

# Keynote Speaker

*'Hospice Nurses: Vital link in meeting cultural and palliative needs of terminally ill Tongan patients and their families'*

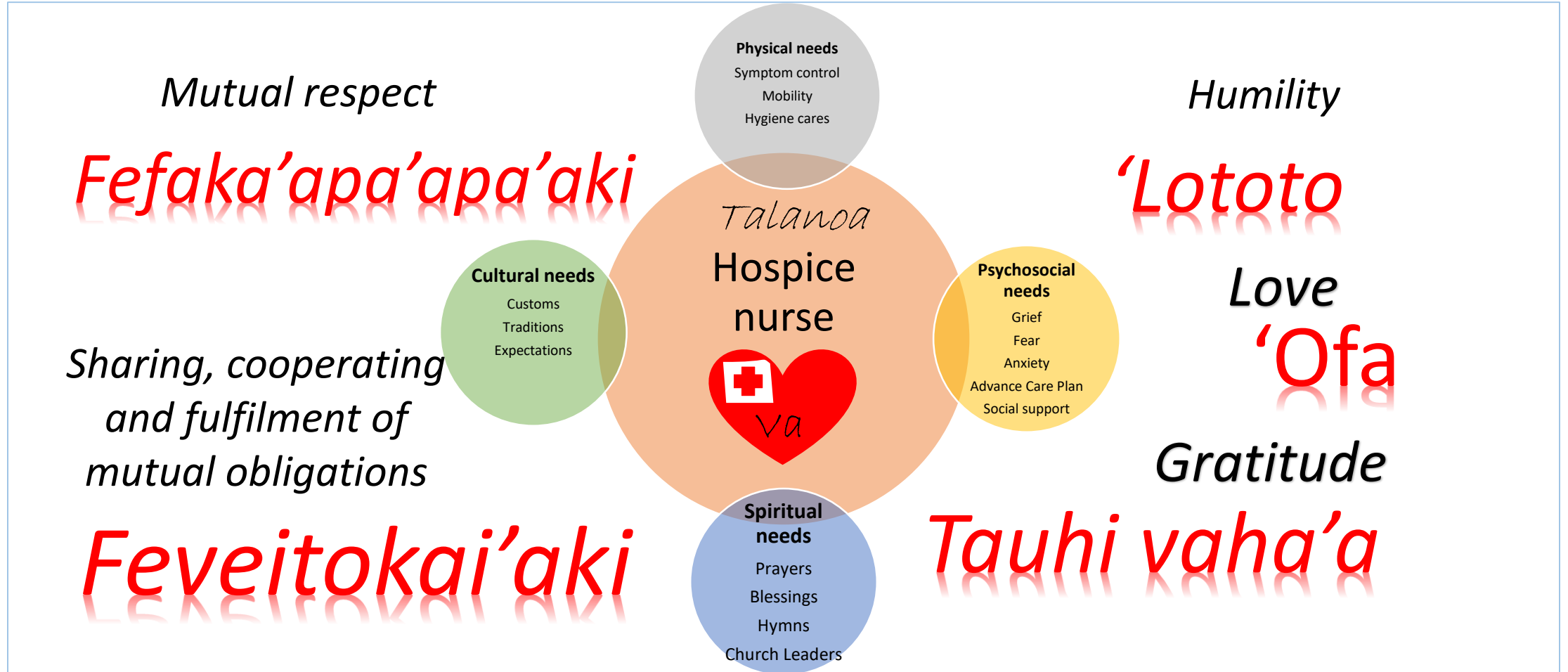
Annalyn 'Ulungā

*Mercy Hospice*



# Hospice Nurses

*A vital link in meeting cultural and palliative needs of terminally ill Tongan patients and their families*  
*Annalyn Ulunga, RN, PG Dip.*



# WHO Definition of Palliative Care

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual.

Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/cancer/palliative/definition/en/>

# New Zealand Definition of Palliative Care

Care for people of all ages with a life-limiting illness which aims to:

1. optimise an individual's quality of life until death by addressing the person's physical, psychosocial, spiritual and cultural needs.
2. support the individual's family, whanau, and other caregivers where needed, through the illness and after death.

(Palliative Care Subcommittee, 2007)

# New Zealand Definition of Palliative Care

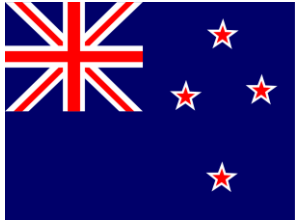
- It should be provided by all health care professionals, supported where necessary, by specialist palliative care services.
- Palliative care should be provided in such a way as to meet the unique needs of individuals from particular communities or groups. These include Maori, children and young people, immigrants, refugees, and those in isolated communities

(Palliative Care Subcommittee, 2007)

# Palliative vs. Hospice care

- Hospice is a philosophy of care, focused on the last 6 months of a patient's life when curative treatments are no longer an option.
- Palliative care is an approach focus on managing symptoms and side effects of life-limiting conditions and chronic illness.
- This means that hospice care includes palliative care, because the goal is to make the patient as comfortable as possible for the time that's left.

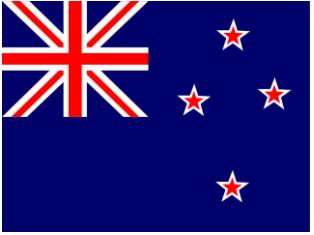
(Palliative Care Subcommittee, 2007)



# NZ Statistics and Projections

**The need for palliative care in NZ is predicted to rise from  
24,000 in 2016 to 46,700 in 2068  
an almost 92% increase due to its ageing population**

**(Macleod, 2016)**



# NZ Statistics and Projections

**Similarly the trajectory of hospice care is projected  
to increase from 11,329 in 2016 to 13,867 by 2038  
an increase of 22.4%**

**(Macleod, 2016)**



In 2017, it was estimated that Mercy Hospice (MH) admitted at least 353 patients in the Inpatient unit (IPU)

13% of this number has ethnically identified themselves as Pacific people coming from Tonga, Samoa, Niue and the Cook Islands.



Acknowledging this cultural diversity is important because a central aim of palliative care is to provide holistic care

(Orb & Wayden, 2001).



A recent study done in Auckland, reports that indigenous and minority populations such as Pacific and Asian patients, are underserved by hospice services (Frey et. al, 2013).



Research literature  
suggests the need for  
increasing public  
presence of hospices  
within the communities  
they serve

(Frey et. al, 2013).

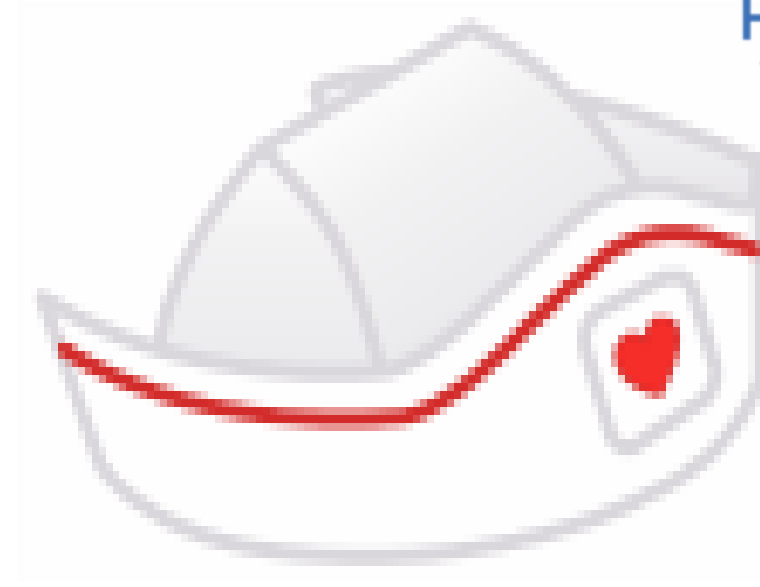


“NURSES, are one of the most trusted members of the healthcare team across the spectrum, from diagnosis, during treatment and in the final stages of life”

(Dahlin & Wittenberg, 2015; p.84)



The interpersonal skills and clinical knowledge of nurses place them in a vital position to promote hospice services to the underserved indigenous and ethnic minorities of the population.





Whilst, dying peacefully at home is their preferred ideal ...

some Tongan families struggle to meet the challenging needs of their love ones nearing the end of life.



What are the roles of IPU nurses in addressing the cultural and palliative needs of Tongan patients and their families?





***FAMILY*** is the central unit of  
Tongan life



# Values



- Fefaka'apa'apa'aki- Mutual respect
- Feveitokai'aki- Sharing, cooperating and fulfilment of mutual obligations
- 'Lototo- Humility
- Tauhi vaha'a- Gratitude
- 'Ofa- Love

- Whakanui- Respect
- Kaitiakitanga- Stewardship
- Aroha kite rawakore- Advocacy
- Mahi rangatira- Quality
- Tapu o te tangata- Dignity
- Aroha- Compassion

# Mutual Respect

NURSES are mindful of their behaviour around family members, always upholding patients' dignity and acting respectfully.



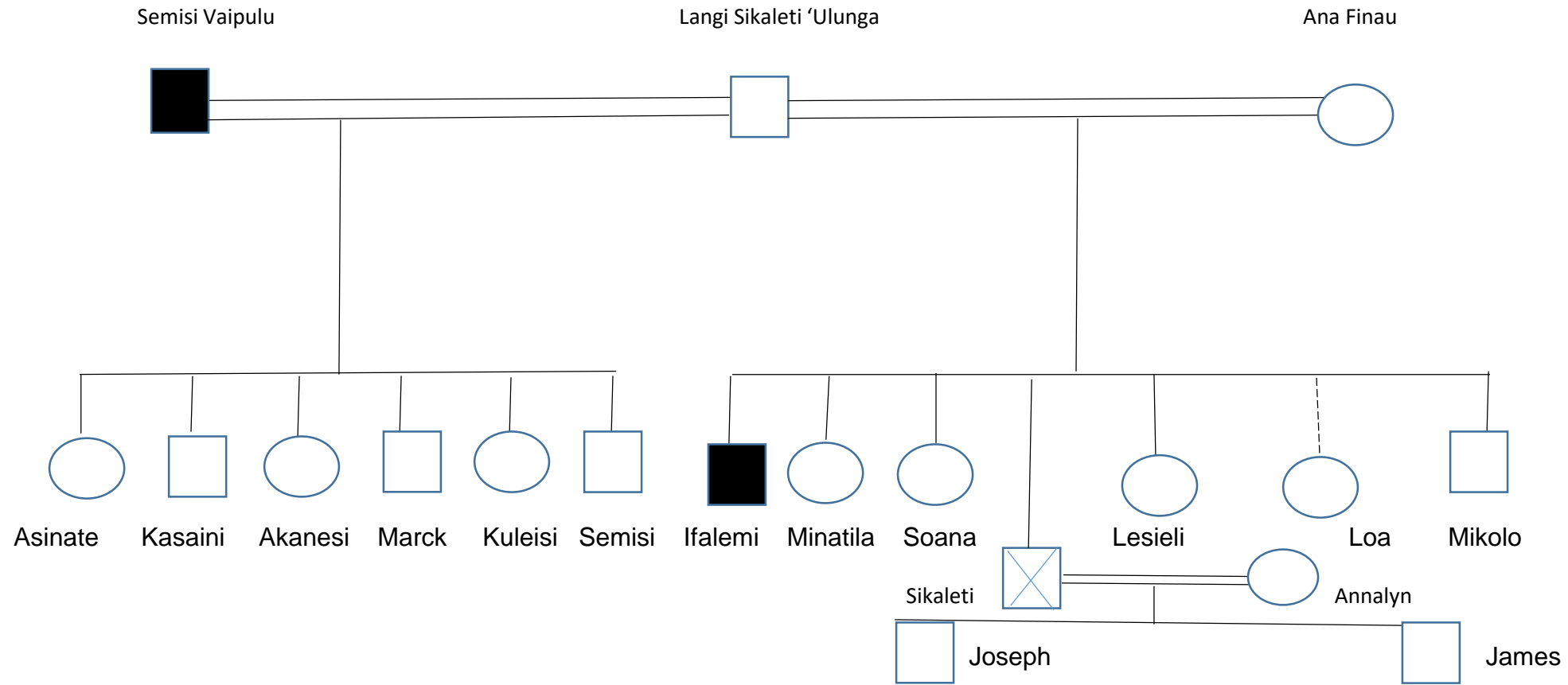
*Fefaka'apa'apa'aki*

As nurses, we  
acknowledge and  
value these  
relationships when  
patients and families  
come into the IPU

\* Not all nurses in the IPU are  
trained to do genogram symbols  
and structures which is an  
important tool in determining  
family relations



# GENOGRAM





NURSES as enablers -  
seeking ways to improve  
on existing caring practices  
e.g. hygiene and pressure  
area cares.

NURSES' care-planning  
enables contribution from  
patients and families, and  
ensures that goals are  
realistic and achievable.

*Sharing; cooperating and fulfilment  
of mutual obligations*



*Feveitokai'aki*

## *Sharing; cooperating and fulfilment of mutual obligations*

Nurses have a direct role in difficult conversations ranging from prognosis, withdrawing treatments to end of life goals of care.

\* There is no consistency of practice for joint consultation with Palliative specialists.



## *Feveitokai'aki*



Mercy  
Hospice  
Te Korowai Atawhai

# Humility and generosity

NURSES are advocates for patients and families in presenting issues and contributing to multidisciplinary meetings.

\*IPU Nurses lead the discussion in MDT meetings



*'Lototoo/anga fakato  
kilalo*



NURSES are able to offer the services available for patients and families in the IPU:

- Symptom management
- Accommodation
- Counselling
- Social services
- Physio/Occupational therapy
- Pasifika liaison
- Spiritual care
- Volunteer services

## Gratitude/ maintaining good relationships



*Tauhi Vaha'a*

Love

NURSES' therapeutic presence in the death bed can be profound.

NURSES guide the care while promoting healthy bereavement within the family.



*'Ofa*

After death, the NURSE offers continued presence, support and information with regard to:

- The process of certifying death
- Information on funeral services
- Information on grief services

Love



*'Ofa*

# The Concept of Vā

As Pacific people, Tongans believe that natural environment, people, time and spirit is held together through Vā.

Vā sums the ideas pertaining to socio/spatial relations or holistic connectedness (Mann, 2017).

Tongans place great emphasis on interconnection of people, environment, time and spiritual realm.





In the practise of palliative care, health professionals operate on the premise of holistic care - not only addressing physical but also spiritual and psycho-social needs of patients and families.



*Upholding Vā in  
palliative care*

The practise of palliative nursing is similar to the essence of Vā.

IPU NURSES serve as a vital link in connecting Tongan patients and their families to health professionals and palliative care services.



# *'Talanoa'* as communication approach

Talanoa- means to talk in an informal way  
(Churchward,1959)

Talanoa concept belongs to several Pacific languages and cultures (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014)

Hospice nurses need to incorporate the concept of *'Talanoa'* to communicate effectively to Tongan/ Pacific families.



# Challenges for IPU nurses

- Not all nurses in the IPU are trained to do genogram symbols and structures which is an important tool in determining family relations
- There is no consistency of practice for joint consultation with Palliative specialists when they do consultations or family meetings

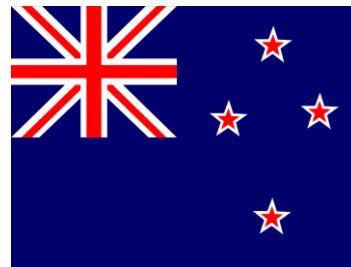


# Challenges for IPU nurses

- Stereotyping can also be a challenge in dealing with Pacific families especially for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants who are already assimilated into NZ culture
- Accommodating and managing large families in the IPU without compromising other cultures and, at the same time, meeting safety regulations
- Paucity of research and resource information regarding palliative care needs of Pacific people

# Conclusion

- As hospice nurses in IPU, we have the unique and almost noble opportunity to assist Tongan patients and their families to have good experiences of palliative care and death.
- Understanding the culture and worldview of Pacific people is paramount in achieving quality care of the terminally ill.





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