

40 STORIES IN 40 YEARS

Kim Hider



Kim Hider has been working in the healthcare sector since she was 18 years old. During her long career as a registered nurse and midwife, she worked in various rural and metropolitan healthcare settings, dedicating most of her time caring for patients.

In 2002, Kim moved on from nursing and established her own evaluation consultancy business. Sixteen years later, in 2018, she saw an online ad recruiting for a Consumer and Carer Representative who has had personal experience with palliative care, to join the Palliative Care Victoria (PCV) Board.

"When I was a nurse, palliative care was one of the areas you were exposed to. It wasn't my specialty, however due to working in rural healthcare settings, I had the opportunity to work directly with

general practitioners and assisted them to care for terminally ill patients in local communities."

"In 2018, I began thinking about volunteering and ways to give back to the community. This Board position aligned with my passion to continue to improve the health sector for families and individuals by becoming involved in palliative care consumer and carer engagement."

As well as serving on the PCV Board, Kim is also employed at Diabetes Victoria as the Head of Evaluation, Evidence and Quality.

"It is really a great privileged to work in palliative care and help support people and families during this difficult time. You can make such a memorable and lasting difference to their lives."

As a Board Member, Kim acknowledges the importance of Palliative Care Victoria as a supporting body during the end-of-life cycle, as well as an organisation that helps consumers to share their stories and experiences.

"As a Consumer and Carer Representative, I advocate for consumers to have a voice and share their stories so that other people can resonate and feel supported and heard."

"I have a good understanding of the current palliative care services in Victoria. I am always willing to help others who are experiencing the impending death of a loved one. I am dedicated to helping people understand what palliative care is, what support is available to them, and how they can access the right care and support, so they can have a positive experience."

"Palliative care is important as it helps patients and families come to terms with the inevitable. It provides closure to help the friends and families through the difficulties of saying goodbye to a loved one."

Kim's involvement and interest in palliative care has also stemmed from her own direct experience with the service.

"Palliative care helps families come to terms and accept that their loved ones are dying. Although I did some palliative care during my nursing career, it doesn't really prepare you for your own real-life experience."

"When my mum was suffering from emphysema, she received palliative care in the hospital. The care and support she received in hospital were excellent and I was able to stay with her in her room all hours of the day and night before she finally passed peacefully away. The staff kept me informed and helped me make the best decision for my mum's care, and I felt comforted and supported throughout the whole experience."

"In comparison the nurse on duty when my Dad was dying was very eager to ensure my dad was comfortable and care free by giving him medication. However, she did not listen to me when I said he didn't need more pain medication, as I could see his breathing was beginning to slow

"While I was reading the eulogy I had written for him to him, the nurse rushed in the room and did not listen to my comments. While she was administering his IV medication, he took his last breath."

"I still remember how disappointed I felt because I was unable to finish reading what I had wrote to him. I want nurses and other health professionals to reflect on this experience and remember to listen to family members during this time and be open and supportive of their needs."

For Kim, this disparity of care is something she would like to see change going into the future of palliative care.

"Looking into the future, there are still changes we can make to palliative care. We need to create a supportive environment and greater awareness of all end-of-life options, free of judgement, prejudice or prosecution. We need to educate the wider communities that palliative care should be holistic and work with families to meet their individual needs."

"We also need more flexible palliative care services in homes and communities, to ensure all individuals and families can receive the best palliative care support possible."

