



# CITTAMANI

CITTAMANI HOSPICE SERVICE LTD

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## CITTAMANI NEWSLETTER — MARCH 2020

*Cittamani holds dear the values of caring and of giving. We look after many clients, all of whom have a story. Sometimes we get to share in that story and be a part of it...*

Recently, Cittamani looked after a very special man. **Pat O'Brien** was an outstanding businessman who started working at his fourth-generation family business as a trainee miller and steadily worked his way to establishing his own very successful milling business. He eventually sold that business and retired in the early 2000s. He heard about the **Prison Transport Group** and their work from a fellow church goer, and in 2007 began driving for them. This organisation started over 40 years ago when compassionate volunteers came together to help families stay in contact with relatives in Correctional Centres by driving them from local rail stations to the Centres. Family contact is vital for a person in prison and these volunteers gave their time and effort to help these families maintain contact. Pat really enjoyed driving family members to prison visits but everyone soon realised that Pat had many other skills that could help the Prison Transport Group grow and become more sustainable in the long term.

In 2008 Pat was asked to take on the role of Chairman. His business acumen was outstanding and he guided the group through the implementation of many financial and management improvements. Under Pat's leadership the Group were supported in planning for the future which gave them the confidence that they would be able to continue to support clients in the years to come. He gave so much to the organisation and everyone felt proud to call Pat a friend. Pat was the Chairman for 11 years and the organisation felt very lucky and very blessed to have him as our leader.

Then in early 2018, Pat received a diagnosis of a brain

tumour. The big tall oak of a man who was Pat slowly succumbed to this disease. In November 2018, he presided over his last AGM for the Prison Transport Group. Pat showed everyone that day what courage really means.

Pat wanted to be cared for at home in his last days surrounded by his family. He was lucky enough to have the support of a wonderful at home palliative care service — Cittamani Hospice Service to care and support him and his family. This wonderful organisation gave Pat and his family the care they needed to fulfil his wishes to stay at home. He died peacefully at home surrounded by his family.

The Prison Transport Group was so blessed to have Pat at the helm, guiding the organisation to its current strong position. The Group wanted to give something back to honour the memory of Pat and all that he had given to them. In late 2019 we decided to give a donation of \$10,000 to Cittamani to help them continue the wonderful work they do in caring for and supporting terminally ill people in their own homes.

We felt that we had created a circle of giving where the coming together of caring and compassionate people found a way to support each other, and in turn benefit the wider community.

**Anne McGuire RSJ**  
Manager, Prison Transport Group



PICTURED ABOVE — Sister Anne McGuire from Prison Transport Group presents a \$10,000 cheque to Cittamani in memory of Pat O'Brien.

## DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CITTAMANI SOCIAL WORKER

At Cittamani, there are five people on our Social Work/Bereavement Team. We support clients and their families as they approach the end of life, as well as provide bereavement support for the families after their loved one has passed away.

Our referrals come from our nurses, who let us know if a family would like to have contact with a social worker. Usually this is to talk things through — such as the challenges of being a carer, family tensions, as well as to discuss uncertainty and anxiety around dying. We can also help to plan a funeral, liaise with Centrelink, link with other resources around wills and powers of attorney etc. There's always a lot of variety in our conversations.

Once a Cittamani social worker has made contact with a family, we try to continue to support that family through the death and on into bereavement. This means after our initial visit, we touch base regularly with the family either by visiting them at home, phone calls, texts, or emails — whatever is easiest for them.

On a typical day, we will come into our office in Palmwoods, have one or two family visits already scheduled, prioritise new referrals, check the computer for updates on families we've been involved with, and get a handover from the nurses. Then we head out onto the road, usually spending about an hour with each family. Social workers may do up to four visits in one day. At other times we're in the office on the phone, writing up notes, liaising with co-workers, or seeing clients for counselling here in our Cittamani office.

At any one time over 200 people receive bereavement support from our team, which means that every day at Cittamani is different. Because of the constantly changing nature of our work we have to be flexible. Things don't always go to plan, but we all enjoy the challenge!



Cittamani welcomes nurses Amanda and Tiffany to our team. They both bring a wealth of experience in palliative care nursing.



Mel has recently joined the administration staff as Operations Support Manager. She brings to Cittamani her extensive experience in senior business management and finance roles.



Sharnee, Lynne and Maria — three of Cittamani's recently trained Respite Volunteers enjoying the Christmas get together.



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The value of generosity and compassion to our human wellbeing and the health of our communities is highlighted in Pat's story in this newsletter. As St Francis of Assisi said 'it is in giving that we receive'.

This point was emphasised in a recent visit to Cittamani by **Geshe Tsultrim**, a Tibetan Buddhist monk based at Chenrezig Institute in Eudlo, who said:

*'The more we can think of others, develop that genuine concern for others, the whole hearted kindness to others, the more we improve our own mental wellbeing. Then we have an ability to respond to situations of others in a way that is so much more beneficial and that contributes to our own happiness and wellbeing, rather than with an attitude that only seeks our own happiness in the world.'*

We experience this so clearly in the work that we do at Cittamani. The generous support that we receive from so many individuals and groups enables us to continue to give to others in our community and our team regularly remark that we receive so much more than we give in the work that we do. Creating a 'circle of giving'.



**Alex Moore** — Director, Cittamani Hospice Service

The wonderful voices of **Cool Harmonies**, led by Yvonne Corstorphin (fourth from left), dedicated their end of year concert at the Uniting Church in Cooloom to support the work of Cittamani. Ticket sales and raffles raised around \$5,000 which was an extraordinary effort!

PHOTO CREDIT: HARI KOTROTSIOS



Cittamani Volunteer Ray Hill (centre front right) being presented with a cheque from the enthusiastic team at **Nambour Heights Bowls Club**.

CITTAMANI THANKS  
**THE JUNE CANAVAN  
FOUNDATION**  
AND  
**THE WHITEHOUSE  
FOUNDATION**

FOR THEIR GENEROUS ONGOING SUPPORT



*"You have to start giving first and  
expect absolutely nothing."*

— His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

*"I have nothing but praise for the service provided by Cittamani.  
They were the difference between being able to care for my wife at home  
during her final months and having to place her in the care of others."*

*"My family and I will be forever grateful to Cittamani for the care,  
thoughtfulness and love shown to my precious husband during  
his last days, and the love and respect shown to me and our family.  
We will always remember the thoughtfulness of you all."*



*Help fulfil someone's wish  
to remain at home in the  
last few months of their life.*

I wish to make a tax deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
to Cittamani's FREE home hospice service.

☐ Enclosed is my Cheque  
(payable to Cittamani Hospice Service)

☐ Direct Debit:  
BSB 484 799 Account 160888044  
(Please put your name as reference)

☐ Click "**DONATE NOW**" on our secure website:  
[www.cittamanihospice.com.au](http://www.cittamanihospice.com.au)

☐ Deduct the **REGULAR AMOUNT** of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
per month from my credit card.

PLEASE CHARGE MY **VISA** OR **MASTERCARD**:

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*Cittamani Hospice Service Ltd  
is a registered charity. ABN 67 110 865 560  
All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*



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**CITTAMANI HOSPICE SERVICE APPRECIATES THE SUPPORT OF QUEENSLAND HEALTH**