

# HOW I BECAME A HOSPICE VOLUNTEER

As a registered nurse I have always enjoyed and found palliative care very rewarding.

Unexpectedly and sadly my first contact with Hospice North Shore was in 2002 when my 29yr daughter was diagnosed with secondaries following breast cancer. We had great support in the community and when Jo was an in-patient she spent her last days surrounded by family and friends in the very loving caring environment of Hospice North Shore.

For years I struggled to go back there, however living in Invercargill for 18 months helping my younger daughter with family while doing her nursing training gave me the opportunity and I became a volunteer at day stay in Invercargill.

Returning to Auckland in 2009, I made inquiries about Hospice North Shore and joined a group for training. Amazed to find Nadine was the Manager of Volunteer Services as Jo had worked with Nadine at Domain Lodge Cancer Society Look Good Feel Better. I had not seen Nadine since Jo's funeral.

Then came another amazing coincidence. Jo's cousin had painted her an angel picture which we donated to hospice. Nadine was looking for something striking for her new office wall and she pulled out the angel painting which had slipped behind a bookcase in a storage room. It now hangs with great pride in her office watching over her and all the volunteers at Hospice North Shore.

I now feel peaceful back in the hospice surroundings and really enjoy my Wednesday volunteer day helping with Day Group and get an added bonus of seeing my daughters angels whenever I like.



**Kay's Story**