



Anna

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Nelson Tasman
Hospice

AUTUMN 2026

At just 47, Anna Burns is not ready to stop living.

A single mum to a 15-year-old daughter and a 23-year-old son, Anna is also a musician, currently recording an EP with her band. There's a fierce determination about her - a refusal to let cancer define the final chapter of her story. But just months ago, she was desperately unwell.

Anna shares her story.

“Several years ago, I’d been given seven months to live,” Anna says quietly. “Then I had this miraculous two years of stability.”

Like so many people in our community, she believed hospice was only for the final days. It wasn’t until she happened to speak with two people connected to Nelson Tasman Hospice that she realised something life-changing:

“Hospice is not just for dying. It’s for symptom management. It’s for respite.”

“I’ve experienced a lot of medical gaslighting in my life,” Anna shares. “At hospice, there was no fight. I didn’t have to convince anyone I needed help. Most of the time, I didn’t even have to ask. They’d ask me.”

After a prolonged period of stability, Anna was initially discharged from the hospice service, reassured that hospice would be there if she needed it again.

“That was really important to me,” she says. “I needed to know I wasn’t being dismissed.”

Alongside the gift of sharing her story, this isn’t the first time Anna has turned her experience of cancer into something that gives back. In 2021, during treatment, her friends organised the unforgettable Laugh for Cancer Cabaret - an extraordinary evening of music and performance that raised funds for Nelson Tasman Hospice. What began as a generous gesture from acquaintances grew into deep, lasting friendships.

“Support comes from the most unlikely sources sometimes,” Anna reflects. “And when it turns up, it’s so touching.”

Late last year, Anna knew it was time to re-engage with hospice “I was really, really sick. I was floundering.”

When Anna was admitted to the Specialist Palliative Care Unit (SPCU), she was in significant pain, barely

eating, and emotionally exhausted. What she found there was not what she expected.

“There was no anxiety. No judgement. Just complete acceptance of where I was.”

Within days, her pain was under control. She was able to eat again. She could sit outside in the sun and listen to the tūi in the gardens. She had a spa bath. A volunteer gave her a hand and foot massage.

“I hadn’t been looked after like that in a long time,” she says. “That touch was so important. I had to tell her, ‘I’m not crying because of you it’s just so nice to be cared for.’”

The impact went far beyond symptom control. Hospice care “patched me back together again,” she says - enough that she is now well enough to return to the recording studio and finish the EP she feared she would never complete.

“I seriously thought we’d have to ditch it. Now I’m going to be able to go into the studio and crack out some songs.”

“It’s not heavy metal”, she smiles, “but close to it.”

That spark of possibility, the chance to finish something meaningful, to create, to leave something behind, is what hospice makes possible.

The care extended far beyond the physical. Hospice psychologists and social workers helped steady her emotionally during a time when anxiety about the future, and memories of losing her father and brother in difficult circumstances, weighed heavily.

Feeling a lot better, Anna was discharged from the SPCU to Hospice’s community service.

Today, hospice nurses visit Anna at

home every two days. They check her medication, yes - but they also check on her heart, her family, her state of mind.

For her family, too, the support has been life-changing.

“They’re so much less stressed now. It’s not just about me - it’s about the people supporting me.”

Anna is passionate, almost protective, when she talks about hospice.

“It aggravates me that people still think it’s just for dying,” she says. “People are missing out.”

Hospice is about symptom control. About respite. About psychological support. About helping people live as fully and comfortably as possible, for whatever time remains.

“It completely changes your quality of life,” Anna says.

“ And when you have a terminal illness sometimes there’s not a lot of quality of life to be had. Hospice gives you those glimpses of joy again. ”

Anna’s story is a powerful reminder that hospice isn’t about giving up.

It’s about living.

And thanks to the generosity of our community, Anna is still making music. Still sitting in the sun listening to the birds. Still being mum.

Still here.

If you feel comfortable sharing your story, we would love to hear it.

Whether you are currently on our service, have lost a loved one on our service in the past, are a volunteer or a supporter – sharing your story is powerful and helps Hospice in a variety of ways.

If you would be interested in knowing more or would like to share your story, we would love to hear from you.



Ana Fierek
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Anna with her band, DreadRaven

Wish List

By donating for specific items you have a tangible sense of the impact of your gift; whether it be equipment, which is loaned free of charge to families in their homes or placed in our SPCU, or stationery to support our daily business, each item you donate helps make a difference to our patients every day.

- **\$115 could cover the cost of a week of personal care and wash products including Sage Comfort shampoo caps** - providing clean hair without the use of water, relieving for patients who are unable to wash their hair in the shower.
- **\$149.50 per item/ \$2990 one off for 20 anti-fatigue mats** - needed for our shop colleagues and volunteers to work comfortably processing donations in our 5 retail shops.
- **\$166.75 per item for 3 lifting belts for the SPCU** - lifting belts help carers stabilise and manoeuvre patients. New belts are needed to replace aging stock.
- **\$470 per item for 8 clothing racks for our retail space.** By helping us invest in these display units you're not just improving customer experience and effective use of space instore - you're ensuring that every donation we receive translates into more care, comfort, and dignity for patients and families in our community.
- **\$1546.75 for one new pressure care cushion** - needed to meet increasing demand for our community patients with pressure injuries.
- **\$2328.47 for a Bailey Access Platform** -

for our shop hub team to store donated items at height safely.

- **\$3036.69 for a new syringe driver to use in the community** - Syringe drivers deliver medication over a long period of time and are used regularly with many of our patients. To replace aging stock.

Gift Strength: \$600 one off / \$50 monthly
Help patients, families and children find strength through free counselling when they are in need of support.

Gift Care: \$1,200 Day of Care - one off
Ensure patients can be cared for at home or in our Specialist Palliative Care Unit, with the specialist support of hospice care.

You can also make a one-off or regular gift to support hospice services in Nelson Tasman.

If you would like to make a positive impact in your community by donating for an item on our Wish List, please contact Ana Fierek on 0272928877 or ana.fierek@nelsonhospice.org.nz

Thank you to the amazing recent supporters of our Wish List for being part of our compassionate community.

Mainland Foundation Makes a Difference in Our Specialist Care Unit

We are incredibly grateful to the Mainland Foundation for their generous grant of \$30,210 towards the supply and installation of handrails in our Specialist Palliative Care Unit (SPCU), the Daniel O'Brien Wing.

For over 38 years, Nelson Tasman Hospice has provided specialist palliative care for people of all ages living with life-limiting illness, enabling them to live "every moment" until they die. Our services are provided free of charge across the Nelson Tasman region, supporting not only patients' physical needs, including expert pain and symptom management, but also their emotional, spiritual and social wellbeing - and that of their whānau.

Last year alone, we cared for 773 patients, aged from 18 to 104, with 48% of those referred to us living with non-cancer diagnoses. While 78% of patients who spend time in our SPCU are later discharged home, for others it is a place of comfort, dignity and peace in their final days.

The installation of new handrails - expertly completed by Stainless Concepts - will help maximise safety for patients and families within their rooms and in the outdoor areas that overlook our peaceful gardens. These spaces are an important part of the experience of care, offering moments of fresh air, reflection and connection. Ensuring they

are as safe and accessible as possible makes a meaningful difference.

We were delighted to welcome Neil Allen, a community advisor for the Mainland Foundation, to see the handrails in place and to thank him in person for this support.

We also acknowledge the gaming venues whose partnership makes grants like this possible, in this instance, the Turf Hotel. Your collective generosity helps us continue to care for our community.

Thank you, Mainland Foundation, for helping us create a safer environment for the patients and whānau who rely on our care.



**MAINLAND
FOUNDATION**
Proud to Support Our Community



Claim tax credits for donations

Did you know you can claim back one third of any money over \$5 you donate to a New Zealand charity?

For example if you donate \$100, you can claim back \$33.33.

This is called a Donation Tax Credit and IRD have made it easier to claim them. You can upload your receipts online by logging onto the 'myIR' platform on the IRD website. Receipts can be uploaded throughout the year or all at once at the end of the financial year on March 31st.

At the end of the tax year, IRD will calculate how much you are owed and you will receive the credit in your account. It's that easy!

We would love if you would continue the cycle of giving by donating your tax credit back to Nelson Tasman Hospice. Once you've received the credit, simply donate it back to us and make your gift go even further!



Celebrating our Volunteers

We have an incredible group of dedicated and skilled volunteers. We are delighted to celebrate four wonderful people who reached significant service milestones in 2025.

Each of these volunteers has given their skills and time in different ways. They have helped with administration, raffles, and family support for Hospice across our region.

Trish 30 years service
Jenny 25 years service
Viv 20 years service
Kay 20 years service

Ka mau te wehi! How fantastic!

We appreciate that not everyone can give decades of service to volunteering. We are very grateful to all our volunteers, for the skills, knowledge and time they give so willing support the sustainability of the Nelson Tasman Hospice service.

If you would like to know more about volunteering or to express your interest, contact - volunteers@nelsonhospice.org.nz

Raise your hands this May.

Help us to provide free specialist palliative care to around 210 patients in our community each month.



Join us for a month of community, compassion, and creativity.

Hands Up for Hospice is our biennial campaign, in which the aim is to raise awareness of the impact of our work in the community, to bring the community together and celebrate loved ones, and to raise much needed funds to ensure that we can continue to provide our services free of charge.



Why not **Host** your own event or fundraiser - you choose how you want to put your hands up!
Or, attend one of the many public events during the month.



Why not Host a **High Tea** for your friends, family or co-workers.
Get together, have fun, raise funds and celebrate someone you love.



Find a friend's fundraiser to **donate** to or make a contribution to the whole campaign.
By putting your hand up to help, you'll be helping us provide care to around 210 patients in our community each month.
Every donation counts!



A friendly tug-of-war competition between teams from local businesses, sports groups and organisations.
'Heave for Hospice' ends our month-long biennial appeal. Sponsored by The Breeze, held at the top of Trafalgar Street on the 29th of May at 4pm.
Sign up now to secure your spot!



Donate a portion of sales to Nelson Tasman Hospice - any size business can make a difference! It could be 50 cents per coffee to \$1000 if someone signs up to buy a new car or house.
Or, support the local businesses raising their hands for Hospice!

Ready to sign up?

Visit the website or get in touch with us **TODAY!**
fundraising@nelsonhospice.org.nz



Geeves Scaffoldings at the Heave 2024



Raise your hands like Barb!



NBS Motueka High Tea 2024



www.handsupforhospice.org.nz