



Louise's personal connection with EPC



Rose's volunteer journey



Staff spotlight - meet Chien Lin



The impact of regular giving

Forever in our hearts

From the time she was a child, Zoe loved horses, was fiercely independent and had an unshakeable determination to succeed. Her passion guided her through many sporting triumphs, community service and, later, extraordinary courage in the face of terminal illness.

Zoe became involved with horses from a young age and quickly distinguished herself as a formidable competitor, winning three state championships.

When she wasn't competing, she was giving generously to the horse community, raising funds for events like the Avenel Horse Trials, establishing a Young Horse competition which she funded herself and inspiring everyone around her.

In Zoe's mid-30s, her life took an unexpected turn. After years of ongoing stomach issues, she was diagnosed with stage four bowel cancer at the age of 35.

As her illness progressed, Eastern Palliative Care (EPC) played a central role in enabling her to remain at home for as long as possible, helping her with pain management and maintaining a sense of independence.

We never imagined we would be in the position of watching our daughter receive palliative care. We are so grateful to the EPC team for providing both clinical care and emotional support during this heartbreaking time. EPC gave us peace of mind knowing help was only ever a phone call away. We also had the chance to create Zoe's biography which is now a cherished family keepsake.

Zoe was kind, thoughtful and always concerned for others. She had a positive impact on everyone in her life and her legacy continues to inspire our family, friends and the equestrian community across Victoria.



Toni and Doug with a photo of Zoe

Zoe was 38 years old when she passed but her presence is still felt in every aspect of our lives. We honour her life and memory by donating regularly to EPC so they can continue to support and care for families just like ours. It's what Zoe would have wanted.

Our regular donations help EPC to provide important services like having a nurse on call whenever help is needed, having the biography of a loved one written, or bereavement support for families; services that made a real difference to us during this difficult time. We don't know what we have done without their support and this is our way of giving back.

Thank you Toni and Doug for sharing your story.

If you would like to become a regular donor like Toni and Doug, and help us provide comfort and care for those who need it most, scan the QR code or go to: www.epcvic.org.au.



Message from Gaylene



Hello friends and welcome to our first newsletter of 2026! In our September edition, we highlighted the increasing pressures facing the Community Palliative Care sector. Demand continues to rise, the complexity of care needs is growing, and the cost of delivering high quality services is escalating. Yet recurrent government funding has not kept pace with these realities.

EPC alongside several community palliative care providers and Palliative Care Victoria, commissioned the University of Melbourne to undertake The Palliative Care Victoria: Community Services Survey. The survey demonstrated that across Victoria, costs to run services has risen 7% over the last 5 years whilst government funding has only risen 3.7%. The report findings will support EPC and the broader sector in ongoing engagement with government and the Department of Health to address critical funding gaps.

Over the past six months, EPC's Executive team has also developed a Five Pillars of Transformation plan, endorsed by our Board, to modernise our operations, and ensure EPC is well positioned for the future. While these initiatives represent significant progress, community support remains vital.

To ensure EPC can continue delivering compassionate, specialist palliative care to people when they need it most, we rely on the generosity of those who value our purpose. Every donation, large or small helps sustain essential services for individuals and families across our community. Together, we can ensure that no one faces the end of life journey without the care, dignity and support they deserve. I hope you enjoy our newsletter.

Adjunct Assoc Professor Gaylene Coulton
Chief Executive Officer

Louise's personal connection with EPC



Meet our new Philanthropy & Communications Manager, Louise Brown, who actually experienced EPC's service before she joined our team.

What was meant to be a wedding in the Yarra Valley with 80 guests became an urgent ceremony at our local church. My dad was determined to be there, to walk with me, and he simply wouldn't have made it without EPC.

Dad was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia at 57, given just three months to live. With nothing to lose, he joined a clinical trial that gifted our family another 11 incredible years. But in the weeks leading up to my wedding, he entered blast phase, and the weekly transfusions could no longer sustain him. His final wish was to die at home and see me get married. Even with a supportive family of four children, we couldn't have made that happen without EPC.

EPC arranged a hospital bed and all the equipment needed to keep him comfortable. Every time the nurse pulled up in her car, we felt immediate relief. She not only cared for Dad medically but supported all of us emotionally during a time that should have been the happiest of my life but was overshadowed with heartbreak.

Thanks to the nurses, Dad made it to the church on time—a small church close to home—and he was able to give me away.

In the days that followed, he remained in good spirits, using humour as his way of coping. As a family, we cherished the privilege of caring for him. We looked through old photos, shared stories and laughed together. He fought bravely for 11 days and passed away the night before the wedding we had originally planned in the Yarra Valley. Without EPC, I would have cancelled my wedding altogether.



Our gratitude for the time EPC gave us is immeasurable. If we had known more about the organisation then, we would have donated in appreciation for the gift they gave our family. Today, I'm a proud regular donor—and even prouder to now work for EPC. My hope is to make a meaningful impact, increasing funding so more families can receive the same compassionate care in their homes.

Home is where the heart is, and everyone deserves the option to spend their final days wrapped in its comfort.

I truly look forward to hearing your stories and connecting with you. Please don't hesitate to reach out—whether by email at lbrown@epcvic.org.au or on 0431 810 117. I'd love to chat about any way you might like to support EPC.

Thank you Lou for sharing your story. Lou has over 25 years experience in the not-for-profit sector and is very excited about joining EPC.

Rose's volunteer journey



Meet EPC volunteer, Rose, who shares her story of how she became an EPC volunteer and why she loves it so much.

I think I inherited the volunteer gene from my mother, who had a wonderful sense of community and always helped others.

I volunteered at my son's primary and secondary schools, but after he finished school my volunteering stopped. I had more time on my hands, albeit still working full time, but I wanted to help in my community. I heard about EPC and in 2019, I called. My initial contact was with Pen, who just made me feel so welcome. I did my training and began with palliative paws, walking a beautiful dog.

In 2020 Covid hit so visits were stopped. Fortunately, I was able to continue by editing biographies, which I so enjoyed as it gave me a glimpse into some amazing lives and stories. I was so in awe of our wonderful biographers who did all the hard work. Unfortunately, my working life meant that I just didn't have the time to continue volunteering, so with a heavy heart I stopped.

In 2025, I retired from Victoria Police and one of the first things I did was ring EPC. I spoke to Krystal and asked her if she remembered me, "of course I do Rose" was the response!

Since my return mid last year, I have been involved in Palliative Paws, social support and bereavement support. I also co-ordinate our network group and helped out at the last Pound the Pavement.

What I love most about volunteering is being able to connect with the community and fill a gap in people's lives. I have met the most wonderful people, EPC staff, other volunteers, clients and client families. It is an incredible privilege to be part of someone's journey.

If anyone was considering becoming a volunteer with EPC, I would say to them that it can be difficult to say goodbye to a client and their family, but this is outweighed by knowing that what you do makes a significant difference. One of the great things about EPC is the network group where we can share our experiences and give and receive support from one another.

Thank you Rose for sharing your story.

Volunteer with EPC

If you're like Rose and looking for a rewarding way to give back to your community, volunteering with EPC could be right for you. We are currently recruiting for new volunteers.

EPC volunteers provide companionship, practical support and moments of connection. Our volunteers are a valued part of our care team and are supported every step of the way with comprehensive training and ongoing guidance.

No prior experience is needed — just empathy, reliability and a genuine desire to support others.

Find out more and join our volunteer team at epcvic.org.au.



Staff spotlight - meet Chien Lin

Get to know our EPC team better with our staff spotlight section where we ask our team questions about themselves and their role at EPC.



What is your role at EPC?

Palliative Care Physician

Why did you pursue this career?

While working as a General Practitioner in Camperdown (VIC), I was involved in managing a challenging situation implementing palliative sedation for someone with agitated delirium at the end of life. The unanswered questions at the time prompted the beginning of my quest to learn more about palliative medicine and I eventually ended up specialising in this field.

How long have you worked for EPC?

I formally commenced in December 2018.

What is something that stands out to you about EPC as an organisation?

EPC is perhaps the epitome of an independent not-for-profit health care service with grass root beginnings, a passion-project and can-do culture, and a lot of common sense that we need in palliative care and the rest of the world.

What is something about you that others may not know?

My wife is pregnant with our first baby boy due this May.

What is the best part of your job and why?

Getting to work with all the amazing human beings on the team who make a difference in people's most vulnerable moments in life. It is extremely rewarding and a huge privilege to be part of.

Describe a typical day for you?

5:30am~7:00am - wake up, respond to any urgent emails, morning exercise, breakfast and drive to work.

7:00am~17:00pm - team huddles, corridor discussions, home visits, phone calls, meetings and handovers.

17:00pm~19:00pm - hospital ward round when rostered, sometimes additional meetings, otherwise go home and have dinner.

19:00pm~23:30pm - dinner, catch-up paperwork if any, brush my teeth and sleep.

24hrs, 7 days a week - answer phone calls from EPC staff for urgent matters.

The impact of regular giving



Although EPC receives government funding, it does not cover all of the essential services that are important to our clients and their families. Donations, particularly regular ones, help fund vital services that are either under-funded or not funded at all.

Regular donations allow EPC to:

- Direct funds to areas of greatest need in real time
- Maintain and replenish essential equipment used in clients' homes
- Sustain free services for clients, carers and families
- Plan services with greater confidence and stability

You can choose how often and how much you want to give—whatever works for you. By donating regularly, you become partners in EPC's mission to ensure everyone has access to high-quality palliative care at home, regardless of their circumstances. Even a small, regular gift adds up to meaningful, lasting care for those who need it most.

If you would like to support EPC through regular giving, visit our website www.epcvic.org.au or contact our fundraising team on 1300 130 813 to learn more.

How to Donate to EPC

You can donate to EPC by:

- **Scanning** the QR Code
- **Clicking**  Donate Now at www.epcvic.org.au
- **Calling** 1300 130 813



Or complete the below form and send it to EPC via:

- **Email** to fundraising@epcvic.org.au
- **SMS** to 0404 912 875
- **Mail** to PO Box 2110 Rangeview 3132

Thank you for your support

I would like to make a tax deductible donation* of

\$ _____

Frequency

- Once off
 Monthly

I'd like to make a regular impact

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____ State _____

Postcode _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My donation is in memory of _____

Please direct my payment to

- General Donations
- Education Appeal
- Syringe Driver Appeal
- Care for the Carers Appeal
- Overnight Support Appeal

* All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible. Receipts are sent to the payee.

All information is collected in accordance with EPC's Privacy Policy (no spam). If you would like further information about EPC fundraising activities or to read our Privacy Policy, please visit our website (www.epcvic.org.au).

In Lieu of Flower Donations and In Memoriam

Thank you to the families of the following people, who requested donations to EPC 'In lieu of flowers' at their loved ones memorial service or created an 'In Memoriam' fundraising page. We are so grateful that you thought of EPC during such a difficult time.

Craig Benson **Margaret Gentile**

Matthew Jarn **John Thek**

Requesting donations in these ways provide friends and family with opportunities to express their condolences to you, honour your loved one and thank EPC. For more information go to www.epcvic.org.au.

Method of Payment

CREDIT CARD/DEBIT CARD

Cardholders name _____

Signature _____

Visa Mastercard Amex

Cheque/Money Order
 (payable to Eastern Palliative Care Ltd)

Card Number

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Expiry date

□□ □□

BANK TRANSFER

Bank Account Name _____

BSB

□□□ - □□□

Bank Account Number

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Signature _____

- I have already included EPC in my Will
- Please send me information about leaving a bequest to EPC
- I am considering leaving a gift in my Will to EPC

Leave a lasting legacy of care with a bequest



A bequest is a powerful and personal way to leave a lasting legacy of care. By leaving a bequest to EPC in your Will, you can make a lasting contribution that helps ensure people living with a terminal illness, and those who care for them, continue to receive compassionate, high-quality support in the comfort of their own home, when they need it most.

Importantly, a bequest does not need to be large to make a meaningful impact. Every gift, regardless of size, contributes to the ongoing care and dignity of people at the end of their lives.

Making a bequest involves creating or updating your Will. To learn more about leaving a gift in your Will, you can download our Bequest Fact Sheet at www.epcvic.org.au or contact us for a confidential discussion.

We welcome the opportunity to talk with anyone considering a bequest and are happy to provide information or answer questions in a confidential and supportive way.

Eastern Palliative Care Ltd

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Address PO Box 2110, Rangeview, Victoria 3132
Email contactus@epcvic.org.au
Website www.epcvic.org.au

Visit our website www.epcvic.org.au to receive our newsletter by email. Email contactus@epcvic.org.au to unsubscribe.

Save the date for Charity Wills Week

Planning for the future can often seem complicated or overwhelming - but it doesn't have to be. At EPC, we see every day how important it is to have your future wishes known. That's why we've partnered with Safewill to give you the opportunity to create a legally binding Will online for FREE.

From 16 - 30 March, you can use Safewill's easy-to-use platform to:

- Create or update your Will from the comfort of home
- Have your Will reviewed by an Australian legal team
- Make unlimited changes for 12 months at no extra cost

You can do all of this online, in your own time. Don't miss this chance to do something that lasts forever.

You've stood with us, now we want to do something for you.



16 - 30 March 2026



If this newsletter has arrived at a difficult time, we sincerely apologise. If you would like bereavement support, it is available for the first 13 months after your loved one's death. Please contact us on 1300 130 813. All donors are added to EPC's quarterly newsletter email list. To opt out, simply call us or email fundraising@epcvic.org.au.

Eastern Palliative Care Ltd (EPC) is located in Melbourne on Wurundjeri Country. EPC wishes to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Wurundjeri People and their Elders past and present.

Stay up-to-date with EPC by subscribing on social media:



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Eastern Palliative Care Ltd acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.