

## **Pastoral care in Catholic aged care facilities – the Jeanne Jugan Aged Care Group**

### **Report of 30 April 2009 Forum**

This note reports on a gathering of Catholic aged care providers organized by Catholic Social Services Victoria on 30 April 2009.

Feedback on the Forum, on this report, or on ideas for further support for Catholic aged care providers would be most welcome.

Catholic Social Services Victoria would like to thank all who participated: representatives from aged care providers, and also our invited guests from a variety of areas, including the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Health Australia, the Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation, Health Care Chaplaincy of Victoria Inc, Bapcare, and Community Care. Their input will contribute to stronger better focused pastoral care programs within our agencies.

This report covers the following topics:

- Next steps and future directions
- The 30 April 2009 Forum
- Issues
- Contact details – participants and other stakeholders
- Resources – books, events, people

### **Next Steps and future directions**

Those who attended the Forum on 30 April decided to keep in contact through a 'special interest group' of Catholic Aged Care providers, which CSSV will facilitate.

After discussion with the Little Sisters of the Poor, and consultation with Archbishop Denis Hart, it seemed appropriate to name this special interest group after Blessed Jeanne Jugan, who founded the Little Sisters of the Poor, and who is to be canonised on October 11 this year. Naming the group after Blessed Jeanne Jugan should serve to retain the focus of attention of the group on the Church's mission of service in this field. It also gives recognition to the loving service to the aged that has been given over the years by Religious sisters and others, often in challenging circumstances.

Further events are envisaged, in cases where there is input or a topic that would be of clear benefit to members. One option under consideration is to offer a further in-service opportunity for pastoral care staff in late October to coincide with the Canonization of Blessed Jeanne Jugan. Preliminary thinking is that this event might look at the Cultural and Spiritual Needs Assessment tool, and how it is being used and further developed.

The group will essentially be a conduit for contact between the members and a way of disseminating information; advertising coming events and topical publications, courses,



Blessed Jeanne Jugan,  
1772 – 1879  
Founder of the Little Sisters  
of the Poor  
Beatified 1982



training opportunities and in-service programs. CSSV will co-ordinate the group and be proactive in seeking input and ideas from members.

CSSV will also provide a webpage and initiate an email contact group. Some material has been posted at [www.css.org.au/agedcarelinks.html](http://www.css.org.au/agedcarelinks.html), including this report and a listing of resources on pastoral care: printed material, events, and key contacts.

It might then make sense to meet a couple of times a year, perhaps at different member sites to familiarize ourselves with other agencies and their work.

We would welcome news and contributions from member agencies to share with the whole group. The email list provided by the members should enable ready communication. Terry O'Shannassy, Member Support Coordinator at CSSV, is an initial point of contact.

### **The 30 April 2009 Forum**

A number of informal comments and discussions with our Catholic aged care providers on the topic of pastoral care had alerted CSSV to the interests of these agencies in meeting together to make contact with each other, to share information about current practice and to discuss issues that they currently face in the provision of pastoral care. Working with Catholic Health Australia, and in consultation with the Office for Evangelisation and with Centacare Catholic Family Services, CSSV followed this up with a Forum for Catholic aged care providers on 30 April 2009.

The Forum was well attended, with around 20 providers and other agencies were represented – see attached list of attendees. These included managers and representatives from a number of the major Catholic aged care providers.

Members and visitors shared their experience and insights around the pastoral care issues facing our aged care services. There was strong affirmation of the dedicated work continuing over generations by teams of clergy and religious, and complemented today by the work of lay volunteers and, increasingly in some areas, paid professional staff.

Members and our invited guests shared a wide range of experience and insights around the pastoral care issues facing our aged care services. For many, this included a passion for pioneering new ways of looking at the pastoral care needs of the elderly, and for sharing these insights and learning with all present.

The forum shared the 100 years of accumulated wisdom from the Sisters of Nazareth and the Little Sisters of the Poor, while hearing also of some recent developments within Catholic agencies and across homes run by other Christian denominations.

The Forum was welcomed by those who participated. This was evident from the closing discussion, and from an indication that participants wanted the links with others at the Forum to continue as a special interest group.

### **Issues**

The twenty participants shared their different models of care, ideas about training and accessing qualified staff, and the financial constraints under which most operate. The origins and management of the various member providers had produced a wide variety of aged care pastoral responses.

#### ***Catholic pastoral care***

There was clear recognition of the importance for pastoral care of the availability of the sacraments, and other dimensions of specifically Catholic spirituality. Equally, there was wide acknowledgement of the importance of affirming the examples and models of committed care developed and delivered by the Church over the generations. At the



same time, it was recognized that pastoral care goes beyond the availability of the sacraments, to meet the diverse spiritual needs of residents.

Links with parishes were seen as important in providing this dimension of pastoral care, and those links are strong in many areas. Catholic Social Services Victoria can assist agencies in this area. Bishop Christopher Prowse, as the Episcopal Vicar both for Justice and Social Services, and for Health, has been another link with the Archdiocese and its parish structure.

At the same time, there was recognition that agencies needed to re-think in many cases the delivery of this support, in light of the reduced numbers in many areas of clergy and religious, and, in some cases, of long term volunteer contributors - some agencies were well organized, while others were only slowly coming to terms with the impact on current support models and with succession planning. Utilisation of retired/resident clergy for sacramental services can be of great assistance, but is not itself a total response to the pastoral care needs of residents.

Ethos and identity of Catholic facilities can struggle where numbers of non-catholic staff may have received little orientation or in-service training to help them understand the basic principles of Catholic Social Teaching which underpin the ministry that they share. Staff position descriptions need to specify the ethos requirements and managers need to provide on-going formation and opportunities for reflection.

The need to respect the religious heritage of residents who are not Catholic was also highlighted.

#### ***Pastoral support for families, etc***

There is a growing need for pastoral support for families of dying residents as well as some support for staff regularly facing stressful situations. Some agencies had creative responses to bereavement that engaged families and supported them through the work of the pastoral care team. Visibility of Pastoral Care staff is important as seen in the example of religious sisters in some homes.

#### ***Models of pastoral care***

Ms Kate Hewett, Coordinator of Mercy Aged Care's Pastoral services updated the group on the approach that is underway across Mercy Health's aged care facilities to appoint salaried pastoral care workers. Speakers from the Health Care Chaplaincy of Victoria Inc. and Bapcare also shared ideas about service initiatives and training and accreditation options.

There was keen interest in information about the provision of suitable training options for both paid and volunteer staff. (see some information under [resources](#) on the website advised above.) A move was foreshadowed to create a system of national accreditation for health care pastoral workers through Spiritual Care Australia. This would enable professional standards and strengthened career opportunities to develop.

#### ***Funding***

Funding is a key issue. Shortfalls in this area can require a heavy reliance on volunteers, some of whom are well trained but many of whom across the sector can tend to be elderly themselves. The release of staff for in-service training and for reflection and formation can also be limited.

Richard Gray, Director of Aged Care Services at Catholic Health Australia, outlined the recent call by CHA on the Australian Government to provide specific funding for pastoral services in Aged Care facilities. This would enable more agencies to recruit qualified pastoral care staff whom they can then induct into their own particular institution and share history and charism.



From a purely management perspective, effective pastoral care leads to more contented residents, happier families and fewer complaints and issues. However, in part because of funding pressures, not all managers in the sector see it as affordable.

In part because of increasing government compliance requirements, there is a trend towards a declining number of individual providers - smaller agencies are tending to join with larger organizations to achieve economies of scale. Such economies can also facilitate the development of pastoral care strategies.

***In-home care***

New structures will need to be put in place to assist those elderly who remain in their own homes and receive services as in the CAPS model. They are at risk of isolation if they do not have some affiliation with an existing church community or local government services. Providers of CAPS services may have a role to play in pastoral care – this is an area of increasing importance

***Other resources***

To better understand the needs of patients, some agencies have a Cultural and Spiritual Needs Assessment tool that they use with new patients to formulate a plan for individual residents. This requires a commitment of time.

Richard Gray and Therese Vassarotti highlighted the recent contribution by Catholic Health Australia to pastoral care initiatives through Aged Care specific publications.

Some specific in-service opportunities were highlighted – see [Resources](#) section below.

Catholic Social Services Victoria  
June 2009

**Attachments:**

Jean Jugan Aged Care Group: Contact List

Catholic Aged Care: Pastoral Care Resources



**Jeanne Jugan Aged Care Group - A contact group of Catholic aged care providers in Victoria**

**Attendees at 30 April 2009 CSSV meeting of Catholic Aged Care Providers**

|    |           |             |                              |   |  |
|----|-----------|-------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| Sr | Ana       | Robertson   | Sister Superior              | Nazareth House  | <a href="mailto:sr_ana@nazhousecamberwell.com.au">sr_ana@nazhousecamberwell.com.au</a>       |
| Sr | Luke      |             |                              | Nazareth House  |  |
| Ms | Jan       | Horsnell    | CEO                          | Southern Cross Care (Vic)                                 | <a href="mailto:jhorsnell@southern-cross.org.au">jhorsnell@southern-cross.org.au</a>         |
| Fr | Michael   | McShane SJ  | Pastoral Director            | Corpus Christi Community                                  | <a href="mailto:mmcshane@corpuscc.org.au">mmcshane@corpuscc.org.au</a>                       |
| Ms | Joan      | Donoghue    | Chief Executive Officer      | Catholic Homes for the Elderly                            | <a href="mailto:Joan.Donoghue@catholic-homes.org.au">Joan.Donoghue@catholic-homes.org.au</a> |
| Ms | Lorraine  | Llody       |                              | St Vincent de Paul Aged Care and Community Services       | <a href="mailto:lorraine.lloyd@svdp-vic.org.au">lorraine.lloyd@svdp-vic.org.au</a>           |
| Sr | Winifred  | Sutcliffe   |                              | Little Sisters of the Poor, St Joseph's Home for the Aged | <a href="mailto:ms.mel@lsop.org.au">ms.mel@lsop.org.au</a>                                   |
| Sr | Loretta   |             |                              | Little Sisters of the Poor, St Joseph's Home for the Aged |  |
| Ms | Kate      | Hewitt      | Pastoral Care Coordinator    | Mercy Health and Aged Care                                | <a href="mailto:khewett@mercy.com.au">khewett@mercy.com.au</a>                               |
| Ms | Audrey    | Kateena     | Pastoral Care Coordinator    | Good Shepherd Aged Services                               | <a href="mailto:audrey.kateena@gsas.asn.au">audrey.kateena@gsas.asn.au</a>                   |
| Ms | Ilsa      | Hampton     | Pastoral Care Coordinator    | Baptcare  | <a href="mailto:ihampton@baptcare.org.au">ihampton@baptcare.org.au</a>                       |
| Ms | Cheryl    | Holmes      | CEO                          | Health Care Chaplains Victoria Inc                        | <a href="mailto:ceo@hccvi.org.au">ceo@hccvi.org.au</a>                                       |
| Br | Mark      | O'Connor    | Director                     | Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation                    | <a href="mailto:moconnor@melbourne.catholic.org.au">moconnor@melbourne.catholic.org.au</a>   |
| Ms | Christine | Greenhatch  | Consultant                   | Community Care  | <a href="mailto:cgreenhatch@communitycare.com.au">cgreenhatch@communitycare.com.au</a>       |
| Mr | Richard   | Gray        | Director, Aged Care Services | Catholic Health Australia                                 | <a href="mailto:richardg@cha.org.au">richardg@cha.org.au</a>                                 |
| Mr | Therese   | Vassarotti  |                              | Catholic Health Australia                                 | <a href="mailto:tvassarotti@gmail.com">tvassarotti@gmail.com</a>                             |
| Ms | Amanda    | Kingham     | Director Residential Care    | Cabrini Aged Care   | <a href="mailto:residential@cabrini.com.au">residential@cabrini.com.au</a>                   |
| Mr | Bruce     | Ryan        | Executive Secretary          | Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life                      | <a href="mailto:pastoral.life@catholic.org.au">pastoral.life@catholic.org.au</a>             |
| Mr | Terry     | O'Shannassy | Member Support Coordinator   | Catholic Social Services Victoria                         | <a href="mailto:toshannassy@css.org.au">toshannassy@css.org.au</a>                           |
| Mr | Denis     | Fitzgerald  | Executive Director           | Catholic Social Services Victoria                         | <a href="mailto:dfitzgerald@css.org.au">dfitzgerald@css.org.au</a>                           |

**Other Catholic Aged Care contacts**

|        |             |            |                                    |  |  |
|--------|-------------|------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Fr     | John        | Petrulis   | Parish Priest, Sacred Heart Parish | Sacred Heart Mission St Kilda Inc                              | <a href="mailto:jpetrulis@netspace.net.au">jpetrulis@netspace.net.au</a>                     |
| Ms     | Lindsay     | Farley     | CEO                                | Sisters of St Joseph Health Care Services Ltd (Mary MacKillop) | <a href="mailto:ceo.mmacc@sosj.org.au">ceo.mmacc@sosj.org.au</a>                             |
| Ms     | Rhonda      | Joiner     | Chief Executive Officer/DON        | San Carlo Homes for the Aged                                   | <a href="mailto:sancarlot@sancarlot.com.au">sancarlot@sancarlot.com.au</a>                   |
| Ms     | Eileen      | Kielty     | Director of Care                   | St Francis of Assisi Aged Care Nursing Home and Hostel         | <a href="mailto:ekielty@assisiscentre.com">ekielty@assisiscentre.com</a>                     |
| Mr     | Bill        | Holligan   | President                          | Catholic Chaplains' Association for Health Care                | <a href="mailto:wholliga@bigpond.net.au">wholliga@bigpond.net.au</a>                         |
| Ms     | Marcelle    | Mogg       | Director of Mission                | St Vincent's Health  | <a href="mailto:marcelle.mogg@svhm.org.au">marcelle.mogg@svhm.org.au</a>                     |
| Ms     | Liz         | Payne      | Pastoral Care Services Manager     | Centacare Catholic Family Services                             | <a href="mailto:Liz.Payne@centacaremelbourne.org.au">Liz.Payne@centacaremelbourne.org.au</a> |
| Fr     | Joe         | Caddy      | Chief Executive Officer            | Centacare Catholic Family Services                             | <a href="mailto:joe.caddy@centacaremelbourne.org.au">joe.caddy@centacaremelbourne.org.au</a> |
| Mr     | Michael     | Perusco    | Chief Executive Officer            | Sacred Heart Mission St Kilda Inc                              | <a href="mailto:mperusco@sacredheartmission.org">mperusco@sacredheartmission.org</a>         |
| Mr     | Patrick     | Gallagher  | Community Director                 | Corpus Christi Community                                       | <a href="mailto:patrickbg@bigpond.com">patrickbg@bigpond.com</a>                             |
| Ms     | Sharon      | D'Rozario  | Chief Executive Officer            | Good Shepherd Aged Services                                    | <a href="mailto:Sharon.D'Rozario@gsas.asn.au">Sharon.D'Rozario@gsas.asn.au</a>               |
| Ms     | Valerie     | Lyons      | CEO                                | Villa Maria Society  | <a href="mailto:Valerie.Lyons@villamaria.com.au">Valerie.Lyons@villamaria.com.au</a>         |
| Ms     | Sandra      | Krnel      | Chief Executive Officer            | Mother Romana Home   | <a href="mailto:romanahome@optusnet.com.au">romanahome@optusnet.com.au</a>                   |
| Ms     | Cath        | Garner     | Director of Mission Integration    | Cabrini Health Australia                                       | <a href="mailto:cgarner@cabrini.com.au">cgarner@cabrini.com.au</a>                           |
| Ms     | Clair       | Schmierer  |                                    | St Vincent de Paul Aged Care and Community Services            | <a href="mailto:claire.schmierer@svdp-vic.org.au">claire.schmierer@svdp-vic.org.au</a>       |
| Dr     | Doug        | Kent       | Chief Executive Officer            | St Vincent de Paul Aged Care and Community Services            | <a href="mailto:doug.kent@svdp-vic.org.au">doug.kent@svdp-vic.org.au</a>                     |
| Fr     | John        | Fitzgerald | Parish Priest                      | Warrnambool  | <a href="mailto:johnfitz@vic.australis.com.au">johnfitz@vic.australis.com.au</a>             |
| Mr     | Tom         | Carr       | Human Resources Manager            | Archdiocese of Melbourne                                       | <a href="mailto:tcarr@melbourne.catholic.org.au">tcarr@melbourne.catholic.org.au</a>         |
| Bishop | Christopher | Prowse     | Auxiliary Bishop                   | Archdiocese of Melbourne                                       | <a href="mailto:cprowse@melbourne.catholic.org.au">cprowse@melbourne.catholic.org.au</a>     |



## Catholic Aged Care: Resources

### Books, etc

Catholic Health Australia publish a range of material that is directly relevant to the pastoral care of older people – see their website: <http://www.cha.org.au/site.php?id=666>

### Events

Healthcare Chaplaincy Council of Victoria Inc.

Mental Healthcare Chaplaincy

24th - 25th September 2009

**National Conference - Spirituality & Mental Health**

See <http://hccvi.org.au/events.html> for details.



Mercy Health Workshop, Friday 16 October 2009

Presenter: Rev Professor Elizabeth MacKinlay

Director, Centre for Ageing and Pastoral Studies, Canberra, Australia

Topic: **Finding meaning in later life**

For further details email [khewett@mercy.com.au](mailto:khewett@mercy.com.au)

### People

Richard Gray, Director, Aged Care Services, Catholic Health Australia, [Richardg@cha.org.au](mailto:Richardg@cha.org.au), tel (02) 6260 5980

Ms Liz Payne, Pastoral Care Services Manager, Centacare Catholic Family Services, [liz.payne@centacaremelbourne.org.au](mailto:liz.payne@centacaremelbourne.org.au), tel 9287 5505

Rev Cheryl Holmes, CEO, Health Care Chaplaincy of Victoria, [ceo@hccvi.org.au](mailto:ceo@hccvi.org.au), tel 8415 1144

Br. Mark O'Connor, Director, Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation, [moconnor@melbourne.catholic.org.au](mailto:moconnor@melbourne.catholic.org.au), tel 9926 5762

Mr. Bill Holligan, Convenor, Catholic Chaplains Association for Health Care, [wholliga@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wholliga@bigpond.net.au),

Mr Terry O'Shannassy, Member Services Coordinator, Catholic Social Services Victoria, [toshannassy@css.org.au](mailto:toshannassy@css.org.au), tel 9287 5570