

Compassionate Bunbury Charter and Toolkit: Fostering community conversations and civic actions

Professor Samar Aoun & Dr Julieanne Hilbers

South West Compassionate Communities Network, Perron Institute and University of Western Australia

Background

Given their role in community engagement and wellbeing, local government is well positioned to be an active player in supporting Compassionate Communities. This poster focuses on the development of the Compassionate Bunbury Charter and Toolkit which built on previous work undertaken with the City of Bunbury (in Western Australia) over a number of years.

The Compassionate Bunbury Charter is a whole of community responsibility; it contains aspirations that relate to community members, service providers, businesses, organisations, groups and clubs to pursue. It provides a pathway for Bunbury becoming a Compassionate City.

What we did

The Charter was informed by community consultations with City of Bunbury Councillors and employees, chaplains, monks, new migrants, carers, retirees, people with life-limiting illnesses and Aboriginal members of the community. We also sought input from the wider community online via the City of Bunbury Community engagement hub and social media. Interviews were subsequently undertaken with community leaders and presentations made at community forums.

What people said

The Compassionate Bunbury Charter recognises the role we all can play in fostering community conversations and actions around caring, dying and grieving. Ten themes were identified during community consultations.



Flow on effect

The Charter is accompanied by a Toolkit which outlines practical actions people can undertake individually and collectively.



The Charter has led to a number of people and organisations to take action to grow compassion. Examples include the development of the Compassionate Bunbury Mayoral award, Compassionate Workplaces initiatives and the proposed Connector Hub at Milligan Community Centre.



Conclusion

Compassionate City Charters are a useful tool for fostering end of life community conversations and is a concise way of organising a purposeful program of civic action oriented towards end of life.