

## Inaugural Victorian State Conference on Palliative Care<sup>a</sup>

Allan Kellehear

The inaugural Victorian State Conference on Palliative Care was held at La Trobe University between February 10-12th, 1999. It was organised by Palliative Care Victoria and hosted by the La Trobe University Palliative Care Unit, which is a division of the School of Public Health. Titled 'Sink or Swim: Palliative Care in the Mainstream', the conference theme was a review of current Victorian palliative care policies and their impact on practitioners. The conference was officially opened by the state Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon. Rob Knowles. One hundred and fifty delegates attended.

Day One heard papers from the Department of Human Services, academics, and from service agency managers. These papers ranged from appreciative pieces to highly critical ones. The topics covered the perceived benefits or otherwise of competitive tendering, mainstreaming, and the 'triangle of care' in palliative care. Day Two heard from practitioners - doctors,

nurses, pastoral care workers, volunteers - about how they saw the impact of these current changes to the service system and their daily practice. Again, many of these voices were critical.

Day Three was devoted to the theme of health promoting palliative care - the practice model of the Palliative Care Unit at La Trobe University. These papers covered the relationship between health promoting palliative care and initiatives in other health promoting settings, the relationship between health promotion and traditional hospice ideals, the applicability of health promoting palliative care in rural settings and among HIV/AIDS populations. The afternoon hosted a forum which discussed all the issues raised over the previous three days.

Allan Kellehear  
Palliative Care Unit  
La Trobe University  
215, Franklin Street  
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000

<sup>a</sup> A copy of the proceedings (for \$12.50 including postage) is now available from Palliative Care Victoria, Level 2, 182 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002 or telephone (03) 9662 9644, email: < info@pallcarevic.asn.au >