

# The Link

## Silverchain Foundation Newsletter

You have made a difference for people in need

In this special edition it is my privilege to bring you stories that highlight the meaningful impact of your support for our community palliative care clients and their loved ones.

The benefit of receiving palliative care at home looks different for every individual and their loved ones. It could mean a young family get to spend more time relaxing at home together instead of travelling to and from hospital. It can help carers and family members be more involved in and informed about a client's care, and importantly, it can significantly improve a person's quality of life.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with one of our PhD students, Norah Elvidge, about the translational impact her work will have on palliative care for our clients. Norah is a palliative care nurse who is undertaking her donor funded PhD at Queensland University of Technology and Silverchain.



This vital research, featured on page four, will help inform the design of an online client and carer portal, which will be a key aspect of Silverchain's new, gold standard National Palliative Care Model of Care.

On page seven you can read about the impact of your compassionate support to our Helping Hand program for palliative care client Dennis and his family over the festive season. Your support not only provides practical assistance for some of our most vulnerable clients, but it can remind people they are not alone.

Silverchain Foundation donor Brenda has kindly shared her moving story about the care she and her late husband Stephen received last year, and how it led her to making a donation.

You can read Brenda's story on page three.

Thank you again for your commitment to shaping the future of care. We couldn't have achieved these wonderful outcomes without you.

Yours sincerely,



**Bronwyn Perry**  
Executive Director,  
Silverchain Foundation

# Silverchain Foundation Scholarship recipients receive good news, thanks to you



“Living in a country town, there can be limited resources and specialists. The knowledge and skills I will gain from this course will help me and my team improve treatment outcomes and provide Best Care to Silverchain clients in the country. I am so grateful to the donors who made this possible.”

Bailey Blight,  
Silverchain Case Coordinator

Thank you for your generous support to our Silverchain Foundation Scholarships appeal in 2024.

Because of you, **eight** dedicated Silverchain employees have received a Care Scholarship, funding their postgraduate studies in health and aged care areas of need including nursing, palliative care, mental health care, dementia care and more.

Each Care Scholarship recipient has chosen to advance their knowledge and skills through further study in a discipline that will meaningfully contribute to enhancing health and aged care for more Silverchain clients and their loved ones.

Silverchain Case Coordinator Bailey Blight is thrilled to commence a Graduate Certificate in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Practice thanks to your support. This program will help Bailey gain new knowledge and skills to provide personalised, high quality care for more clients in regional Western Australia.

Your support has also given a further **32 employees** across Silverchain access to study assistance support in 2025.

This provides a wide range of opportunities for employees to engage with nationally accredited education and training to help achieve career aspirations and support Silverchain to deliver Best Care to every person, every time.

We look forward to sharing more with you on our other Silverchain Foundation Scholarship recipients and how your support will help Silverchain clients receive the best possible health and aged care at home.

Congratulations to all Silverchain Foundation Scholarship recipients, and thank you for your generosity.

# Why I became a donor: I wanted to say thank you in a way that felt meaningful

Brenda's late husband Stephen Matthews OAM received exceptional care through RDNS Silverchain's palliative care service in Adelaide last year. When Stephen died, Brenda wanted to do something to show her thanks for the care that they both received.



Stephen and Brenda celebrating a special Easter with family in 2009.

“At first I had no idea what I wanted to do and how I could say thank you to all of the nurses who came into our home. I think a lot of them didn't realise the impact they made. They'd come in each day and talk, make us laugh, and take our minds off things. They gave every day a focus and their visits became the highlight of our day.

“I am truly appreciative of what they did for us. The nurses were there for me when I needed to cry as they weren't only there to nurse Stephen. They looked after me too, and there isn't a thank you big enough for that.

“I chose to say thank you with a donation because I wanted to thank them for what they did for me. I wanted to help make a real difference for others in the future, and to me that was meaningful.” – Brenda

## **A donation to Silverchain Foundation allowed Brenda to share her gratitude for the compassionate care she and Stephen received in the last months of his life.**

For Brenda, a donation was a meaningful way to say thank you. It was also her way of doing something in Stephen's honour to help other palliative care patients receive the same amazing care and compassion in the future.



Stephen and Brenda on holidays in 2019 visiting family in Scotland.

If you would like to share a story of gratitude for Silverchain services or donate in memory of a loved one, please contact [fundraising@silverchain.org.au](mailto:fundraising@silverchain.org.au) or call **1300 650 803** and ask to speak to the Silverchain Foundation team.

Thank you to Brenda for generously sharing your story at such a difficult time.



# Innovation enhancing palliative care at home

The demand for palliative care is expected to rise by 50% between now and 2035, and double by 2050.<sup>1</sup>

**This growing demand emphasises the need for greater investment in new models of care that enhance both patient and carer quality of life while reducing the burden on Australia's acute health system.**

Thanks to your generous support, Silverchain is leading the way to provide better care options to more Australians.

Your support is helping our Research and Innovation team develop a new National Palliative Care Model of Care to create a gold standard in community palliative care that can be replicated across the country.

A key component of this new model of care is piloting a digital client and carer portal.

The portal aims to improve care outcomes, give clients more face to face time with clinicians, and address the diverse needs of clients and carers more effectively.

Using the portal, patients and carers can record symptoms, quality of life measures, plus, input various factors to improve care planning, and access relevant, targeted support resources and materials.

Key benefits of the portal include:

- **A more personalised care experience for clients and carers:** for example if a client inputs poor sleep, relevant help videos or other resources can be shared in response.
- **Potential for early identification and intervention:** where a client is beginning to deteriorate action can be taken sooner to keep a client at home and reduce hospital emergency presentations.
- **Key health information can be stored in one place for clinicians to reference:** reducing the need for clients and carers to repeat details of their symptoms and condition with each new care provider.





(L-R) Silverchain's National Director of Research & Evidence Dr Karen Smith OAM, PhD candidate Norah Elvidge, PhD candidate Julie Kelly, and Director of Research Discovery Dr Tanya Davison at Silverchain's 130 year national symposium in Perth.

Dr Karen Smith OAM, Silverchain's National Director of Research & Evidence is leading the National Palliative Care Model of Care project and explains there are many benefits to the client and carer portal.

"When patient and carer information is accessible to clinicians and multidisciplinary teams in real time, we can expect enhanced patient management and improved care outcomes without additional consults. The benefits will apply to both the community and hospital settings and are likely to help reduce instances of carer burnout," Dr Smith said.

"I'm excited to see a pilot of the client and carer portal commence this year using insights gained in partnership with our clients to inform the new model of care."

## Your support helps uncover important research discoveries to improve care

Your generous donations to Silverchain Foundation are funding an important PhD project to help Silverchain's Research and Innovation team build the new National Palliative Care Model of Care.

Norah Elvidge, Silverchain researcher, nurse and PhD candidate at Queensland University of Technology, is looking at a possible link between certain client symptoms or characteristics and increased hospital use by our specialist community palliative care clients. These insights will help us understand where more support is needed for clients to help keep their care at home.

Dr Smith explains how Norah's research will improve the National Palliative Care Model of Care.

"These findings can help inform how we'll tailor the client and carer portal. If we know which clients are likely to benefit from early intervention and additional support, we can build that into the portal to support better care experiences," Dr Smith said.

Thank you for your ongoing support to help our dedicated researchers and care teams continue to enhance the care that Silverchain clients and their loved ones receive.





# Thank you to our Sterling Supporters

Sterling Supporters are generous regular givers who choose to support our work with an automatic direct debit or credit card donation.

**Regular donations from our Sterling Supporters help Silverchain clients and their loved ones receive the very best health and aged care at home.**

Sterling Supporters help fund innovative new health technologies, support enhanced client wellbeing, and provide further education and training opportunities for our passionate clinicians.

## The impact of your support:



### Research

Fund ground breaking research to support enhanced health and aged care at home.



### Education

Empower our health care professionals with greater access to education and training.



### Client wellbeing

Greater dignity through social and economic support that goes beyond physical health.

“Silverchain helped my grandfather when he had cancer, I still remember the nurses visiting when I was a kid. Then they were there again for my father at the end of his life. They’ve helped my family so much. That’s why I make a regular donation, to help Silverchain continue their great work well into the future.”

Sterling Supporter Andrew\*, WA

Please call **1300 650 803** if you would like to become a Sterling Supporter today.

\*Personal images have not been used to protect donor identity.

# You gave a helping hand to people like Dennis

Because of you, dozens of Silverchain clients in need were given grocery and pharmacy vouchers in 2024 to help manage cost of living pressures.

This would not have been possible without your support to our Helping Hand program.

The Helping Hand program offers support to Silverchain clients to help relieve the financial pressure many clients with serious medical conditions face.

Dennis\* is receiving support through Silverchain's Specialist

Community Palliative Care Program and has been living on a small pension, supplemented with last resort life insurance to get by each week. Dennis' partner Kate\* resigned from her job last year to care for Dennis at home and better support their teenage son.

When Silverchain Social Worker Jacinta was visiting Dennis, she built rapport with Kate who revealed the reality of their financial struggles and the toll it was taking on them all.

As soon as Jacinta was aware of the situation, she made a Helping Hand application for a \$350 food voucher for Dennis to provide critical support for the family.

Thank you for supporting individuals and families who were struggling over the festive season last year with essentials like food vouchers.

Your generosity is making a meaningful difference for some of our most vulnerable clients.

To make a donation or find out more about our Helping Hand program, please contact [fundraising@silverchain.org.au](mailto:fundraising@silverchain.org.au) or call **1300 650 803**.

**“Thanks to generous donations, I was able to seek a food voucher for Dennis. This allowed the family to redirect funds from their grocery budget to help pay for Dennis' medications. It really has made a huge difference for the family in a very difficult time.”**

Jacinta,  
Silverchain Social Worker



\*Names and images have been changed to protect personal identity.

# Ways you can give

Your generosity helps us continue our work to ensure more Australians can receive the care and support they need, in the comfort and familiarity of home.

## Make a one off gift

Every gift to Silverchain Foundation helps us enhance the care our clients receive.

### Phone

Call **1300 650 803** to donate over the phone using a credit or debit card.

### Online

Go to **[silverchain.org.au/donate](https://silverchain.org.au/donate)** to send a gift via our secure online donation form.

### Mail

Send your cheque to:

**Silverchain Foundation  
6 Sundercombe Street,  
Osborne Park WA 6017**

Please ensure your bank is still offering cheque services.

## Leave a gift to Silverchain in your Will

By leaving a gift in your Will to Silverchain, you will help shape the future of in home health and aged care for generations to come. Your legacy will empower our clinical and care teams, and our innovators, to create real change for all Australians.

Please call **1300 650 803** and ask for the fundraising team, or send us an email at **[bequests@silverchain.org.au](mailto:bequests@silverchain.org.au)**

## Sterling Supporters

Set up a regular donation via direct debit or credit card to become a Sterling Supporter and help provide ongoing funding in our areas of greatest need.

Call **1300 650 803** to set up your regular donation today.



You can also support Silverchain Foundation through your local container deposit scheme.

For more information visit **[silverchain.org.au/containerdeposit](https://silverchain.org.au/containerdeposit)**

## You can make a difference today.



Scan the QR code to donate or visit **[silverchain.org.au/donate](https://silverchain.org.au/donate)**

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Silverchain Foundation is part of Silver Chain Group Ltd including RDNS Silverchain

*Shaping the future  
of care together*