

4 November 2021



Relish Today even as you Fight for Tomorrow

The inscription on the gravestone of John Keats reads *"Here lies one whose name was writ in water."*

That's a good start for the kind of maudlin farewell letter one expects to write at the end of a long career. But in the final week of my tenure at CFA I am surprised to find that I have no time for sad goodbyes.

Perhaps it's only one last hurrah, one last chance to flourish my flare for the dramatic so close to the end. However I can only write what I feel - and the truth is I feel fantastic!

I was certainly bracing myself for melancholy. After all, CFA has been my home and my mission for more than six years. Even so, I find that I'm leaving my post with a feeling of real joy and contentment.

I could never be happy to leave behind my friends and colleagues, but I am overcome with the warmth of my recollections.

I've witnessed medical marvels every week for years on end - not just in the form of futuristic medicines but also in the walking talking miracles that make up our CF community.

I've seen first-hand that the world can change for the better and that the power of everyone can be the ones to change it.

Real life is people coming together for causes they believe in, struggling together, even grieving together and getting up to fight another day.

Compared to working in 'Not For Profit' everything else is just a day job, and I feel blessed to have made this discovery in time to find my place at CFA. The corporate world can keep their perks and the money, that's not real life!

My parting message to the CF Community is simple – Relish Today even as you Fight for Tomorrow.

The medicine, funding, education and advocacy is all there to serve everyone in our community, fuelled by the pure energy and enjoyment (and even embarrassment!) of everyday life. We have a duty to live voraciously because our names truly are writ in water.

A luminary that I would like to briefly trace in the pond before I go is Patrick O'Connor, recently past President of CFA. He had courage, he was an enabler, and he had my back ... and together we got things done.

Another superstar is Robyn Peck. She is the backbone of CFA, our Major Domo and our engine. It is with absolute confidence that I am handing her the reins as interim CEO.

I want to thank the CF community who supported CFA's advocacy and research efforts and the clinicians who joined steering committees and were the 'brains trust' I needed to challenge inequity.

Thanks to the CFA Board who have been so supportive and always made the right decisions for the right reasons; the Federation Group and S/T CEOs who do such outstanding work for people in the community; and the partners and supporters who fund our work even in pandemic times.

Finally, I want to thank my CFA team who have achieved so much with limited resources and small budgets and no excuses. They are the future of CFA and they have great plans that will continue to support people with CF, their carers and the community.

My time with all of you has been a privilege. It has inspired me to move to my next chapter at [GoodWorks](#) where I'll continue striving to provide a voice to engage the powerful for those who need to be heard.

I will be watching the cherished CF community I leave from the sidelines, willing you all on to achieve every aspiration and innovation you deserve.

Farewell,



Nettie Burke
CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Australia