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## media release

*For immediate use*

### **A life-affirming activity – art therapy** **Art in palliative care - bridging expression and meaning at end of life**

The Palliative Care Day Hospital at Neringah now regularly conduct a life affirming pursuit, art, as part of their diversional therapy activity. Arts facilitator Stephen Dernocoure, who has been responsible for Neringah Hospital's specialised art program since 1997 is conducting an art session every fortnight.

Patients at the Day Hospital are able to participate in art meetings that for some may offer a focus of concentration away from pain, or exploration of ideas and thoughts, while for others it may provide an arena for expression where words cannot - including the religious and spiritual. Stephen Dernocoure describes his use of art as a means of communication, "It can be a bridge of meaning and expression between the individual, their illness, and their family and even to the palliative care team."

The Day Hospital Coordinator, Kate Spurway said that in addition to the comprehensive medical, nursing physiotherapy, occupational therapy and other support services, they are developing a diversional therapy program to engage their patients, "In addition to the art therapy program we've also introduced yoga with an accredited yoga teacher who comes here every Tuesday."

For more information about the Day Hospital, telephone Kate Spurway on 9488 2252 on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

*Sydney 12 May 2009*

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