

# Media Release

Monday, 4 September 2023

## **I Am Living receives Good Samaritan Mission Award**

The I Am Living public awareness initiative and campaign delivered by Calvary Health Care, Catholic Cemeteries + Crematoria and Mercy Palliative Care, has been named the Good Samaritan Mission Award winner at the Catholic Health Australia National Conference 2023.

The program launched in 2022, is designed to expand understanding, and address community anxiety and some of the fears around the deterioration of health, dying, death, loss and grief. It contributes to end-of-life public awareness, further education and the normalisation of discussions and planning around palliative and end-of-life care.

While some people may live for years with a life-limiting illness, others may experience a sudden and unexpected death, or become unresponsive and therefore unable to make and communicate decisions for themselves. I Am Living encourages people to have open and honest conversations so their wishes and preferences are known and respected, even when they may be unable to voice these themselves.

The program's strategy is to further support the education of the public about the personal and highly varied complexities of the psychological, spiritual, cultural, social and medical journeys of individuals navigating their own end-of-life experience, together with the significant people in their lives.

The program centres on a series of short documentaries featuring authentic conversations with people living with an advanced terminal illness. These Good Samaritans speak about the things that matter to them as they face their own mortality. Importantly, their stories show that hope-filled and positive experiences are possible, even in a hospital bed.

Mark Green, Calvary Health Care's Director of Mission, said: "I Am Living instills a deep reverence for each and every person as they matter to the last moment of their life. The program dignifies the person's suffering and demonstrates how, with care and support, a life is enhanced even as it draws to a close."

Deanne Layton, Mercy Palliative Care manager, said Mercy was quick to recognise the value of the I am Living initiative.

"Initiatives such as these which raise the public awareness of palliative care and the conversations that people can have at the end of life are valuable," Ms Layton said.

"The video stories bring real life stories of people receiving palliative care and the message of living until we die. These stories show there is much more to palliative care than just end of life care. Raising community awareness and encouraging people to talk is an important message from this campaign."

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**About Calvary:**

In 1885, six courageous Sisters sailed into Sydney to continue the mission of Venerable Mary Potter and the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary to care for those in need. Thus began Calvary's enduring legacy of care in Australia. Today, we continue their mission, in our hospitals, home and virtual care services, retirement living and residential aged care homes across five states and two territories.

For more information, visit [www.calvarycare.org.au](http://www.calvarycare.org.au).