

DRAFT



Compassionate BUNBURY Toolkit

January 2023

BUNBURY
is the heart of the South West.

Where living and dying is everyone's business.



Department of
Health



This draft Toolkit aims to provide inspiration for how you or the organisations you are part of can grow Compassion. Together we will make Bunbury an even more Compassionate city to live, work, play and die in.

10 key themes were identified as central to growing Compassion in the **Compassionate Bunbury Charter** and form the key action areas addressed in this Toolkit.



The ideas for taking action were offered by people who participated in local workshops and also draw on the work undertaken by other Compassionate Communities around the world.

The South West Compassionate Communities Network is providing an opportunity for people and organisations to publicly pledge to make Bunbury a kinder more supportive place when confronted with illness, caring responsibilities, death and grief. If you would like to make a pledge then please go to: XXXX

FEEDBACK WELCOME

We would really like to hear from you.

We will be finalising this Toolkit in April, 2023. If you would like to give us some feedback then please complete this short survey or email us with your thoughts and ideas at swcomcomnetwork@gmail.com

CAPACITY TO GIVE & RECEIVE

MOBILISING NETWORKS OF CARE

We have a greater sense of being loved, cared for, listened to and supported.

We live in a community where people show kindness, understanding and compassion towards everyone.

We are a resilient community who can sit with our vulnerabilities.

What we would see and experience in our community:

We ask for help.

We are comfortable to offer help.

Practical care and emotional support are available.

TAKING ACTION



Individual

RECEIVE

- By accepting help, you are helping your community to develop its caring skills.
- If you are affected by illness, dying or loss, accept help when it is offered and remember it is okay to ask for help.
- Mobilise your network of care and support.

GIVE

- Compassion comes from the heart and starts with me. Offer to help and be of service to each other.
- Say hello and have a chat.
- Ask are you OK?
- Listen and Be KIND.
- Do something to help (eg drop off food, put out the bin, walk the dog or organise a busy bee).
- If you know someone who is on their own offer to be part of their network.
- Support a caregiver. Offer to sit with the person they care for so they can go out. Help them link in with other services (eg Carers Gateway).
- Offer a back home box of goodies or meals after someone leaves hospital.
- Learn by doing. Become a volunteer with the Compassionate Connectors program and become a Compassionate Connector or Caring Helper.

- Volunteer with a community organisation that helps others.
- Have a positive approach to ageing and our elderly.
- Sit at the bedside so no one dies alone.

Group / Organisation

- Neighbour check-in program by phone or in person.
- Establish and mobilise networks of care and support for someone who is having a difficult time. This could include accessing formal services such as palliative care, [My Aged Care](#); informal support such as Compassionate Connectors and Caring Helpers. Online options such as Facebook, [Healthy End of Life Program](#), [Gather my Crew](#) can be used to set up a volunteer roster with family and friends.
- Offer training and resources to upskill people to carry out the compassionate community activities.

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We help as much as we are able as every little bit makes a difference.

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It's about building the networks between the people that are in need and the people that can help.

”

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION

There is good communication and information sharing in our community.

What we would see and experience in our community:

We are willing and comfortable to talk about caregiving, dying, loss and grieving.

Information is easy to find and easy to understand.

TAKING ACTION

Individual

- Be willing to have respectful discussions.
- Talk openly about your future care wishes and complete your Advance Care Plan, Will and Emotional Will.
- Make a Bucket list so to identify how you can continue to live fully.
- Talk to your family and friends, including children, about dying and death, as openly and honestly as you can.

Group / Organisation

- People know what care and support is available in their community.
- Provide opportunities for people to develop their knowledge and skills around death and grief (ie death literacy). For example,
- Go along to the local Death Cafe, or hold one of your own.
- Support Dying to Know Day (August 8) in your local community
- Provide information sessions focusing on planning ahead (legal documents, funeral and burial options). For example, Palliative Care WA Advance care planning workshops.
- Hold a film night and discussion.
- Hold a Death over Dinner gathering.
- Facilitate a panel discussion (face to face or online). For example, You Can't Ask That panel where people can even ask questions. Another might be "Lets Listen, Lets Ask, Lets Talk, Lets Share" discussion.
- Before I Die wall
- Organise a Death festival
- Foster accessibility by providing information in plain language and in a number of ways (eg newspapers, TV, social media, posters, website, in person).

Local Government

- A nominated City of Bunbury staff member is available to sign post local services and support.
- Maintain a community directory of local services.

RESPECTING PEOPLE'S WISHES

We adopt a person/family/community centred approach to illness, caring, death and grief.

What we would see and experience in our community:

An individual's wishes, choices and beliefs are respected and guide the journey ahead, including where and how they die.

TAKING ACTION



Individual / Group / Organisation

- The person who is living with a terminal illness is recognised as the expert on their own life and their wishes, choices and beliefs are respected and guide the journey ahead including how and where they die.
- Community-led end of life options are available and actively supported.
- Lived experience informs education.
- We allow space for differing expression and ways of dealing with death and grief.
- Visibility through open conversations will assist in reducing stigma around dying and grieving.

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Everyone has their own way of dealing with death and illness. It is important to respect people for who they are and the decisions they make at any time.

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FOSTERING BELONGING & CONNECTEDNESS

We look out for each other.

What we would see and experience in our community:

We reach out to connect and build community.

TAKING ACTION

Individual / Group / Organisation

- Reach out to each other
- Build your social network.
- Disconnect from technology and RECONNECT in person (eg hold a street party, help out at a community garden, join a Chatty Café).
- Develop networks, relationships with interested others.
- Value and focus on existing community strengths and assets. Build from there.
- Identify other community groups and organisations you can work with.

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We have never been more globally connected yet locally disconnected.

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SPACE & TIME FOR REMEMBRANCE

People feel supported to grieve and remember.

What we would see and experience in our community:

Space and time is provided for people to grieve, talk and remember.

TAKING ACTION

Individual

- Hold your own ritual of remembrance for someone you have loved or cared for who has died.

Group / Organisation

- When someone in your work community (or someone they care for) dies acknowledge this by taking time to come together and remember the gifts they brought to your community. You may wish to plant a tree in acknowledgement.
- Hold annual memorial events *To Absent Friends*.

Local Government

- Create a memorial walk at a public venue.
- Hold memorial events in addition to Anzac and Remembrance Day. For example, Festival of Lights which allow for individuals to light a lantern for those who have died.



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There is a shared community space, perhaps a wishing tree or tree of remembrance in Queens Gardens near the Labyrinth, where communities can come together for ceremonies and gatherings.

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CARING ORGANISATIONS

Growing more compassion in our businesses, schools, workplaces, clubs, community groups and institutions.

What we would see and experience in our community:

We take practical steps towards becoming Compassionate workplaces, schools, community groups and institutions.

TAKING ACTION

Individual / Group / Organisation

- Equip your teams with the skills and policies to better support their employees and colleagues when it comes to issues of working with someone with a serious illness, caregiving or whilst grieving.
- Provide training for local champions (eg Connector / Caring Helper training)
- Identify someone in your workplace or club who is a good listener and is comfortable with having conversations about death so that anyone affected by loss or bereavement feels they have someone to talk to.
- Establish workplace grief initiatives.
- Foster conversations and connection. It can be a financial, human resource and process or policy commitment.



LEADERS IN CHAMPIONING CARE & COMPASSION

We take the lead in being kind and caring.

What we would see and experience in our community:

Our community and organisational leaders are kind and caring.

We are all take the lead in being kind and caring to others.

We advocate for others who need support.

TAKING ACTION

Individual

- Leadership is about compassion, inclusion, care and respect.
- Everyone can be a leader.
- We are willing to be bold and be the change we want to see.

Groups / Organisations

- Develop organisational policy which is supportive of carers, those living with a terminal illness and those who are grieving.
- Support affordable funerals.
- Participate in planned Compassionate Bunbury leadership forums and make a pledge to take action.

“ Let's lead by sharing what we've learnt and listening with our hearts. ”



BE CREATIVE

We get creative.

What we would see and experience in our community:

Art and creative processes are used to connect and process emotions.

TAKING ACTION

Individual / Group

- Create and support artistic events that get people talking about death, dying, loss and bereavement.
- Use arts-based processes to bring to life the stories of people living with a terminal illness. Stories of their lives and legacy are woven into artworks, poems, illustrations and songs and are given back to their family/friends.
- Be inspired by the Coffin Clubs around the world and make or decorate your own coffin.

Local Government

- Museums and art galleries hold exhibitions and events focusing on ageing, dying, death, loss or care.



“ We draw on our artists to create public art showing Bunbury as a big-hearted city. ”

VISIBLE RECOGNITION

Compassion is celebrated.

What we would see and experience in our community:

There is open recognition of compassionate acts.

Visibility of serious illness, caregiving, dying and grieving as part of a daily life.

TAKING ACTION

Individual / Group / Organisation

- Recognise and reward compassionate acts.
- Share your personal story about the compassionate help and support you have experienced, tell friends and on social media – it might help others.
- Share compassionate stories widely (local newspaper, social media, conversations) to showcase how illness, death and grief is ‘everybody’s business’.

Local Government

- Offer Compassionate Community citizen awards.

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We amplify the community story we tell ourselves...that Bunbury is a BIG HEARTED City". It is a friendly place to live and a place where our last chapter will be a good chapter.

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We see our elders, older people, people who are terminally unwell out in the community riding around Bunbury on electric rickshaws or in vintage cars. Giving them the opportunity to see the ocean, smell some fresh air and be a part of the community.

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We would hear more stories on TV, in the papers and social media about how compassionate, kind and caring our community is.

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Let's grow Compassion together

Make a pledge to take action.

Drawing on the ideas offered in the Toolkit we invite YOU to make a commitment to take action that will enable us to grown Compassion in Bunbury.

For example,

I will develop my capacity to GIVE and to RECEIVE

I will learn how to mobilise a network of care

I/we will learn how to be comfortable with having a conversation with others about caring, illness, death and grief.

I will grow my community network.

I will respect others wishes on how they live and die.

I will volunteer to become a Compassionate Connector or Caring Helper.

We commit to being a Caring organisation who support those who are caring, are unwell, dying or grieving.

We will support education opportunities for our community to learn more about illness, caring, death and grief.

We will provide space and time to remember those who have died by holding an annual Remembrance day.

We will publicly acknowledge Compassionate acts on our social media pages.

Another action from the Toolkit: You tell us!

Go to our online *pledge page* (tbc) where your pledge will be made public.

Share this pledge with others, to help them take action too!