

Holistic Care

What is holistic care? It is the consideration of the complete person: physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually.

As a student nurse in the early 60's we always commenced the early shift with 'Morning Ward Prayers'. This practice continued throughout our training. In later years as a District Nurse, we would meet each week to pray together. As I progressed through the 70's and 80's these meetings were discontinued and prayer became an individual pursuit.

In the early 90's, when the National Health Service was in a state of turmoil (nothing new!), I applied for the post of Matron / Manager at Wickham Court Nursing Home. John Randle, a founding member of the Hospital Management Trust who ran the Nursing Home for the Sisters, arranged for me to meet Sr. Mary Goretti, a Daughter of Mary and Joseph, who was to be the Pastoral Care Sister in this new venture. This was to become the beginning of a special friendship.



The charism of the D.M.J's set the tone for all the care provided in the Home, and having a Pastoral Care Sister made certain that spiritual care was never forgotten, and so, along with Sr. Mary Goretti, we were able to provide holistic care. Wickham Court Nursing Home was a happy and successful Home where everybody was important.

Under the guidance of Sr. Mary Goretti, staff were encouraged to be part of the spiritual care of the patients. Daily Mass, prayers for the dying and the deceased, and Services of Remembrance and always cups of tea!

The patients themselves, many with no special beliefs, soon fell under her thoughtful, gentle, quiet and caring ways, and I flourished too, and eventually became a DMJ Associate. It was like coming home.

I will always be grateful to Sr. Mary Goretti for sharing that part of the journey with me, and I will always hold a special place in my heart for her.

Jo Cornish