Compassionate Communities: Civic Charter

Compassionate Communities is an approach to enable all of us to live well within our communities to the end of our lives. It encourages support for people and their families who are living with life limiting illness, loss, and bereavement. It recognises that care for one another is not simply a task solely for health and social services but is everyone's responsibility.

A **Compassionate Community** will advertise, collaborate and co-operate to develop and support the following 13 social changes to the community's key institutions and activities.

Community-wide Memorial Event

Schools and Colleges

Incentive Schemes and Awards

Workplaces and Trade Unions

Promoting and Celebrating

Places of Worship

Inclusive Policies and Practices

Hospices and Nursing Homes

Become a Compassionate Friend or Champion

Museums and Art Galleries

Establish a Compassionate Community Steering Group

• **Our schools** will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care.

• **Our workplaces** will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care.

• **Our trade unions** will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care.

• **Our churches and temples** will have at least one dedicated group for end of life care support.

• **Our community's hospices and nursing homes** will have a community development program involving local area citizens in end of life care activities and programs.

• **Our community's major museums and art galleries** will hold annual exhibitions on the experiences of aging, dying, death, loss or care.

• **Our community will host an annual peacetime memorial parade** representing the major sectors of human loss outside military campaigns – cancer, motor neurone disease, AIDS, child loss, suicide survivors, animal companion loss, widowhood, industrial and vehicle accidents, the loss of emergency workers and all end of life care personnel, etc.

• **Our community will promote compassionate communities programmes** to engage neighbourhoods and local streets in direct care activities for their local residents living with health crisis, aging, caregiving, and grief.

• **Our community will create an incentives scheme** to celebrate and highlight the most creative compassionate organisation, event, and individual/s. The scheme will take the form of an annual award administered by a committee drawn from the end of life care sector.

A 'Mayors Prize' will recognise individual/s for that year, who most exemplify the community's values of compassionate care.

• **Our community will publicly showcase, in print and in social media,** our local government policies, services, funding opportunities, partnerships, and public events that address 'our compassionate concerns' with living with aging, life-threatening and life-limiting illness, loss and bereavement, and long term caring. All end of life care-related services within the community limits will be encouraged to distribute this material, or these web links, including veterinarians and funeral organisations.

• Our community will work with local social or print media to encourage an **annual community-wide short story or art competition** that helps raise awareness of aging, dying, death, loss, or caring.

• All our compassionate policies and services, and in the policies and practices of our official compassionate partners and alliances, will demonstrate an understanding of how **diversity** shapes the experience of aging, dying, death, loss and care – through ethnic, religious, gendered, and sexual identity and through the social experiences of poverty, inequality, and disenfranchisement.

• We will seek to encourage and to invite evidence that institutions **for the homeless and the imprisoned** have support plans in place for end of life care and loss and bereavement.