

"IF IT WASN'T FOR HOSPICE MY BROTHER WOULD NEVER HAVE FELT SNOW AGAIN BEFORE HE DIED."

Don't get me wrong—it was incredibly sad losing my brother, but I will never forget his face when we opened the curtains outside the hospice and the garden was full of snow, and there were fairy lights in the trees. The whole scene had been created using man-made snow sourced from a local company.

None of it would have happened if it wasn't for the love, care and thoughtfulness of hospice. They'd truly listened that day my brother mentioned he just wished he could have felt snow one more time. What would we have done without hospice? I've no idea; all I know is the world is a better place with hospice in it. They do an amazing job and the services they provide are all free to patients and their families. We can never repay them—please have a think about giving a donation today, no matter how big or small, it means so much.

—Nicola*

These are the experiences that make hospice care unique and enable people to live every moment.

Many people do not realise that hospice is a philosophy of care, not a building. Hospice cares for the whole person; not just their physical needs, but also their emotional, spiritual and social needs. We care for families and friends as well, both before and after a death. Irrespective of where a person lives, this philosophy does not change and everything we provide is free of charge.

In 2008, hospices throughout New Zealand provided care and support for over 13,000 people and made over 125,000 visits in the community. The range of services a hospice provides depends on what is required locally, but could include access to an inpatient facility, community nursing support, clinics with palliative care specialists, counselling and bereavement support, access to social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. You can find out more about the services provided in any region

of the country by visiting www.hospice.org.nz.

Government provides funding for hospice services through contracts with the Ministry of Health, however this does not cover the full cost of hospice care. Each year we need the support of the community to fund the shortfall and keep services free of charge. There are many opportunities to support our work: donations, attending fundraising events, leaving a gift in your will or making purchases at a hospice secondhand shop.

We are extremely fortunate to have wonderful ongoing partnerships with companies like House of Travel, ABN AMRO Craigs and BNI, plus regular support from Dilmah NZ and many charitable trusts that support a range of projects.

Volunteers remain at the heart of hospice and in 2008 more than 7,000 people gave more than 456,000 hours of their time in a variety of roles, all helping others make the most of life.

FACT FILE

Who can use hospice services?

Hospices can provide care for anyone who has a terminal diagnosis irrespective of age, religion, ethnicity or ability to pay. The majority of patients have cancer, but patients with other terminal illnesses (such as motor neurone disease, MS, heart failure) also receive care.

Where is hospice or palliative care provided?

At home: Community hospice palliative care services work alongside the patient's own doctor and district nurses and family.

Day-stay facilities: Services may include medical and nursing care, spiritual support, physiotherapy, occupational therapy as well as varied creative and social activities.

Inpatient facilities: Patients are admitted for a few days or weeks for specialist care. This may be for symptom control, respite or terminal care.

Is it true that once you go to a hospice inpatient facility you are unlikely to leave?

No. Many patients spend a day or two in a hospice inpatient facility for symptom control and pain management. They then return to their homes where their care is continued. Hospice palliative care does not have to be provided in a hospice. It is often provided in a person's own home. People may choose the supportive environment of a hospice in-patient facility. Where possible, whatever is best for them, and their family and friends, is accommodated.

For more on hospice, and the various hospice services around New Zealand, please visit www.hospice.org.nz

HOSPICE AWARENESS WEEK

Hospice Awareness Week runs from May 11-17. A variety of activities have been planned by hospices to mark this occasion—keep an eye out for details of events and activities in your local paper. **Good magazine will donate \$9 from every subscription bought by June 14 to Hospice New Zealand.** You can also make a donation at anytime through the Hospice website, www.hospice.org.nz

Any donation you make means we are able to continue supporting people like Nicola and her brother to live every moment—what a wonderful gift.

Subscribe to Good magazine and we will donate 20% to Hospice New Zealand

To learn more go to good.net.nz/goodcause or see the subscription form on page 96



* While this story is based on an actual situation, some details have been changed to protect those concerned.

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