



Total Confidence in Cranford Hospice

An open letter to Cranford Hospice supporters, staff, volunteers and the people of the Hawke's Bay.

The board of Presbyterian Support East Coast is writing this open letter to assure the public, staff and supporters that they can have total confidence in Cranford Hospice; both in the care provided and in the positive atmosphere amongst most staff.

Recent articles and correspondence in the media has been based on the opinions of a small number of people and in our opinion portrays an inaccurate interpretation of facts. The board is very concerned that this unjustified criticism is damaging the reputation of Cranford Hospice, upsetting staff and volunteers and diverting efforts from the important work of providing care for those with a life-limiting illness.

Cranford Hospice has always strived to improve access to palliative care. It has been through many changes in its twenty-seven year history. These changes have always been for the good of patients and their families and whanau. The same is true today.

Many of the current initiatives build on ideas begun under previous leaders and staff. Today's leaders are extending these ideas and adding to them, in order to improve both the quality of and access to palliative care throughout Hawke's Bay.

The direction Cranford Hospice is taking is in line with hospice development both nationally and internationally. The board has stayed in close touch with Hospice New Zealand and taken other external advice to ensure that Cranford Hospice is on the right path.

This path involves the introduction of new clinical methods and an expansion of the support to others such as GP teams, hospitals, Maori providers and resthomes with whom we work in partnership. This means that more patients and families can get access to quality care and that care happens in a more integrated way across all services.

Nurses and other staff are being asked to work in some different ways. The vast majority of staff are satisfied with this and see the benefits for their patients.

Here are some facts to back the board's confidence in Cranford Hospice:

- There are now more nurses, doctors and other front-line staff than ever before and their wages have been increased significantly in the last three years.
- In the last year there were 500 patients. We received consistently excellent feedback from them and bereaved families.

- In a survey in September this year 80% of hospice staff and volunteers said they talk positively about the service to family and friends.
- Over the last 12 months, 1100 staff in resthomes and hospitals have received specific training in the care of the dying through the Liverpool Care of the Dying Pathway project. This enhances the partnership between Cranford Hospice and these services when caring for patients.

The ultimate testimony to our confidence in Cranford Hospice is the positive experience of hundreds of people who are supported by the service and the satisfied staff who love working there.

The recent public criticism diverts energy from the important work of caring for patients. This work is the board's priority and we do not intend to participate in any further debate via the media. We believe that most reasonable people would agree with our decision.

Ron Hall
Chair of the Board

