

# In Loving Memory of Jude Byrne

9 March, 2021



International Network of People who Use Drugs



*Photo by Nigel Brunsdon*

INPUD is devastated to hear of the passing of Jude Byrne last Friday, especially with the knowledge that she was denied palliative pain treatment following her diagnosis.

Jude was an extraordinary woman, mother, grandmother, friend and drug user activist who touched the lives of countless people around the world. She was a fearless advocate for people who use drugs over a career spanning decades, holding

numerous roles with the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL) as well as serving as a board member of the International Network on Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users. Globally Jude often served as a community representative for people who inject drugs on international forums and was a founding member of INPUD and acting Chair of INPUD Board for close to a decade.

Anyone who has met Jude will be able to tell you a positive story about her. As a person she was compassionate, lively and generous, making an impact on nearly everyone she met. As an activist she was fierce, determined and authentic. Jude had a way of cutting right to the heart of any issue and was unafraid to be direct to the people who stood in the way of her advocacy work. She was fearless in demanding a seat at the table for people who use drugs in the decisions which affect their lives and was particularly determined to advocate on behalf of women who use drugs in these settings. She kept others around her accountable for their actions and their promises, never one to stay silent if she thought things needed to be said even if it ruffled some feathers. Always looking out for the community, Jude would have been furious had she heard of anyone being denied palliative pain treatment as she was. Jude did all this work selfishly and with the wider interests of the drug using community in her heart. The impact of this work cannot be understated; Jude saved lives both through direct action and the policies she devoted her life to reforming. While strongly opinionated, Jude was also a great listener and committed to understanding global perspectives on drug use and advocacy. Our work today emulates Jude's vision for a global movement which unites our diverse communities through a shared lived experience.

Jude was an extraordinary woman who will be remembered as a pioneer and a hero to the global community of people who use drugs. The sheer amount of tributes to Jude shared over the last few days are an incredible memorial to someone who has shaped the very foundations of this global movement. INPUD will continue to collect stories and tributes to Jude's life over the coming days as we memorialize the legacy she has left behind. More importantly we will carry on the work which Jude has left for us, fighting for the future she dreamed of where people who use drugs are respected and free to live our lives in dignity.

Rest in Power, Jude.