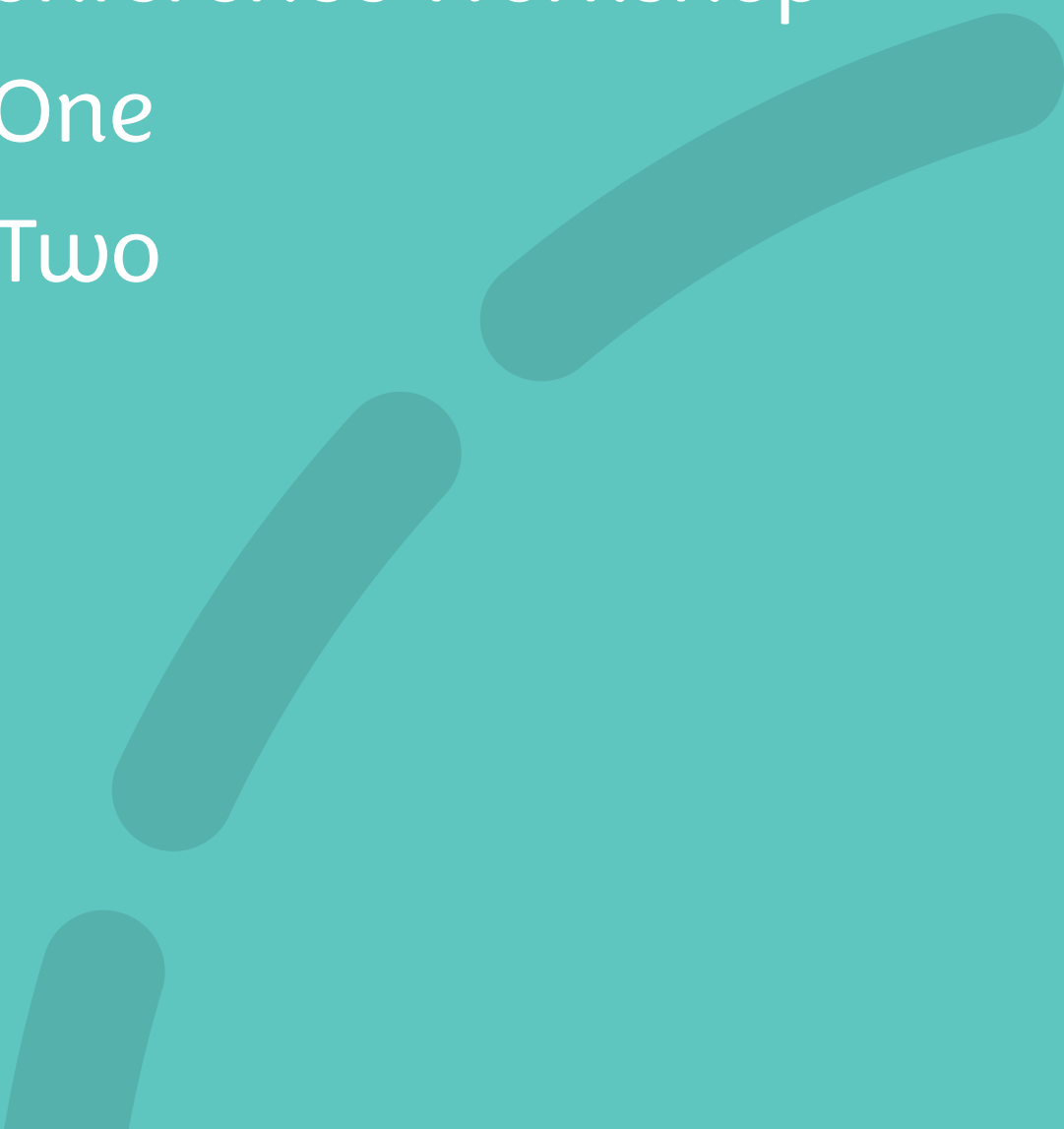
Back
to the
Future
Palliative Care
CONFERENCE
2024

1-3 May 2024
RACV Goldfields Creswick

Program



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Our Sponsors

We wish to express our sincere thanks to the following organisations for their support and generous sponsorship of the Grampians Regional Palliative Care *Back to the Future* Conference.

Without our sponsors it would not have been possible.

Major Conference Partners



Conference Partners





Improving patient experiences and outcomes by connecting cancer care and driving best practice

Who We Are

Grampians Integrated Cancer Service (GICS) are one of eight geographically based service improvement teams located in Victoria. We are an integral mechanism for local health service implementation of the Victorian Cancer Plan.

We achieve this by building relationships between health care providers and other cancer care stakeholders to improve experiences and outcomes for people affected by cancer living in the Grampians region.

Why Partner With Us



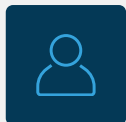
Engagement & Partnership

In depth engagement and partnership with our stakeholders to implement the cancer reform agenda.



Understanding Local Needs

Understanding local context and responding to the needs of our regional health services.



Consumer Voice

Bringing consumer voices into service improvement and redesign activities.



Data

Data driving evidence based, purposeful and impactful change.

Contact Us



(03) 5320 4782



www.vics.org.au/gics

Important Information

Conference Venue: RACV Goldfields, 1500 Midland Highway, Creswick, Victoria 3363. Contact number: 03 5345 9600.

The Registration Desk is located on the Ground Level and is open at the following times: *Wed May 1: 10am-5pm, Thur May 2: 7.45am-5pm, Fri May 3: 7.30am-4.30pm.*

Thursday 6.15pm - Late: The Conference dinner is at RACV Goldfields. Please meet in the trade display area at 6.15pm for pre-dinner drinks. Back to the future attire. Drinks are at bar prices.

Dress: The dress code for the duration of the Conference is neat casual.

Weather: During May, the daily mean maximum temperature is 13°C. Weather in the Grampians is variable so please bring a warm jacket with you for evenings.

Photography at the Conference: The GRPCT will take photographs at the Conference to reproduce and to distribute in educational, news or promotional materials and other publications, whether in print, electronic or other media, including the conference website. By participating in the Conference, you permit the GRPCT to use, reproduce and distribute photographs taken of you for such purposes and waive your legal rights to pursue any cause of action against the GRPCT related to such photographs. If you have any concerns regarding the use of photographs taken of you during the Conference, please contact Rebecca Matthews at Rebecca.Matthews@gh.org.au

Welcome

When selecting the theme 'Back to the Future' in 2021, none of us could have foreseen the enduring impact COVID-19 would have on the delivery of palliative care. The urgent need to adapt our practices to ensure timely access to palliative care and the increased demand for terminal care in the community were met with a clear desire to support our communities. This situation has also demonstrated the resilience and willingness of healthcare professionals to embrace innovative ways to connect with patients across regional and remote areas.

Our theme, 'Past, Present & Future Directions of Palliative Care,' provides us with an opportunity to reflect on how palliative care has evolved across the Grampians region over the past 40 years. The lessons learned, the



achievements celebrated, and how these experiences will shape the future healthcare needs of people facing life-limiting illnesses into the next decade and beyond.

A very special welcome to our speakers, who have generously given their time to provide such a valuable learning opportunity. Additionally, thank you to our sponsors and exhibitors whose financial support has greatly assisted in keeping the cost of attending this conference to a minimum.

I hope this conference will serve as a source of challenge, reflection, and inspiration for you to take with you in to the future.

Kind regards,
Regina Kendall.



Grampians Regional
Palliative Care Team

A very special welcome to our speakers who have given their time generously

Conference Committee



Regina Kendall
Conference Chair
Nurse Practitioner



Dr Russell Pearce (MC)
Palliative Care Fellow



Julia Johnston
Palliative Care CNC



Julie Kidd
Palliative Care CNC



Helen Lusby
Palliative Care Clinical
Nurse Consultant (CNC)



Sara Lord
Nurse Practitioner, GRPCT



Tanya Sherritt
Senior Clinical
Psychologist, GRPCT



Rebecca Matthews
Op Manager

Administrative support

Sue Bott
Bernadette Peacock
Sharyn Greed



Grampians Regional
Palliative Care Team

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PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE

Back to The Future Palliative Care Conference 2024


phn
WESTERN VICTORIA

An Australian Government Initiative

Preconference Workshop

Wed May 1, 2024



Pre-conference Workshop

Wed May 1, 2024

Joint meeting with VPCNPC and CNSA SPN

10:30am – 11:00am

Registration

11:00am – 11:05am

Welcome

11:05am – 12:00pm

Interventional techniques for pain management and other oncological emergencies

Dr Richard Ussher, Director of Radiology
Grampians Health

12:00pm – 12:45pm

Lunch

12:45pm – 1:45pm

Practicing in an environment of recreational substances – Addiction and pain management

Dr Adam Straub Addiction Medicine Specialist

1:45pm – 2:45pm

Long term use of opioids in cancer pain – Implications and Complications

Dr Adam Straub Addiction Medicine Specialist

2:45pm – 3:15pm

Afternoon tea

3:15pm – 4:10pm

Future directions of Oncology treatments for Metastatic cancers

Dr Wasek Faisal, Medical Oncologist, Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre

4:10pm – 4:30pm

Future directions of oncology nursing

Ms Suzanne Bartlett, Nurse Practitioner
Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Center

4.30pm – 4.55pm

Role of Abstral and titration protocol.

Jennifer Pena, Hospital and Specialist
Representative: Oncology and Palliative Care

4:55pm – 5:00pm

Evaluations and close

5:00 – 6:00pm

VPCNP collaborative meeting

Pepperberry room

5:00 – 6:00pm

Focus group with Latrobe University on Co-Design research

**I hope this conference
will serve as a source
of challenge, reflection,
and inspiration...**



Indivior is the world leader in addiction treatment with over 20 years' experience and a unique patient-focused approach. Our endeavour is to understand the journey of individuals suffering with addiction.

We partner with healthcare professionals, the public, policymakers, and payers to ensure people suffering from addiction are treated just like any other patients suffering from a chronic, relapsing medical condition.

Proudly Sponsoring the Pre-conference workshop



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About Menarini Australia | Our Company

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Our commitment to research and development combined with our particular expertise in the establishment of in-license partnerships, has enabled us to deliver a wide range of prescription, non-prescription, biological and highly specialized treatments and at the same time significantly expand and strengthen our product pipeline.

We also offer the pharmaceutical industry outstanding Contract Sales teams and opportunities to partner with Menarini Australia to make available to Australian patients the life changing and life saving treatments offered elsewhere around the world.

Wednesday Pre-conference Guest Speaker

Dr Rick Ussher

Interventional techniques for pain management and other oncological emergencies

Dr Rick Ussher completed his Radiology training in Melbourne. On completion of his training Rick spent a further year at the Royal Children's Hospital gaining advanced training in Paediatric Radiology. After this he completed further advanced Fellowship training at the Austin Hospital in Interventional Radiology and at the Canberra Hospital in MRI and Musculoskeletal Radiology. Rick has a special interest in Interventional Pain Management and has completed a Masters of Medicine in Pain Management through the University of Sydney. Rick is a Diagnostic & Interventional Radiologist at Grampians Health and Sovereign Radiology.

Wednesday Pre-conference Guest Speaker

Dr Adam Straub

Practicing in an environment of recreational substances – Addiction and pain management

Adam Straub, Addiction Medicine and General Medicine Physician at Grampians Health, graduated from The University of Melbourne in 2008 and focused his early career in critical care medicine. After working with Victoria Police and spending many years working in Emergency Departments, Adam developed a great interest in Addiction Medicine, identifying a patient group that would benefit from a more comprehensive model of care. Through this, Adam is able to interact with a broad patient group and support their care throughout the hospital. He is a strong advocate for opioid agonist therapy and harm minimisation education. Adam completed advanced training in Addiction Medicine and General Medicine through St. Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and Ballarat Health Services. Adam is

actively involved in continuous professional development and medical education, supporting medical students and colleagues across all disciplines of medicine, nursing and pharmacotherapy care.



**Adam is actively
involved in
continuous
professional
development and
medical education**

Wednesday Pre-conference Guest Speaker

Dr Wasek Faisal

Future directions of Oncology treatments for Metastatic cancers



Dr Wasek Faisal is a senior Medical Oncologist and a mid-career Clinical Researcher in the field of Medical Oncology and Tumour Immunology. He is a Fellow of Royal Australasian College of Physicians & Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and completed his tumor immunology research thesis at the University of Nottingham, UK prior to completing his advanced training in Oncology in Australia. He is the current Clinical Director of Grampians Integrated Cancer Services as well as being the Clinical Lead and Chair of the Thoracic Tumour Stream at the Grampians Health. Dr Faisal has been a Principal Investigator for 25 international multicenter phase II & III Randomized Clinical Trials in lung cancer to date, investigating novel therapies including

immunotherapy and drug conjugates, as well as being sub-investigator for well over 50 clinical trials in oncology. He is a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the La Trobe University, Melbourne. He also has research collaboration with several translational research groups at Monash & Federation University. He has received competitive educational and research grants in excess of 5-million AUD, including receiving the Thoracic Oncology Group of Australasia (TOGA) Inspirational Research Grant (2023), Victorian Cancer Agency Doctoral Research grant (2021), Ballarat Health Services (BHS) Cancer Research Grant (2019) & Quality & Innovation Award for Lung Cancer Redesign Project at BHS (2018). He is currently co-supervising 1 PhD student through La Trobe University. Dr Faisal has 15 published papers, 8 manuscripts currently in preparation and multiple published abstracts and conference proceedings (h-index 6, i-index 4). Dr Faisal has held several leadership positions including being the current Co-chair of Registry-based RCT Steering Committee at RTN-Vic, member of Strategic Program Steering Committee at

VCCC and member of the Expert Advisory Committee at Lung Foundation Australia. He is also member of several national and international oncology societies and collaborative networks including TOGA, AGITG, CTA, IASLC, MOGA and ASCO.



Dr Wasek Faisal is a senior Medical Oncologist and a mid-career Clinical Researcher in the field of Medical Oncology and Tumour Immunology.

Wednesday Pre-conference Guest Speaker

Ms Suzanne Bartlett

Future directions of oncology nursing

Sue works as an Oncology Nurse Practitioner at Grampians Health Ballarat.

She has worked in various clinical, coordinator and project management roles in metropolitan, regional and rural centres which has allowed her to develop many varied skills and knowledge in leadership and management, quality and risk management, consumer involvement, education, practice development and research.

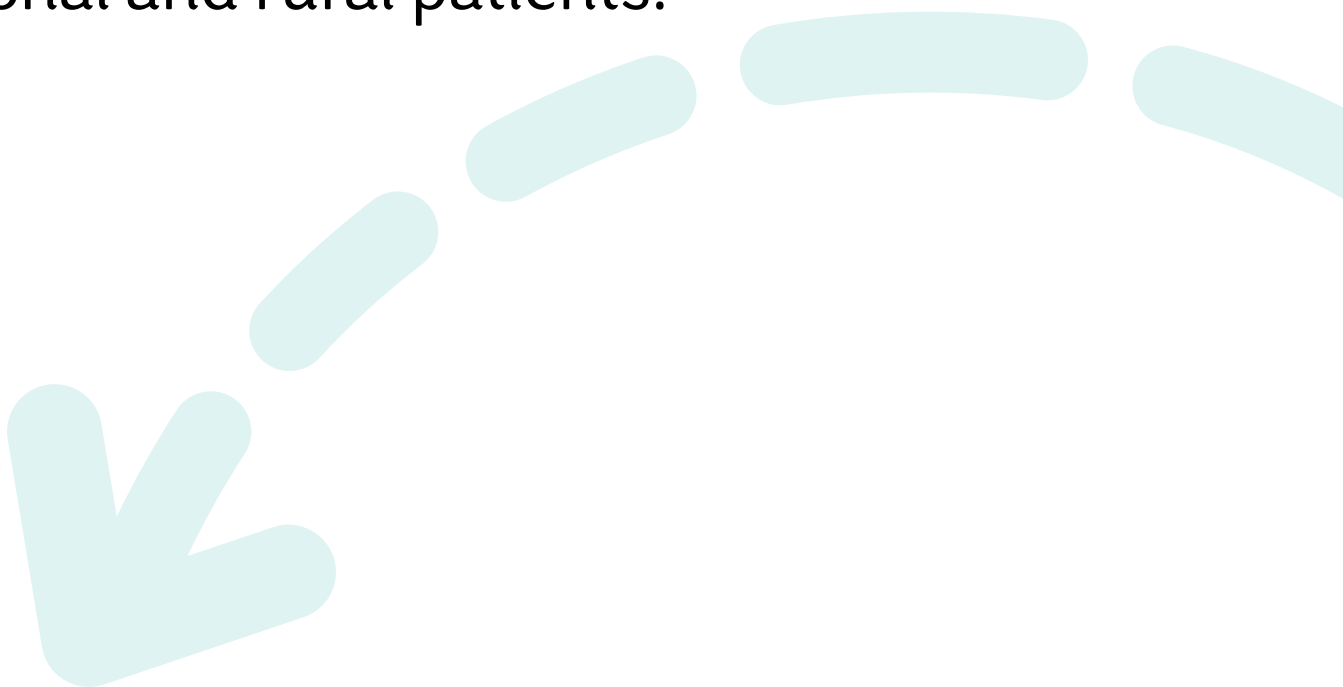
She completed her Graduate Certificate in Cancer & Palliative Care in 2008 and Master of Advanced Nursing Practice - Nurse Practitioner in Medical Oncology at the University of Melbourne in 2018.

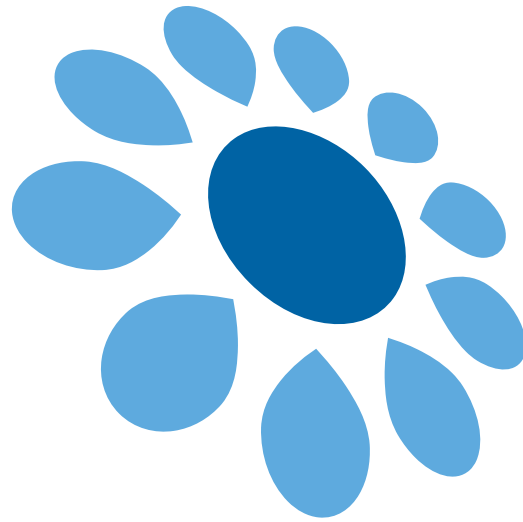
Sue is a current board director and congress co-director of Cancer Nurses Society of

Australia (CNSA) – the peak professional body for over 1900 cancer nurses across Australia as well as the current secretary of the CNSA Cancer Nurse Practitioner Specialist Practice Network.

Sue has been involved in multiple nurse led service provisions including establishing and implementing the Symptom & Urgent Review Clinic (SURC) at Grampians Health Ballarat along with developing and rolling out an immunotherapy patient alert card used throughout regional Victoria.

Sue is passionate about regional and rural health provision and ensuring equitable patient access to specialised cancer care for regional and rural patients.





Grampians Region
Palliative Care **Consortium**

*Strategic regional planning for
people with a life-limiting illness,
their families, carers and clinicians
in the Grampians region.*

www.grampianspalliativecare.com.au

Day One

Thur May 2, 2024



Day One

Thursday 2nd May 2024

08:00am – 08:30am

Registration

8:30am – 8:45am

Conference Opening & Welcome to Country

Dr Russell Pearce, Conference MC, Palliative Care Physician GRPCT

Welcome to Country

Peta Hudson, Djaara Traditional Owner

8:45am – 9:00am

Opening Address

Violet Platt, CEO Palliative Care Victoria

9:00am – 9:10am

Sponsors acknowledgements – Sponsor slides

9:10am – 10:30am

Inequalities and Initiatives for Aging Populations

9:10am – 9:55am

Ageism in Cancer Care

Professor Meinier Krishnasamy, University of Melbourne

9:55am – 10:30am

Using Technology to Engage In Dementia Care

Dr Tanya Petrovich, Business Innovation Manager, Centre for Dementia Learning, Dementia Australia

10:30am – 11:00am

Morning Tea

11:00am – 1:00pm

Inequalities and Initiatives for Aging Populations

11:00am – 11:30am

Equitable and meaningful access to palliative Care on the Dementia/Frailty illness trajectory

Steven Pitman, Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner

11:30am – 12:00pm

Elder abuse

Dr Supriya Rama Krishnan, Gerontologist,
Grampians Health

12:00pm – 12:30pm

Frailty and EOLC/COVID

Dr Yih Harnng Chong Gerontologist, Grampians
Health

12:30pm – 1:00pm

Panel discussion

Prof Krishnasamy, Dr Petrovich, Dr Rama
Krishnan, Dr Chong and Mr Pitman

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Lunch

Optional: Focus group with Latrobe
University on Co- Design research

2:00pm – 4:45pm

**Psychosocial and Allied Health Dimensions
in Palliative Care**

2:00pm – 3:00pm

Trauma informed and culturally sensitive practice in palliative care

Tanya Sherritt Senior Clinical Psychologist GH,
Emma Leehane Aboriginal hospital Liaison

3:00pm – 3:15pm | **Afternoon tea**

3:15pm – 4:00pm

Beyond the RoHo cushion

Kelsey Morcombe Senior Occupational
Therapist Grampians Health , Renee Jenkins
Occupational Therapist GH

4:00pm – 4.45pm

Therapeutic Music | Peter Roberts

4:45pm – 5:00pm

Summary & Close of Day One

Dr Russell Pearce, Conference MC, Palliative
Care Physician GRPCT

6:15pm – 7:00pm

Pre dinner drinks and nibbles

7:00pm till late

Dinner Theme – Back to the Future



Thursday Guest Speaker

Professor Meinier Krishnasamy (FAAN)

Ageism in Cancer Care

Professor Meinier Krishnasamy (FAAN) is Professor of Cancer Nursing in the Department of Nursing at the University of Melbourne; Honorary Professor in the Department of Health Services Research at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Chair, and Research and Education Lead for Nursing for the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre Alliance. Her research focuses on equitable access to cancer supportive care particularly for older adults with cancer and people with poor prognosis cancers. She has secured AUD\$35m as CI and co-CI in competitive research funds and has authored 116 publications.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Dr Tanya Petrovich

Using Technology to Engage In
Dementia Care

Dr Tanya Petrovich is Business Innovation Manager, Dementia Australia.

Tanya completed studies Genetics at the University of Melbourne and Post-Doctoral studies at the Marie Curie Research Institute, UK. She has spent many years teaching in the fields of Science, and Health Science. She joined Dementia Australia in 2008.

Tanya leads the team in applying innovations in technology to improve the services that support the lives of people living with dementia. In 2013 the Virtual Dementia Experience was released and was the first VR experience to be used in Dementia Care Education.

More recently in 2016 EDIE- Educational Dementia Immersive Experience was

released for use on the Oculus Gear VR. This mobile technology has opened the opportunity to have these virtual experiences available to people not only in Australia but worldwide. EDIE is now delivered in Europe, Canada and New Zealand. Since then the team has developed other VR experiences and including TED the artificially intelligent Avatar living with dementia. Ted is designed to teach good communication skills for anyone who supports a person living with Dementia. Most recently in 2022 we released BrainTrack an App to help self-monitor cognitive health and encourage help seeking. BrainTrack recently won the Google 2023 award for Best App for Good.



**Ted is designed to teach
good communication
skills for anyone who
supports a person living
with Dementia.**



Thursday Guest Speaker

Steven Pitman

Equitable and meaningful access
to palliative Care on the Dementia/
Frailty illness trajectory

Steven Pitman is a Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner with Yarrawonga and NCN Health. Steven has completed a Masters of Palliative Care and Masters of Nurse Practitioner through Flinders University. Steven has had over 20 years experience working in palliative care and his special interests include aged care, communication and fostering practical wisdom in palliative care.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Dr Supriya Rama Krishnan

Elder abuse

Dr Supriya Rama Krishnan is a Geriatrician who works in public hospitals and private practice. In addition to her geriatric training, she has completed the Masters of Forensic Medicine and has gained experience working in the field of clinical forensic medicine.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Dr Yih Harnng Chong

Frailty and EOLC/COVID

Dr Yih Harnng Chong is a New Zealand geriatrician now based in Ballarat with Grampians Health. He has diverse interests within the field of geriatric medicine, reflected in his involvement with subacute care, acute geriatric medicine, and CDAMS clinic. He is passionate with teaching from all levels of undergraduate to advanced trainee in clinical medicine. Yih Harnng has previously held positions as honorary senior lecturer with New Zealand universities, and attained his PhD with the University of Otago. He is keen to collaborate widely in any research and teaching opportunities, and immerse himself within the Victorian communities.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Tanya Sherritt

Trauma informed and
culturally sensitive practice
in palliative care

Tanya Sherritt has worked at Grampians Health for 19 years commencing with Grampians Mental Health Services in 2005 prior to her current role with the Grampians Health Psychology Department which she commenced in 2012. She has worked across the areas of forensic mental health, child protection and early intervention, private practice and public health since the completion of her training. Tanya has worked across a range of programs at Grampians Health Ballarat including Rehabilitation, Pain Management and Oncology. She currently works as the Senior Clinical Psychologist with the Grampians Regional Palliative Care Team (GRPCT) and the Healthy Weight Management Program.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Emma Leehane

Trauma informed and
culturally sensitive practice
in palliative care

Hi, my name is Emma Leehane.

I am a proud Yorta Yorta woman. A Ballarat girl born and bred. I am passionate about my culture and my people. Previously, to this role I was a First Nation educator in museums and a Primary School Teacher for 11 years.

Working in the healthcare system, has provided me the opportunity to assist in improving the pathways of health for First Nation people and assist staff to provide culturally safe and effective clinical care for First Nation people. I strongly believe that Reconciliation is the key foundation for a better future. Together we can build relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and First Nation peoples.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Kelsey Morcombe

Beyond the RoHo cushion

Kelsey is a senior occupational therapist at Grampians Health Ballarat, working across the acute site and Ballarat Austin Radiation Oncology Centre (BAROC). Kelsey has a Master of Occupational Therapy Practice and a decade of experience as a clinician, in the public and private sector. In 2022, Kelsey completed a Graduate Diploma in Palliative Care at Flinders University after developing a special interest in oncology and palliative care.

Kelsey was drawn to palliative care when her Pa was diagnosed with cancer. His symptoms significantly impacted his function, and stopped him from being at home and doing what he wanted. This sparked her passion for supporting people to remain at home for as long as they can, and helped her understand

the role OT can play in maintaining participation and dignity at the end of life.

Kelsey has a special interest in palliative rehabilitation, supporting people to maintain function and independence for as long as possible. She is a strong advocate for allied health in palliative care, and has collaboratively developed a range of student, clinician and consumer resources. In her current senior clinician role, her love of learning led to the opportunity to facilitate the learning platform for junior OT's at Grampians Health Ballarat. In July this year, she will commence as the Deputy Manager Occupational Therapy Junior Workforce.

Outside of work, Kelsey enjoys creating masterpieces in the kitchen, keeping active at the gym, and spending time with her young family and fur baby.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Renee Jenkins

Beyond the RoHo cushion

Renee has worked as an Occupational Therapist for over 10 years in the Grampians Region. Renee has worked in the public health system across acute, rehabilitation and community settings.

Renee has a passion for Animal Assisted Therapy, travelling to America in 2009 and South America in 2014, gaining practical experience in training assistance dogs and using dogs as a therapeutic modality. Renee experienced the amazing benefits that animals provided to children with Autism and people with disabilities sparking further study in the area.

In 2016 Renee completed a post grad Certificate in Animal Assisted Therapy. Renee developed her business, Dogbond

Occupational Therapy Services in 2017, working with her therapy dog, Macey, a black labrador for people with disabilities and mental health conditions through the NDIS.

Renee is passionate about mental health awareness and nervous system regulation and completed a 200hr yoga teacher training in 2020.

Since becoming a mother and going through the experience of losing a loved one, Renee has transitioned into the area of Palliative Care, in which she is tying all of her skills together to provide a holistic approach to OT in the palliative care setting.



Thursday Guest Speaker

Peter Roberts

Therapeutic Music

Peter Roberts (www.robertsmusic.net) has worked as a specialist, palliative care musician for over 25 years.

His form of musical care within end-of-life settings was the subject of research by Deakin University. The final report entitled *Relief of Suffering at the End of Life*, was jointly presented by Peter and Em. Professor Helen Cox (Deakin) at The Mayo Clinic Spiritual Research Conference in the USA

His personal story of transitioning mid-life from a furniture retailer into a palliative care musician was the subject of an ABC TV *Australian Story* documentary called *Heaven Sent*, and more recently, *From Music into Silence*, a full-length documentary exploring Peter's journey of the heart into this field, was

shown in cinemas around Australia and in Oregon USA.

Peter lives in Geelong, and he is currently focused on manufacturing therapeutic, musical instruments called Reverie harps. These small, beautiful instruments are now being used within care settings across Australia and overseas.

During his presentation, Peter will demonstrate his approach to playing at the bedside, share personal stories, and explain how his Reverie harps can be used....by anyone.

Peter lives in Geelong, and he is currently focused on manufacturing therapeutic, musical instruments called Reverie harps.



Day Two

Fri May 3, 2024



Day Two

7:45am – 8:30am

Pre conference sessions

- Therapeutic music
- PainChek
- Virtual reality with Dementia Australia
- Meditation

8:45am – 9:00am

Welcome to day Two and Acknowledgement of Country

Dr Russell Pearce, Conference MC, Palliative Care Physician GRPCT

9:00am – 10:00am

Looking at the Past to Lead us into Tomorrow

- Dr David Brumley
- Maree Kewish, NUM Gandarra
- Violet Platt, CEO PCV
- Dr Bharathy Gunasekaran, Clinical Director Anam Cara House Geelong
- Regina Kendall NP, Grampians Regional Palliative Care Team

10:00am – 10:30am

Morning Tea

10:30am – 12:15pm

Digital Horizons in Palliative Care

10:30 – 11:15pm

Technology use in Health Care

Assoc. Professor Simon Egerton, LaTrobe University, Dr. Kan Yu, La Trobe University

11:15am – 12:15pm

What might the future hold? Digital health's impact on Palliative Care

Assoc. Professor Christopher Pearce, Director of Research, Outcome Health. Ass Professor of Health Informatics, University of Melbourne.

12:15pm – 12:55pm

Lunch

12:55pm – 2:40pm

Future innovations and trends

12:55pm – 1:45pm

Victorian Virtual ED

Dr Mihaela Marginean, Northern Hospital

1.50pm – 2:40pm

Organ donation and VAD

Larna Woodyatt, Nurse Donation Specialist,
Organ and Tissue Donation

2:40pm – 3:00pm

Afternoon tea

3.00pm – 4:00pm

After death care and burial options

Annie DeJong, CEO Ballarat Cemeteries

4:00pm – 4:20pm

Announcement of prize winners

Save the date 2026

4:20pm – 4:30pm

Conference Thanks & Close



Friday Guest Speaker

Violet Platt

Looking at the Past to Lead us
into Tomorrow

Violet is a registered nurse with over 30 years of experience in cancer and palliative care nursing. Working in England, the Isle of Man, and Australia in a variety of settings including hospital, hospice, and the community. Violet has a Master's in Nursing Research, an Executive Master of Business Administration, and is currently undertaking a PhD in Palliative Care for people experiencing homelessness. In 2016 Violet received a Lifetime Achievement award from the WA Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards in recognition of her contributions to cancer and palliative care nursing.



Friday Guest Speaker

Dr Bharathy Gunasekaran

Looking at the Past to Lead us
into Tomorrow

Bharathy is a palliative care physician at Grampians Health. She is also the clinical director at Anam Cara House Geelong, a new purpose-built palliative care facility providing person-centred care in a home-like environment. Bharathy completed a Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (Hons) and Bachelor of Medical Science at the University of Melbourne. She is passionate about research and medical education. Bharathy recently completed her Graduate Diploma in Clinical Education with the University of Melbourne. She is an Affiliate Senior Lecturer at Deakin University and a member of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Palliative Medicine Curriculum Review Group.



Friday Guest Speaker

Assoc. Professor Simon Egerton

Technology use in Health Care

Simon Egerton is an Associate Professor at La Trobe University Australia and directs the Technology Innovation Lab and the Rural Digital Health Research Group at the Bendigo campus. He specialises in applying technology, Internet of Things and Robotics to improve health and wellbeing outcomes in rural and regional communities through the co-design of digital health research. A notable recent contribution of his was the “Driving digital transformation of regional aged care through the innovation corridor: An Internet of Medical Things Aged Care Service Model” a project funded by Regional Development Victoria which extended medical services into the homes of those at risk of hospitalization with chronic disease. The project developed IoT Technology to deliver services in rural

areas without traditional mobile phone and WiFi coverage and was an Australian first. Simon is co-founder and director of the Creative Science Foundation (CSf), a non-profit foundation dedicated to exploring the use of science fiction as a means to motivate and direct research into new technologies. The recent Creative Robotix project from CSf is currently being adopted into schools across the region and further afield.



Friday Guest Speaker

Dr. Kan Yu

Technology use in Health Care

Dr. Kan Yu, a lecturer at La Trobe University's Bendigo campus, specializes in Computer Science and IT. With a Ph.D. from Malardalen University, Sweden, and a rich background in both academia and industry, Dr. Yu brings a unique blend of expertise to the healthcare domain.

His research focuses on the intersection of wireless systems and cyber-physical systems, demonstrating a keen interest in applying these technologies to healthcare. An active member of the IEEE Standards Association P1451.5p Working Group, he contributes significantly to the development of radio frequency channel specifications. Dr. Yu's editorial roles, including his work for IEEE Transactions on Industrial Informatics,

highlight his commitment to advancing the field of industrial cyber-physical systems. His involvement in special sessions at major IEEE conferences, such as ICPS and INDIN, emphasizes his leadership in exploring the applications and challenges of wireless networks and fog computing in industrial settings, with implications for healthcare technologies.

His achievements are further underscored by accolades like the best paper award at the International Conference on Information Technology and grants from prestigious institutions like the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Science and Ericsson.



Friday Guest Speaker

Assoc. Professor Christopher Pearce

What might the future hold?
Digital health's impact on
Palliative Care

A/Prof Pearce is a rural generalist who has extensively researched computers in healthcare, with a focus on the interactions and useability. He is an invited speaker both here and overseas, and the author of over 100 academic articles. As director of the AURORA Primary Care Research Institute, his role with Outcome Health is to work on data quality and use of Australia's largest repository of general practice data. He is pioneering the use of AI in the primary care setting.



Friday Guest Speaker

Dr Miki Marginean

Victorian Virtual ED

Dr Miki Marginean is a senior Emergency Physician and the lead for Palliative Care in the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department at the Northern Hospital.

Miki has an avid interest in aged care and is trying to make a difference in the management of geriatric patients in the challenging environment of the Emergency Department.

This interest is also based on personal reasons as she looked after her father who suffered of a terminal illness and was disabled in the last years of his life.

She worked many years in rural Victoria and Queensland and understands the difficulties people have accessing health services.



Friday Guest Speaker

Larna Woodyatt

Organ donation and VAD

Larna Woodyatt is a Donation Specialist Nurse at Grampians Health Ballarat and DonateLife Victoria. For over eight years, Larna has provided clinical and education services to her Health Service colleagues to ensure the best possible care for potential organ and tissue donors and their families. She has a background in Intensive Care Nursing and is passionate about choice at end-of-life.



Friday Guest Speaker

Annie De Jong

After death care and
burial options

Annie is currently the CEO of Ballarat Cemeteries. For the last 7 years, Annie has had the honour of caring for those no longer physically with us and creating beautiful botanical memorial places for people to visit.

Active in the broader community, Annie is currently an executive member of the Ballarat neighbourhood houses and a member of the Compassionate Cities Steering Committee.

Annie has been appointed the President of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Association of Victoria (CCAV)

Annie has over 23 years in Local Government, with Senior Executive level experience within diverse leadership roles.

Annie enjoys living in regional Victoria (Ballarat) and enjoys camping, eating out and special friendships.



5 Senses of Palliative Care

CONFERENCE 2026

Save^{!!!}
the date

May 2026



Grampians Regional
Palliative Care Team



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