

# News release



8 March 2005

## **POSITIVE MESSAGE FOR HOSPICE CARE**

An overwhelming message of support has been delivered to the Southern Area Hospice by its patients and their relatives, according to research undertaken by the Southern Health & Social Services Council.

The research, launched jointly by the Council and the Hospice, indicates that patients and relatives benefited in a number of ways from the service. The ultimate impact was improvements to their quality of life experiences through the physical, emotional and spiritual support of the hospice. The research indicates an overall picture of good practice in the provision of compassionate, holistic care. Speaking at the launch of the research report, Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairman of the Council said "Quantity of care is not enough – quality is equally important. It is vital to listen to the patients and carers who have the physical, psychological and practical concerns."

The research report makes a number of recommendations to continue to improve the service. These include the production of information to encourage early referral to hospice care, the extension of day care services, consideration of access to complementary therapies, provision of opportunities for patient interaction, bereavement support on an

outreach basis and improvements to the external appearance of the building.

The Hospice anticipates that the research will support the ongoing development of the service and continue the drive for quality of care. Speaking on behalf of the hospice, Ann Cooney, Administrative Director said, "We welcome this report, which provides us with an independent and accurate account of the quality of the service we provide. The core principle behind Hospice care is concerned with a commitment to actively listen to the families it serves and to respect their thoughts and experiences, and the research which has led to the publication of this report facilitated a process which allowed us to do just that."

A full copy of the report is available on request or can be downloaded from the website – [www.shsscouncil.net](http://www.shsscouncil.net)

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## **Notes to Editors:**

- **The Southern Health and Social Services Council is one of 4 Health and Social Services Councils set up in 1991 to represent the views of patients and users of the health and social services. The Council has a total of 24 members, 40% of whom are nominated by District Councils in the Southern Area. The remainder are appointed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – 30% voluntary/community representatives and 30% are nominees with an interest in health and social care.**
- **Health and Social Services Councils have a right to be consulted by Health and Social Services Boards about and plans for development of services, or where significant changes are being considered. Councils play an important part in representing the views of consumers of services to the decision makers, and provide advice and support to patients and service users in relation to complaints procedures.**

**If you require any further information please contact :**

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**The Council's website address is: [www.shsscouncil.net](http://www.shsscouncil.net)**