



the  
hospice  
hub

connecting end of life care

## 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

33 Lewis Street, Perth  
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[thehospicehub.ca](http://thehospicehub.ca)



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## Message from the Volunteer Executive Director and the Chair of the Board

The Hospice Hub's first year of operations, covering the period from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, was exhilarating and challenging. A lot was accomplished! Anne Janssen and I would like to recognize our engaged and committed board members, talented and dedicated volunteers, and part-time operations assistant for their engagement and dedicated work.

We would also like to thank our community members for their generosity and commitment.

Together we have made great strides towards our vision of a compassionate community where everyone can live, die, be a caregiver, and grieve well.

Thanks very much,

Anne Janssen, Executive Director

Janet Cosier, Board Chair



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### Introduction

**The Hospice Hub (THH)** in Perth is a new hospice organization that was federally incorporated as a not-for-profit in March 2023.

Given the aging and income level demographics in our rural communities, there is a deep need to provide comprehensive, compassionate, and integrated services to support individuals at end-of-life including their families and caregivers. **The Hospice Hub** aspires to open a Hospice Residence in the Perth or Smiths Falls area to provide a welcoming, peaceful, and home-like environment in the next three years.

**THH** serves Perth, Smiths Falls, Portland, Westport and surrounding areas. Our catchment area is that served by the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital. Our services are provided free-of-charge. Community awareness and fundraising play a crucial role in supporting the hospice mission since limited funding is made available from the provincial government to hospice organizations to support caring for individuals at end-of-life



*photos by Alfred Van Mirbach*



Community meeting - April 2023

## Building community awareness and volunteer interest

In April and May 2023, two community engagement meetings were held in Perth to share the need for hospice palliative care in our communities, and to attract and engage potential volunteers to support the development and implementation of THH's vision and strategic directions. The community interest and support were overwhelming with over eighty individuals attending these sessions. And the support has continued to grow!

In December 2023, a volunteer engagement session was held to recruit volunteers for the different roles needed by the organization including volunteers for the home support and grief and bereavement support programs. In addition, volunteers were solicited for various operational roles with expertise in the areas of information technology, website design, communications, and event planning and execution. Over forty individuals attended the engagement session.

## Governing by interim board of directors

In the fall of 2023, an interim operating board of directors was established. Eight volunteer directors were appointed with diverse skills and experience, including health care, bereavement and spiritual support, finance, technology, and board governance. Four officers were appointed to the roles of board chair, vice-chair,



secretary and treasurer. Anne Janssen was appointed, as the Executive Director, to lead the organization and develop an operational plan to monitor operational performance.



**Steering Committee meeting, August 2023.**

*Front:* Isobel Boyle, Patti Koeslag, Sue Cavanaugh.  
*Back:* Dale Delahunt, Janet Douglass, Anne Janssen, Martha Slaven, Liana Gallant.

During the year, the Board met six times to carry out its responsibilities. The operational plan was a central focus at each board meeting in order to track progress on the major initiatives and to discuss any risks and challenges to achieving the organizational objectives. The finance report, which was prepared by the board treasurer, was also presented at each board meeting.

The By-Laws were developed and approved by the board in January 2024 which was a significant achievement. In addition, a

number of board governance policies were developed, such as roles and responsibilities of the board, confidentiality and privacy, and conflict of interest. The terms of reference of the Governance and Nomination Committee were approved; and the committee met ten times during the year.

## Building partnerships with community organizations

Community outreach meetings were held with many partner organizations to share the vision, mission and goals of THH, and to explore opportunities for collaborative partnerships. Meetings were held with the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital, community health centers, Tay River Health Center, Community Home Support Lanark County, Smiths Falls Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, Lanark and Leeds Grenville paramedics services, Home and Community Care Support Services, Lanark Leeds Grenville Ontario Health Team, LLG Public Health Unit among others.

These organizations expressed appreciation for the work of THH, and acknowledged that working collaboratively will help to improve the quality of life for individuals at end-of-life and their loved ones. We will be building on these partnerships as we roll out our programs.

## Delivering a volunteer training program and a volunteer handbook

A seven week volunteer hospice palliative training course was designed and delivered. Nineteen volunteers have successfully completed the course; and they are qualified to provide hospice home and/or bereavement support services to clients. A volunteer handbook was also developed to answer volunteers' questions and to prepare volunteers in providing client support services.

We would like to acknowledge the reference material available from Hospice Palliative Care Ontario including the online training modules. As well as, the volunteer handbooks and policies graciously shared by Hospice Care Ottawa/la maison de soins palliatifs d'Ottawa, Madawaska Valley Hospice Palliative Care, and Beth Donovan Hospice.



Volunteer training - spring 2024

## Integrating bereavement support

We were pleased to welcome the bereavement support lanark county volunteers into THH. These experienced and talented individuals provide grief support to people who experience the death of a loved one. The services include one-on-one companionship; open and closed bereavement groups and education workshops; and walking groups.

In May 2024, THH hosted a community event in Perth featuring Michelle O'Rourke, a registered nurse, who has extensive experience in the areas of caregiving, resilience, spirituality, and palliative care. Michelle's presentation was very well-received.

## Offering advance care planning education

Six education sessions on advance care planning were offered to the community in Perth and Elgin. Developing an Advanced Care Plan involves writing down your wishes and instructions about the kind of health and personal care you want in the future, if you become incapable of expressing your own decisions. More than 75 individuals attended these sessions.

## Developing a communications plan and a website design

Another significant achievement was the design and launch of THH's website. The website is attractive and user-friendly. The content will continue to expand as the organization grows.

The new logo was developed in a collaborative way with input from a variety of sources. The final two designs were shared with the community to help in the selection process. The logo with a circle represents the hub and our desire to connect end-of-life care.



THH's Newsletter has been well-received with the number of subscribers increasing to 280. In addition, regular and ongoing local media coverage of THH's activities has been beneficial in spreading the importance of community financial support to provide the critical end-of-life services so very much needed in our communities.

## Fundraising through grants, donations and events

THH was successful in raising funds to support its operations. THH would like to acknowledge the grants received from the following organizations:

- Perth and District Community Foundation (\$25,000)
- Petro Canada (\$7,500)
- Town of Perth (\$1,500)
- Ontario Health East (\$62,500) one-time funding for grief and bereavement support over two years.



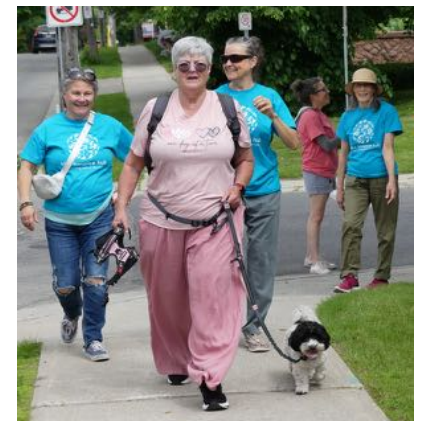
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Donations were made by individual community members totaling approximately \$20,000. Subsequently, two large gifts were graciously donated by Bill Gibbons, Frankville, (\$25,000) and the Sampson Masonic Lodge, Newboro, (\$10,000).

In-kind donations were also received, such as rent-free office space and Wi-Fi at the Perth Family Health Centre. Volunteers have contributed hundreds of hours of their time to: build collaborative relationships with partners; recruit and train home and bereavement support volunteers; build a technology infrastructure and website; raise funds; and perform various administrative and operational activities.

The planning and implementation work for the **Hike for Hospice** event started early in 2024. The event was held on June 2, 2024. It was a big success! We would like to acknowledge the outstanding work of the event team who did a truly amazing job. This was a small but mighty team! We also very much appreciate the generous financial giving of our community, and from their friends and families from afar in helping us to surpass our goal. Together we raised over \$80,000.



*photos by Patti Koeslag, Connie Nuyens, Christine and Reid Kilburn*



## Financials

At March 31, 2024, THH's net income after deducting operating costs totalled \$79,077. This income will be used to roll-out THH's home support and bereavement services in 2024 – 2025, and to establish a reserve account for building a hospice residence.

## Looking forward

In 2024 – 2025, THH will be focused on the following priorities:

- Develop a strategic plan
- Roll-out home support and bereavement services in collaboration with partners
- Develop a community education program, and day hospice services
- Develop a fundraising strategy
- Recruit directors for the board with specific skills and expertise
- Engage with community members in building a hospice residence over the next three years

## 2023-2024 Board of Directors

NAME	POSITION	START DATE	TERM
Janet Cosier	Chair	Oct. 2, 2023	1 year
Isobel Boyle	Vice Chair	Oct. 2, 2023	1 year
Constance (Connie) Nuyens	Secretary	Jan. 8, 2024	1 year
Katherine Williton	Treasurer	March 6, 2024	1 year
Janet Douglass	Director	Oct. 2, 2023	1 year
Liana Gallant	Director	Oct. 2, 2023	1 year
Joan Stephenson-Bowes	Director	May 15, 2024	1 year
Patti Koeslag	Director	Oct. 2, 2023	1 year

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