

16 July 2026

CEO Roundtable for Palliative Care – Meeting held on 16 July 2026

Communique 15

Leaders from across Western Australia's health, aged care, community, disability and palliative care sectors met on Thursday 16 July for the latest Palliative Care WA CEO Roundtable.

The meeting was chaired by Palliative Care WA President Liz Behjat and provided an opportunity for senior leaders to share emerging issues, discuss sector reforms and strengthen collaboration across the health and community care system. Discussions were held under the Chatham House Rule.

Churchill Fellowship presentation

The Roundtable welcomed Amanda Silla, Program Manager, End of Life Care Program, WA Health, who presented the key findings from her recent Churchill Fellowship examining international approaches to voluntary assisted dying (VAD).

Amanda shared insights gathered from Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United States, focusing on how patients are supported to make informed decisions between practitioner-administered and self-administered methods where both are legally available. Participants heard that jurisdictions overwhelmingly report higher use of practitioner-administered methods and explored the factors influencing these choices, including clinical practice, culture, legislation and patient preferences.

A strong theme is the importance of shared decision-making, ensuring patients receive balanced information about all legally available options, with sufficient time and support to make decisions aligned with their own values and preferences. Participants discussed the importance of avoiding unintended bias in clinical conversations and strengthening practitioner education to support high-quality informed consent.

Amanda advised that her Churchill Fellowship report will be released in August. Members congratulated Amanda on her leadership and work under the Fellowship.

Palliative care and voluntary assisted dying

The presentation prompted a thoughtful discussion regarding the relationship between palliative care and voluntary assisted dying.

Participants broadly agreed that voluntary assisted dying is an end-of-life choice available under legislation. The Roundtable also acknowledged the importance of maintaining clear public messaging about the role of palliative care, recognising that community understanding of palliative care remains limited. Participants noted that

conversations about voluntary assisted dying should complement ongoing efforts to improve awareness of the benefits of high-quality palliative care.

Discussion also reinforced the importance of ensuring that decisions regarding voluntary assisted dying are never influenced by gaps in access to palliative care, community supports or aged care services.

Designated Registered Nurse Prescribers

Participants received an update on the implementation of Designated Registered Nurse Prescribers in Western Australia following recent Commonwealth legislative reform.

The discussion highlighted that designated nurse prescribing has the potential to improve timely access to medications, particularly within aged care, rural and remote communities and palliative care settings where medical workforce shortages can delay treatment. The model requires formal clinical governance arrangements, collaborative partnerships with authorised medical practitioners or nurse practitioners, structured mentorship and clearly defined prescribing scope.

Roundtable participants discussed the importance of ensuring robust organisational governance frameworks, agreed models of care and strong collaboration between nurses, general practitioners and health services before implementation. Several organisations noted they are beginning to explore how designated nurse prescribing could operate safely within their own services.

The potential benefits for patients were widely recognised, including faster access to symptom management, reduced delays in care and fewer avoidable hospital presentations, while acknowledging implementation challenges remain to be resolved, particularly across diverse service models and geographically dispersed workforces.

Supporting siblings through grief

The Roundtable also heard from Siblings Australia regarding emerging work supporting brothers and sisters of people living with disability or chronic illness.

Participants learned about new grief support initiatives being developed in collaboration with Lionheart Camp for Kids, recognising the unique and often overlooked experiences of siblings both before and after the death of a loved one. The discussion highlighted opportunities for greater collaboration across disability, grief and palliative care services to better support families experiencing complex loss.

Looking ahead

The CEO Roundtable continues to provide a trusted forum for senior leaders to discuss emerging issues, share innovation and strengthen collaboration across Western Australia's palliative care, health and community care sectors.

The discussion reinforced the value of bringing together leaders from across multiple sectors to examine complex policy issues through the shared lens of improving outcomes for people with life-limiting illness, their families and carers.



Meeting attendees from left: Georgina Low, Melanie Marsh, Andrew Allsop, Jo Reid, Mark Kinsela, Susie Wilson, Gary Wilson, Etta Palumbo, Dr Alison Parr, Amanda Silla, Shelly Skinner, Barbara Voight, Paul Rogers, Shannon Schedlich. **Front Row:** Samar Aoun, Leana Walter, Liz Behjat. Attendee not in the photograph was Jo Micallef.

Meeting attendees

- Liz Behjat, President, Palliative Care WA and Director of Government Relations, Ageing Australia – meeting facilitator
- Mark Kinsela, CEO, Palliative Care WA
- Dr Alison Parr, Clinical Lead Palliative Care, WA Department of Health
- Andrew Allsop, Director Clinical Services, Silverchain
- Professor Samar Aoun, Perron Institute research Chair in Palliative Care UWA, Chair of Compassionate Communities Australia
- Shelly Skinner, CEO, Lionheart Camp for Kids
- Susie Wilson, Chair, Ambulance Wish WA
- Gary Wilson, Chair, Ambulance Wish WA
- Amanda Silla, Program Manager, WA Department of Health End of Life Care Program
- Barbara Voight, WA Department of Health End of Life Care Program
- Melanie Marsh, Supportive Care Director, Cancer Council WA
- Jo Reid, General Manager Education and Clinical Specialty, Brightwater Care Group
- Etta Palumbo, CEO, Neurological Council of WA
- Paul Rogers, Head of Business Continuity and Growth, Carers WA
- Shannon Schedlich, CEO, Siblings Australia
- Leana Walter, Acting Manager Complex Care and Mental Health Co-Response, St Johns WA
- Georgina Low, Acting Nurse Director, State Health Operations Centre
- Jo Micallef, Partnerships, Events and Administration, Palliative Care WA

Apologies

- Richard Newman, CEO, Carers WA
- Catherine Stoddart, CEO, Brightwater Care Group
- Renae Lavell, CEO, Silverchain
- Darren Munday, CEO, Consumers of Mental Health WA
- Ashley Reid, CEO, Cancer Council WA
- Yvonne Timson, CEO, Community Vision
- Jackie Boyce, CEO, Albany Hospice
- James Jarvis, CEO, Busselton hospice Care Inc
- Timothy Ryan, Manager, PaSCE, Cancer Council WA
- Ben Irish, CEO, St John of God Murdoch Hospital
- Clare Mullen, Executive Director, Health Consumers Council of WA
- Fiona Simpson, State Manager, Dementia Australia
- Maeve Egan, CEO, MNDAAWA
- Yasmin Naglaszas, CEO, Parkinson's WA