

**AFTERNOON TEA TO MARK THE  
40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS SOUTH TAS INC  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2024**

Good afternoon, everyone. I warmly welcome you to Government House to celebrate 40 years of compassionate service by Hospice Volunteers South Tasmania.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

In 1984, an initiative began to provide practical and emotional support for those living with palliative conditions and for their families. Over these last 40 years, you have supported more than 4,000 people; a significant achievement.<sup>1</sup> That's 100 people on average yearly for the last four decades who have received your services, which have improved their quality of life.

At the heart of this work are your volunteers. The impact of their work is huge. As palliative care volunteers, you step into situations that require immense personal and emotional strength. This provides comfort not only to patients but also to families. Your presence provides comfort; you offer a listening ear, a gentle touch, or silent companionship. Importantly, you help families through their grief, uncertainty, and emotions surrounding end-of-life care.

Over four decades, Hospice Volunteers Tasmania has developed advanced care planning and bereavement support and the recently introduced life story biography service. Your support continues to grow and adapt to meet the changing needs of our community. Partnering with the Tasmanian Health Service and the Department of Health ensures that your services remain

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence Steph Kirkman Miekle – Paula Chatwood 21 November 2024

effective and accessible, including your focus on digital initiatives like the Palhelp platform.

Today, we also recognise the staff, advocates, and community partners who have contributed 40 years of support. Professor Michael Ashby, Tasmania's leading palliative care physician and long-time supporter and advocate for Hospice Volunteers, is another example of the commitment shown to this cause.

And so, as we mark 40 years of dedication and service, it is clear that Hospice Volunteers South Tasmania is integral to the success of palliative care in our community.

To the volunteers here today and all the volunteers who have been part of this support service, thank you. Many of you have served for decades, including one volunteer with an exceptional 33 years of service! Your level of dedication is inspiring and exemplary.

May I wish you continued success in supporting individuals and families in need. Thank you all, and please enjoy your afternoon tea.