

## BIOETHICS COMMITTEE

### Context:

The Bioethics Committee was established to advise the Church and its agencies on matters of medical ethics and related issues. Appointments to this Committee take into account the desire for a range of gifts, skills and experience especially expertise in theology, social responsibility, ethics, Community Service, the Law, Medicine, the Social Sciences, Hospitals, Aged Care, Disability Services etc., and Chaplaincy. Current membership of the Committee comprises: Mrs Margaret Cullen Erickson, Ms Colleen Geyer (ex-officio Director of Mission BlueCare), Revs Brian Gilbert (Chairperson), Linda McWilliam, Helen Prior.

As in recent years, this Committee has again struggled to maintain a viable working membership. For a number of reasons, there have been resignations, and this has made greater demands on the time of a few who are already heavily committed in other areas. We thank Revd Trevor Gibson for his contribution to our project during the last twelve months. Heartfelt thanks go to all Committee members for their contribution and commitment during the last eighteen months.

<b>Responses to our Call</b>	<b>Working towards our Call</b>
<i>Living with Hope</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee is still working on the task that has been reported at previous Synods, viz conducting “A qualitative study to develop a Uniting Church resource for patients and families to assist them to cope with emotional, spiritual and ethical end of life issues.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the present time, the Committee is at the stage of preparing a draft for future publication - which is the stage we had hoped to be at, at least twelve months ago.</li> </ul>

<b>Responses to our Priority Directions</b>	<b>Challenges/Risks</b>
<i>Providing opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with a number of people were conducted, and much of the work since the last Synod has been in coding and identifying key themes that would inform the content of the resource that we have in mind.</li> <li>Some of these themes are Communication, Power/Control, Identity Issues, Spirituality, Preparing for Death, Support for Carers, and clearly relate to the Gospel values in the Together on the Way, enriching community journey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee still has funds allocated to it from the Uniting Church Foundation that will be used for publication and distribution.</li> <li>Renewal of the membership of the Committee needs to be considered so that it can more effectively complete its current project and have the capacity to engage in other projects that may be referred by the Synod</li> </ul>

**Recommendations/Issues to be addressed:**

At times we appear to be making so little progress, but progress is being made, and our hope is that the end result of our labours will prove to be something useful for the wider church and the wider community.

**Contact for Report questions:**

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