**Compassionate Communities Charter - Asset-Based Community Development approach**

**Lesley Pearson**

WA Primary Health Alliance has partnered with the City of Albany to embed a compassionate communities approach in service planning and activity, which recognises that care for one another at times of health crisis and personal loss is not simply a task for health and social services. Rather it is everyone’s responsibility. The two-and-a-half year project has involved using a public health approach to palliative care and an asset-based methodology, that has led to a range of collaborations between the community, local government, primary health, hospice, social service providers and WA Country Health Service.

The project has sought to build community capacity and find the ground for greater collaborations between care services and the community. Since the recent impacts of COVID-19 there has been increasing evidence and recognition that asset-based community development programs, such as Compassionate Communities, are essential for both community well-being and for our care systems to function effectively. COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of empowering local communities to work not only together, but in partnership with service providers, in order to create stronger networks of support, building the death literacy of health professionals and the broader community along the way.

The ambitions of the Albany community have been captured in an overarching Compassionate City Charter, endorsed by local government and adopted across a range of sectors, including health, faith groups, sporting clubs, businesses and the broader community, including the local Menang Noongar community.