

Award honours palliative team's care

THE Swan Hill District Health (SHDH) community palliative care team has been acknowledged for excellence in supporting people living with a terminal illness.

The announcement of the award coincided with National Palliative Care Week, aimed to raise awareness about the rights of all Australians to access high-quality palliative care when and where they need it.

Acknowledging that palliative care is a universal human right, this year's theme seeks to broaden the community's perceptions, under-

standing and appreciation of palliative care, demonstrating its role in supporting the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of people living with a life-limiting illness, their families and their care team.

"Palliative care is available to people with a serious and life-limiting illness and their families, to assist in managing their symptoms, improve their quality of life and help them to live as well as possible, for as long as possible," Palliative Care Victoria chief executive Violet Platt said.

The Excellence in Palliative Care

Nursing award was named after Noala Flynn.

She was a passionate palliative care nurse and leader who worked tirelessly to support those in palliative care. Her contribution resulted in her being awarded the Member of the Order of Australia in 2005 for services to palliative care.

Following Ms Flynn's passing, her family wanted to continue her work by recognising outstanding palliative care nursing through this annual award.

Ms Platt said it was fitting that

this first award was nominated by a family who received care from the winners.

"Noala went above and beyond for her families if they needed something to help them better care for a loved one at home, she somehow made it happen," her husband, Gerald Flynn, said.

Ms Platt said that palliative care workers and services have a deep understanding of the difficult situations people near the end of their life or with a life-limiting illness often face.

"They can be instrumental in balancing a variety of perspectives and incorporating the psychological, social, and spiritual concerns of patients, their families and the staff caring for them," she said.

"They are also there to support the loved ones of people near the end of their life and help them live through their grief and bereavement."

SHDH director of clinical care Chloe Keogh said winning the award was a "true reflection of their care and passion".