

MEDIA RELEASE

Improving end of life care

23 November 2015

Mildura residents are being urged by the Victorian State Government to have their say about the services they want to support them at the end of their and their loved ones' lives.

Many people with a life-limiting disease die in hospital, when they would have preferred to die at home. Figures indicate that up to 70 per cent of Australians would prefer to die at home, but only 14 per cent do.

A public *End of Life Care* framework consultation session will be held in Mildura on **27 November** between **9.00am – 12.00pm** and is open to all Mildura residents who would like to contribute towards a new state-wide end of life framework.

Local residents can also contribute via an online hub www.betterendoflife.vic.gov.au from now until 18 December 2015.

A new Discussion Paper – *Greater Say for Victorians: Improving End of Life Care* – has been released by the Department of Health & Human Services, and consultation is being undertaken across the state with health professionals, carers, families and members of the public.

The Discussion Paper looks at how to strengthen the framework to:

- Enable genuine choice
- Support individuals, families and carers
- Respond to diversity
- Help people to die well
- Support the workforce.

A key focus of the current government is to introduce statutory recognition of advance care directives to ensure Victorians have a greater say over their treatment conditions and can decide their end of life care wishes.

Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy, quotes that:

- *"Victorians deserve the best possible end of life care – care that relieves pain and suffering, and provides empowering support to family, friends and carers."* and
- *"It's so important that families and the wider community talk openly and honestly about end of life care. It can be a difficult topic, but it affects us all."*



Those interested in attending should register via the website www.betterendoflife.vic.gov.au. The Discussion Paper is also available on the website or a hard copy can be requested by calling 03 9096 1337.

Submissions can be received until Friday 18 December 2015 via the website, EoLC.consultation@dhhs.vic.gov.au or by mailing Continuing Care – Health Service Programs, GPO BOX 4057, Melbourne VIC 3001.

SCHS provides local Palliative Care Services across the upper Loddon Mallee region. Our staff and volunteers have extensive experience in end of life care and will be in attendance at this forum to support discussion on this important topic. If community members need further information or support on their own experiences or needs regarding end of life care, please contact SCHS on 5022 5444.

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