

Marina Celebic



As the Manager of the Serbian Community Association of Australia (SCAA), a not-for-profit organisation that provides the Serbian community with information, advocacy, referral, and social support, Marina Celebic is extremely passionate about supporting her community and providing education on palliative care.

Almost 30 years ago, Marina came to Australia with her husband and young children. She started her career in the education sector before moving into community services. She has been working in the Serbian Community Association of Australia for more than 21 years, coordinating aged care and settlement projects and manages initiatives.

The SCAA provides innovative programs that are built on the principles of respect and diversity. Aligned with Marina's values, the association aims to engage and empower community members to be well-

informed, resilient, and have active participation in society.

“Our mission is to bring palliative care to the Serbian Community.”

“While working with the association on aged care and support, we noticed there were gaps in educating the community about palliative care. The subject of end-of-life care had no meaning in the Serbian language and there were minimal resources and information about the topic.”

In January 2019, the SCAA collaborated with Palliative Care Victoria on a pilot project called ‘Empowering Serbian people in need of palliative care’, a project led by Marina and Volunteer Coordinator Biljana Trickovic.

“At the time, there were no existing programs like this in our community. The program enables Serbian speaking volunteers to provide social support, referral, and information to individuals with a life-limiting illness and their families. It also allows the community to come together to share their experiences and learn from one another.”

“It took months to promote the project to the community. The Serbian Community Association worked intensively with local community groups across the region to recruit the right volunteers and teach them how to work with palliative care patients.

“When we commenced the project, we only had seven volunteers. We trained them by providing training sessions, manuals, and resource kits. After around seven months, we had the first referrals.”

“We hear many positive stories and get excellent feedback from families. We are delighted that the project has made a difference in the lives of so many Serbian palliative care patients.”

“It’s an achievement to manage a big project in a short period of time and it has been fulfilling to see that the program has been a big success. Both the elderly demographic and people who have recently migrated to Australia are more aware about support services and how to care for those who are at end-of-life.”

“We know that we still have to work on the program to ensure communities are aware of Palliative Care Victoria and the services they offer. We plan to further strengthen the connection by developing networks with local palliative care and health care providers.”

“I am proud of being a part of the Serbian community and carrying out the work that I do. I am very privileged to be well connected with community leaders, priests, presidents of local clubs to help us connect with Serbian media to convey important information to the community.”