

Airdrie & District *Hospice*
Society 



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Airdrie Hospice Care For Changing Lives

Whether you are a long standing friend of Airdrie Hospice or hearing about us for the first time, we value your time in learning about our dedication to improving the quality of life...until the end of life, and supporting those who are grieving. Hospice is about helping our clients to live life, finding joy and meaning along the way, and supporting those left behind to work through their grief and to heal.

Hospice Airdrie helps dying people and their loved ones face terminal illness and bereavement with compassionate care from volunteers. Our services are provided free of charge to residents in our service areas. Airdrie and District Hospice Society serves Airdrie, Balzac, Bieseker, Carstairs, Crossfield, Irricana, Kathryn, Keoma and Madden.

As a charitable not-for-profit organization, Airdrie and District Hospice Society relies on its relationships with individuals, businesses, and charitable foundations in the community. Without the generosity of our donors and our volunteer, our work would not be possible.



MISSION - Airdrie and District Hospice Society enhances community capacity by supporting physical, emotional and spiritual well-being for those impacted by a life limiting illness.

VISION - Community based compassionate, collaborative holistic support, bereavement, palliative and end of life care for residents of Airdrie and District.

Priorities Identified

- **Spiritual Care** through working with religious communities and secular organizations.
- **Community Engagement** through bereavement support groups, partnerships and social media.
- **Funding** through grant seeking and collaborative partnerships.
- Community Partnership(s) continue to enhance and engage within the communities we serve.
- Volunteers serving on committees.
- Capital for 1-2 Hospice Suites at an existing facility.

AIRDRIE AND DISTRICT HOSPICE SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019

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LISE BLANCHETTE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hospice

Providing care of the sick, especially those with a life limiting illness. Does not mean death will happen immediately. It means to provide care and comfort so the person can pass peacefully.

Unknown

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



2019 was another successful year at Airdrie and District Hospice Society. Within these pages, are highlights, key achievements and special moments from the year. This compassionate, whole person approach to care is made possible thanks to community ongoing and generous support. Donations fund over 80% of our programs and services. We receive each gift with gratitude and remain committed to carefully allocating every dollar to augment client and family care.

Over the past year we have been working hard to expand our outreach and support for grief and bereavement programs and increase the number of clients in home assistance.

Last year we supported 25 community palliative clients in homes. We also served well over 75 people in our support programs for bereavement. With your generous support, we are providing all these services free of charge.

Thank you for being part of our shared legacy of support and care in our community.

Sincerely;

Lise Blanchette Executive Director

Airdrie and District Hospice Society

But in all the sadness, when you feel like your heart is empty, and lacking, you've got to remember that grief isn't the absence of love. Grief is the proof that love is still there

Tessa Shaffer

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MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT



Airdrie & District Hospice Society (ADHS) is an essential part of Airdrie and Area in supporting those going through end of life. It was established as a response to the need for end of life care

in our community. As Airdrie grows so does the need to have the supports we are providing the community.

This past year, we focused on increasing our presence in the community through community outreach, strategic partnerships, and support services. It has also been a year of

positive changes in general.

The board was pleased to welcome Lise Blanchette as our new Executive Director in April, and she has played a large role in getting many of our strategic priorities met this year.

We were also pleased to meet with the Physicians Association of Airdrie to discuss an alliance. From that, we have recruited a physician to serve on the ADHS Board of Directors, and information about ADHS is being provided at most medical clinics in the city. An agreement with Alberta Health Services has led to more opportunities for our Compassionate Care Volunteers to support clients in the community with a life limiting illnesses.

We held public information sessions throughout the year. The topics included: Advanced Care Planning; Preparing Wills, Personal Directives and Powers of Attorney; Applying for the Disability Tax Credit as well as CPP Disability with CRA; and our annual Getting Through the Holidays workshop.

Presidents Message Continued:

In the Fall, I was invited to Edmonton for orientation to the *Youth at the Table* (Y@TT) Program, which is Supported by Canada Service Corps, and is a province-wide initiative seeking to engage youth ages 18-30 in shaping their communities.

Volunteer Alberta has matched a wonderful young lady with us, and she will be serving on the Board of Directors, as well on the Community Outreach Committee.

Our social media presence increased, thanks to the brilliant efforts of a Board member who is skilled in the field. In 2020, a Marketing and Communications Committee will be formed, and they will develop a communications plan which include some fresh new social media content, an updated website and many other exciting ways of reaching out.

Some positive changes were made to the annual *Tree of Hope* ceremony in order to allow people to spend more time reminiscing while staying warm. We lit the Tree at the Festival of Lights at 6:00 pm and then convened at the Nose Creek Museum for the service and reception. Thanks to the Airdrie Community Choir for lending their beautiful voices to the event!

The board continues to work on different areas through our Strategic Plan that we revisited and updated in the Fall of 2019, including increasing our capacity to provide Compassionate Care Volunteers to assist with respite; providing grief support and educational sessions; and engaging with the community.

We look forward to exciting new ventures in 2020, such as revamping our website; implementing Nav-CARE to the Community; introducing Grief Conversations - casual meetings for anyone to share their grief and offer support; and looking into obtaining a few suites to provide hospice care in Airdrie. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your continued assistance in developing programs and services that benefit the community at end of life and beyond!

Sincerely, *Daria Skibington-Roffel President*

POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Testimonial “I have been a Compassionate Care Volunteer with the Airdrie Hospice Society for the past two years. What a tremendous honour it is to journey alongside and support those in our community with a life limiting illness. It is rewarding to give back to those who need it most with social, emotional and practical support in any way I can support the client, and the caregiver.”

Linda Davy Hospice Volunteer

Family testimonial “The loss of a loved one is one of the most difficult times in any **person's** life. Airdrie Hospice gave my family the opportunity, to relieve the everyday stresses of the unknowns in our journey with **my father's** end of life. Airdrie Hospice treated our family with dignity and respect. The volunteers unselfishly offered their assistance with any of our requests and answered any questions that we had. They turned an overwhelming situation into a wonderful experience. Unfortunately, my family had to travel out of town for my Dad to receive hospice care in a facility during his last two weeks of life, which added an additional burden at a very trying time in our life. We greatly need a hospice in Airdrie, so families have access to the same level of exceptional care, close to home.”

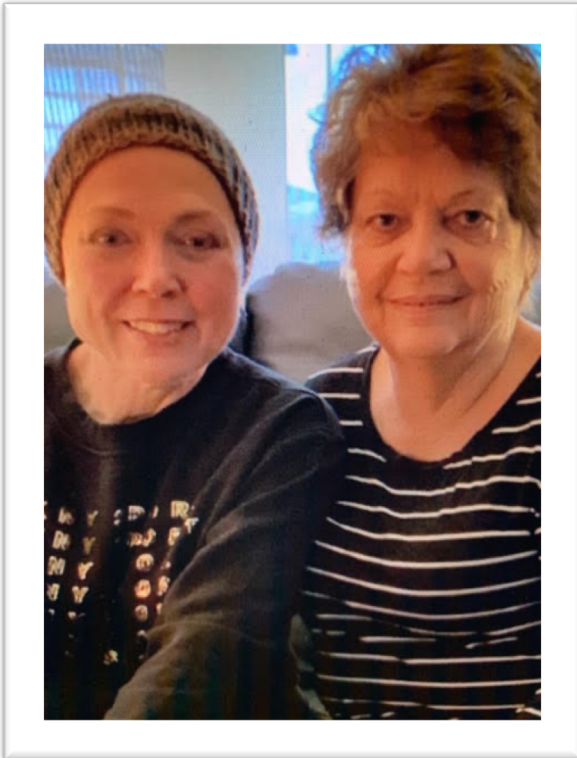
Michelle McPherson and Family

Volunteer Opportunities

Compassionate Care Program

THE POWER OF HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS

Airdrie and District Hospice Society is home to a community of 30 active volunteers and 12 board members. These community-minded individuals provided a total of 3,408 volunteering hours in our community last year. Compassionate Care volunteers provided 2,100 of these hours directly to hospice palliative care support to clients. Volunteer are truly the heart of Airdrie Hospice. They support us in fundraising & events, and they make a significant difference in the lives of people in our community when they need it the most. Without the generous gift of time and continued support of these individuals, to simply put it Airdrie Hospice would not be able to do what we do!



Lisa Smith Client and Linda Davy
Compassionate Care Volunteer

Compassionate Care Volunteers

You can expect to visit in home or in a facility of the individual and offer a variety of services through companionship. This bedside respite program requires volunteers to take our two-day Compassionate Care course following the Alberta Health Services Compassionate Care Program.

Grief Facilitators – Volunteers will be teamed with a lead facilitator after they have attended our one-day training session. This will give volunteers the basis to facilitate the six-week grief program or our drop-in grief conversations group.

Event Volunteers – Activities vary for each event however organizational skills and reliability are the key strengths required and have fun doing it.

Committee Volunteers work with the Board of Director Committee Chairs

- **Spiritual Care Committee - working with religious communities and secular organizations.**

- **Community Outreach Committee - Community Engagement** through bereavement support groups, partnerships and education programs.
- **Fundraising and Events Committee – Funding through collaborative partnerships and opportunities. Capital for 1-2 Hospice Suites to serve Airdrie and District. Working in sub committees to support all our events.**
- **Marketing and Communications – Develop and implement a strategic marketing and communications plan to increase awareness, partnership opportunities and funding.**

Hike for Hospice 2019



Left to right Kelly Hegg, Tina Petrow, Blake Richards, Lise Blanchette Peter Guthrie and Peter Brown

Programs Supported Through Your Donations

Grief Support Programs

This six-week program is offered in a safe, confidential and non-judgmental environment. Topics include self-care, support networks, coping with our grief, grief

journey, grieving styles and honoring our loved ones.

Cooking for one after a loss

It is not easy losing someone and now you are faced with learning how to “Cook for One”. Airdrie and District Hospice Society, in the Rotary Kitchen at the Airdrie Food Bank offer a four-week program to help you learn about nutritional choices and meal ideas. As well as build community as you share your meals and get to take some home.

Getting Through the Holidays

This two-hour workshop allows individuals the opportunity to get together with others who are also coping with loss. Remember, grief never ends but it changes. It is a passage, not a place to stay it is the price of love.

Compassionate Care Fund

For many families, costs at the end of life can be overwhelming. Our Compassionate Care fund is designed to assist individuals who are in a palliative situation and have exhausted all other means of financial support. All requests require a referral from a palliative social worker and are at the end-stage of diagnosis which is expected to be the primary cause of death.

One day you will tell your story of how you've overcome what you are going through now and it will become part of someone else's survival guide.

Anonymous

THE

NEED TO DO MORE ...

The demand for hospice palliative care in Canada is steadily increasing and will soon create a significant concern. According to Statistics Canada, seniors make up the fastest growing age group, however life limiting illnesses impact all ages. Airdrie is the fastest growing city in Canada with the newest census at 71,000 and the other areas we serve we are looking at a population of \$100,000 plus with no Hospice Centre.

With the integration of Airdrie Hospice within our community, it will enable us to build upon our well recognized grief programs and introduce new services to meet

the varied and continued needs of families and caregivers across Airdrie and area.



70-80% of Canadians would prefer to die at home, but the reality is that 67% of Canadians died in hospital (Statistics Canada, 2007).



Currently, those who would prefer to die in a hospice have to travel out of our community to Calgary.



The cost of care in a hospital palliative care bed is approximately \$850-\$1100 daily and increases in the last month of a patient life (AHS).



The cost of a hospice palliative bed is estimated to be \$460 daily (AHS). Our community needs at a minimum two Hospice suites we can call our own.



Over the past 8 years, Airdrie Hospice has continued to expand its services to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve however, in order to continue to do so, we need to also be able to provide beds for respite and hospice care.



Did you know - Only 3% of Canadians die suddenly. That means 97% of us will need help to live well to the end of life – in comfort, with meaning and with support for our caregivers. That is what hospice palliative care is.



96% of clients say hospice has positive impact on quality of life, and 97% of clients have high satisfaction with their hospice experience.



Paramedics currently respond to patients in their last 90 days of life an average of three times and, by legislation, are required to transport these patients to a hospital. Spending their final days in a hospital emergency room Hospice Suites would alleviate this.

HOW WILL AIRDRIE AND DISTRICT HOSPICE SOCIETY ADDRESS THE GROWING AND CHANGING NEEDS OF AIRDRIE AND DISTRICT?



By rallying together with members of our community to develop the Airdrie and District Hospice Suites. With the integration of two hospice suites in our community, it will enable us to build upon our well recognized programs and introduce new services to meet the continued needs of families and caregivers across Airdrie and District.

Airdrie and District Hospice Society Letter of Support

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the wonderful work you are doing to give others who have suffered great trials of terminal illness in our community.

One can never realize what a 14-year battle with five different types of cancer means. It means desperation trying to find that miracle that will save your loved one's life. It means sleepless nights wrestling with many fears of the darkness of what is inevitable. It is trying to continue to be strong for you children even though you are weak and trembling inside every single day to fight this demon called cancer.

I can't forget the endless trips into Calgary where again Drs. try to save your husband's life-time after time. Every day you watch your best friend get thinner and you can see the fight is diminishing. And then the day happens where the specialist tells you the tumors are out of control. The dark curtain starts to close. There is no hope, no miracle. Your husband must go to a hospice. There is a two month wait. He must be hospitalized. We wait for that dreaded call. It comes!

Your husband is transferred to a Calgary hospice where they will medicate him and keep him comfortable until he dies.

Usually it only lasts a few days but my Scotsman's strong will kept him fighting for two more months. The nightmare of the dreaded long drive home at 2 or 3 am, only to return, again at 6 the next morning. Watching him suffer. The drives got harder and longer to the point where my daughter had to talk to me until I got home for fear of my exhaustion on the long drive.

As I witness amazing people trying to open a hospice in Airdrie I can't support this cause enough as I personally have journeyed through a very dark disease that took my husband's life and the added pain of having to travel to where he was slowly dying certainly took its toll.

My prayer is that not one more person endures the added stress of having to journey to Calgary day after day waiting for the dreaded day where you have to say goodbye to a very special loved one!

Please support this great cause! These are very special people on a very important mission.

Thank You

Nancy McPhee

AIRDRIE AND DISTRICT HOSPICE SOCIETY

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Donation can be made online or by mail please make all donations payable to:

Airdrie and District Hospice Society