

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Culture and religion focus for End of Life seminar

The specific requirements surrounding cultural and religious beliefs and customs of terminally ill people and their loved ones will be discussed at a forum in Hobart today (June 5).

The *Death and Dying through the Lens of Culture and Religion* seminar is hosted by the University of Tasmania's School of Medicine Short Course Program.

Leaders in Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Greek Orthodox, Christian and Aboriginal communities within Tasmania and interstate will address topics including caring and visiting terminally ill people, mourning, funeral rites and cultural aspects of grieving and bereavement.

"There are over 100 people, including GPs, nurses, counsellors, funeral directors and medical educators coming from all over the State to attend the seminar," event organiser, and School Continuing Professional Development Unit Manager, Sue Quarmby said.

"We developed this seminar in response to a strong need expressed by health professionals and volunteers working in palliative care and other health care environments.

"Many of the attendees have stated they have not had this type of educational seminar before in Tasmania."

"The workshop equips participants with the skills and confidence needed to provide an enhanced level of support to members of various cultures and religious communities and their significant others as they approach the end of life.

"It will also be of enormous benefit to members of these communities as they approach the end of their life surrounded by carers exhibiting a strong understanding and respect of their cultural and religious beliefs and requirements."

University of Tasmania
Private Bag 95
Hobart TAS 7001
T 03 6226 2999
media.office@utas.edu.au

utas.edu.au

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