

Media Release

Friday, 29 November 2019

Prof Meera Agar elected as Palliative Care Australia Board Chair

Following its Annual General Meeting and Board meeting, Palliative Care Australia (PCA) welcomes Prof Meera Agar, Professor of Palliative Medicine and a Professor at the IMPACCT (Improving Palliative, Aged and Chronic Care through Clinical Research and Translation) Centre at the University of Technology Sydney, as the newly-elected Chair of the PCA Board. Prof Agar brings to the Board nearly two decades of specialist clinical care practice expertise, as well as expertise in clinical informed research, knowledge translation and health policy reform.

Prof Agar currently leads the SPHERE palliative care clinical academic group, one of Australia's nine advanced health research and translation centres. She has a deep understanding of the needs of underserved populations as a result of her clinical work in a diverse region in Sydney and having been the clinical director of tertiary palliative care service providing inpatient, community and outpatient services for more than a decade.

PCA also welcomes Helen Walker, a specialist palliative care nurse, elected as the Deputy Chair. Helen has been on the PCA Board since 2016 and is the Nurse Unit Manager of the Laurel Hospice at the Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide. She serves as the Deputy Chair of Palliative Care South Australia and Deputy Chair of the Laurel Palliative Care Foundation.

Helen holds post graduate qualifications in palliative care and has extensive experience in palliative care clinical management, between states and the public and private sectors. She is a strong advocate for palliative care access for all Australians.

The PCA Board expresses its deep gratitude to out-going PCA Chair, Dr Jane Fischer, who was elected to the Board in 2012 and served as Chair since 2016. Dr Fischer is a passionate advocate in educating the community about the value and impact that palliative care can have in improving quality of life and the experience of death, dying and bereavement. Having worked in palliative care roles for 30 years, Dr Fischer witnessed firsthand the difference that palliative care makes to people and their families.

PCA also acknowledges the service of retiring Deputy Chair, Judy Hollingworth, a clinically-qualified Spiritual Care Practitioner and founder and chair of the charity Manning Valley Push for Palliative who had been on the PCA Board since 2016.

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