

MEDIA RELEASE - Joint statement from Spiritual Health Association and Spiritual Care Australia

Wednesday 13th April 2022

Changes to Spiritual Care Practitioners Professional Development program

We are pleased to announce an exciting change to the monthly Professional Development Program, currently delivered jointly by Spiritual Health Association (SHA), Spiritual Care Australia (SCA) and Australia and New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ANZACPE). After 30 years of leading the facilitation of the PD program, SHA is delighted to pass the leadership baton to SCA.

For most of its life, the Professional Development program was a Victorian state-based program delivered in collaboration with the SCA Victorian branch and Association for Supervision and Clinical Pastoral Education in Victoria (ASACPEV). The program had a strong focus on the health sector given most participants from the three organisations represented this sector along with aged care. It has undergone many changes over the years, and there will be many who remember gathering in person for morning education, shared lunches, and afternoon peer supervision groups. Changes in work and employment arrangements impacted the program over the years, and those who served on steering committees needed to be responsive to shifts in the environment.

We are grateful to those from SHA who have led the program over the years including Graeme Gibbons (for over 20 years), Dan Murphy, Heather Tan (with Shinen Wong), and most recently Alicia Stafford. We acknowledge the administration undertaken for many years first by Kathy Dawes and then by Trish Fernley.

Last year, the impact of the pandemic provided an opportunity to take the training online and opened it to a national audience for the first time. A joint PD committee was formed with representatives from SHA, SCA and ANZACPE.

The coordination of the online national PD program was reviewed late last year. Given that SCA is the organisation with a focus on practitioners in chaplaincy, pastoral and spiritual care across multiple sectors in Australia, it seemed appropriate going forward that SCA should coordinate the delivery of the professional development that enables practitioners to meet the requirements for continuing membership of SCA.

Kāren Lunney, SCA's newly appointed Professional Development Engagement Officer, will take leadership of this program. Karen is already very involved in this space and will seek to further strengthen our national professional development opportunities. SCA will continue to work in collaboration with industry stakeholders across the sectors where practitioners are engaged, including SHA and ANZACPE.

We look forward to this exciting new chapter for professional development in the spiritual care sector. For any enquiries regarding the Professional Development Program, please contact Kāren Lunney on pd@spiritualcareaustralia.org.au.

Cheryl Holmes, Chief Executive Officer, Spiritual Health Association

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Spiritual Health Association is the peak body for spiritual care in the health sector.

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For more information visit www.spiritualhealth.org.au/professional-development.