

Nurse Maude

To contact the Biography Service

Telephone 03 375 4274

Or ask a member of staff

HOSPICE PALLIATIVE
CARE SERVICE

Biography Service

Te ratonga haurongo

Nurse Maude

Hospice Palliative Care Service

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What is the Biography Service?

At this time in your life you might be looking back over the years, reflecting on what was or what might have been, perhaps thinking about your accomplishments and the things that have given you satisfaction, and also thinking about your family/whānau and friends.

The biography service is based on the premise that everyone has a story to tell in their own words and in their own way. Recording your story can be a very rewarding experience. The service is provided by specially trained volunteers called biographers. You may wish to have your whole life story told or just a particular part of it – such as your childrearing years, your work or your travels.

Sometimes, because energy or time is short, it may not be possible to complete a full biography/life story which can take quite a few hours over several weeks. If this is the case we may be able to organise a short life review which only takes about an hour to complete.

The biographer would ask you a series of questions such as:

- What are the most important moments in your life?
- Are there particular stories you want people to hear?
- Are there things that you want your family/whānau/friends to know about you?
- What have you learned about life that you would like to pass on?
- What would you like to be remembered for?

Letters

Sometimes people need assistance to write letters to leave to family members and this is also part of our service.

How and when?

The biographer contacts you to arrange a time to visit either at home or in the Nurse Maude Hospice. Interview sessions are usually scheduled for no longer than an hour at a time. Quietness and privacy are necessary, so your recollections can be recorded without interruption.

A digital recorder is used during the interview which is typed up by the biographer. You have the opportunity to edit a draft copy of the biography prior to completion. A few photographs can also be included.

You will then be given a spiral bound copy and a clipped copy. The voice recording is erased and we do not keep a copy. This is a free service and is dependent on volunteer availability so there may be a delay between requesting the service and a volunteer being available.

Access to your story and confidentiality

Your story belongs to you, and you choose who to share it with.

At the first meeting with the biographer you are assured of confidentiality, your written consent is obtained and your wishes for your story documented including what you would like done with the written record if you die before it is finished.