

# NSW Palliative Care Volunteer of the Year Awards



Media Release

Southern Highlands local, **Sandra Hiscock**, and the **Nepean Hawkesbury Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteers** team have won the 2026 NSW Palliative Care Volunteer of the Year Awards.

### **Volunteer of the Year: Sandra Hiscock, Southern Highlands Community Hospice**

Sandra wears many volunteer hats and is a worthy winner of the Volunteer of the Year Award. Not only is she a busy volunteer board member for the Southern Highlands Community Hospice, a not-for-profit charity organisation in Bowral, but she has also played a key role in the introduction of their local community-based volunteering program. Sandra manages the coordination, training, and support for new volunteers. She also takes an active mentoring role, ensuring new recruits understand the scope of their positions and how best to interact with clients and their families.

Beyond her volunteer work on the board and her efforts in managing others, her volunteering extends to visiting clients at one of the Harbison aged care homes each week. Sandra has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to client care and the care of her volunteer peers, delivered with genuine empathy and compassion. She possesses a strong community spirit and the drive to bring meaningful ideas to life.

### **Volunteer Team of the Year: Nepean Hawkesbury Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteers**

The Nepean Hawkesbury Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteer team have made a profound and measurable impact across the Nepean Blue Mountains community. The team overcomes significant obstacles, often travelling long distances to visit people who live alone or have little or no other support. They enable patients to remain at home by providing transport, shopping assistance, and social connection, which helps to prevent isolation and reduce pressure on both families and the health system.

Their work benefits people from all backgrounds, including those who are socially isolated, culturally diverse, or reluctant to accept help. Biography volunteers help patients capture their life stories and write letters to loved ones, preserving legacy and strengthening relationships.

Whether advocating for life-story work, medical reviews, or essential equipment, Nepean Hawkesbury Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteers champion the rights and wellbeing of those they care for.

The NSW Palliative Care Volunteer of the Year Awards are run annually by Palliative Care NSW whose Volunteer Services Support Program is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health. These awards celebrate the contribution and impact of palliative care volunteers across New South Wales. Palliative Care NSW CEO Kirsty Blades said the awards shine a light on the efforts of volunteers, individually and as a team.

“Palliative care volunteers are an incredibly important part of a palliative care team and service. They offer people companionship, comfort, and respite during difficult times. The positive impact palliative care

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volunteers have on their community is significant. These awards recognise this contribution, and we congratulate the winners and all the finalists.” says Kirsty Blades, CEO, Palliative Care NSW.

In NSW, there are over 40 palliative care volunteer services and more than 1,000 palliative care volunteers. Palliative care volunteers work in a variety of settings visiting people in their homes, in hospitals and palliative care units, and in aged care. This National Volunteer Week we recognise and thank all volunteers for the invaluable support they provide to people living with a life-limiting illness, their families and carers.

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### Volunteer of the Year Winner & Finalists

Sandra Hiscock, Southern Highlands Community Hospice (Winner)

Kate Clark, HammondCare Braeside Hospital

Margaret Dark, Wauchope Palliative Care Unit

Kathy Hawkins, HammondCare Greenwich Hospital

### Volunteer Team of the Year Winner & Finalists

Nepean Hawkesbury Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteers (Winner)

Sacred Heart Biography Service

Western Sydney Supportive and Palliative Care Volunteers

Dungog Shire Palliative Care Volunteers Inc.

Find out more here: <https://volunteerhub.com.au/2026-nsw-palliative-care-volunteer-of-the-year-awards-finalists/>

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### What is palliative care?

Palliative care is care and support for anyone of any age who has a progressive, life-limiting illness. Palliative care aims to maintain or improve the quality of life for patients by addressing their physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual needs. Palliative care recognises the unique needs of a person who is approaching and reaching the end of their life, as well as the needs of their family and carers. This care extends to grief and bereavement support.

### How do I find out more about becoming a palliative care volunteer?

To find out more about palliative care volunteering in NSW visit the Palliative Care NSW Volunteer Hub: <https://volunteerhub.com.au/>. Here you can access information, resources, and search for palliative care volunteer services in your area.

For media enquiries and interview requests, please contact Maria Lopez on 0423 300 127 or [media@palliativecarensw.org.au](mailto:media@palliativecarensw.org.au)