

HOSPICE NEWS



Cumberland County Hospice

May 2015

The recent Supreme Court of Canada decision on assisted dying was generally hailed as a great achievement in the media. But, whatever each of us may think about this decision, it will likely never affect most of us. We will all die, but the assistance we need is the support of loved ones, family, friends and the community. Unbearable suffering is the dramatic and rare exception. Death itself is an everyday occurrence that can be made more difficult by many factors.

The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association puts out a fact sheet with statistical information about death in Canada. Most of us say we would like to die at home, but almost 70% of Canadians die in a hospital. There are obvious difficulties in staying in the family home at the end of life. Looking after someone who is dying requires, on average, 54 hours per week. This is more than a fulltime job for most of us and the bulk of this burden will be carried by a spouse or partner. And only 15% to 30% of Canadians have access to a palliative care program.

Perhaps the most informative document to come from government in recent years was written by now retired Senator Sharon Carstairs, originally from Nova Scotia. In 2010 the Senate published "Raising the Bar: A Roadmap for the Future of Palliative Care in Canada." A basic point is that the vast majority can benefit from palliative care at the end of life without having to be in hospital. Hospitals mainly provide acute health care. A hospice provides the key elements of end of life care, including support for caregivers. A hospice is not home, but it can provide the privacy and safety of home and the comfort of our local palliative care program. It can also help us to educate ourselves about the choices we may face.

The leadership for a Cumberland County Hospice has organized a community group to plan and hopefully develop a five to ten bed facility. Already started, it will be picking up momentum and hopes to develop support throughout the county.

Written by Don Rushton



The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.

-Helen Keller

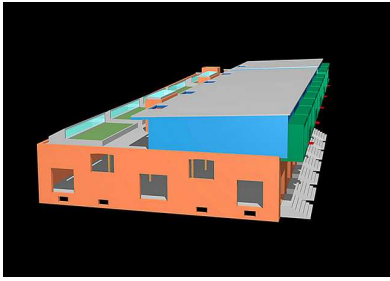


FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee has been reviewing the various drafts of the Feasibility Study which is being done by James Torbert & Associates. They are also in the process of developing a strategic working document that encompasses operational, capital and organizational aspects for the Hospice Project.



**Communication Team (l-r) Don Rushton, Audrey Marshall, Shelagh Fowler
Missing from Photo: Carol Embree, Jim Scopie**



FROM THE DESIGN TEAM

The Design Team has been looking at various land sites for the proposed Hospice. As well, they have been looking at other actual sites to gather ideas. They have visited East Cumberland Lodge, the enclosed courtyard in Sackville Memorial Hospital, and the Hospice Shop in Moncton. They also plan to visit Bobby's Place in Saint John and the new palliative care facility in Charlottetown.

From the Communication Team

The Communication Team identified the need for internal communication between team members, so it decided to produce a monthly Newsletter which may or may not be sent to the general Cumberland County Hospice membership. Also, a flow of information for Documents/ Pamphlets /Communications etc. was established and approved by the Steering committee. Please see below:

Document etc. is developed by Team or Steering Committee or Board



Document sent to Communication Team for editing/input/logo insertion



Communication Team sends edited document to Steering Committee for approval



Steering Committee approves and sends document etc. back to Communication Team for filing and date stamping and production if necessary OR sends document back to Communication Team for revising



Communication Team sends copy of document back to developing team



Information Session / Membership Drive at Tidnish, NS on April 19th

From The Membership Team

The Membership Team is comprised of Rev. Charlotte Ross, Beverley Smith, Linda Campbell, Lola Estabrooks and myself, Howard Spence.

We divided Cumberland County into sections that each team member took. We were able to get volunteers in these areas who would arrange information meetings about 'hospice'. Special meetings were scheduled to inform the public about the Cumberland County Hospice Society. At the present time, these meetings are on-going. To date we have had meetings in Springhill, Amherst and Tidenish. On May 27th at 7pm there will be a meeting in Parrsboro at the Fire Hall. Other smaller meetings have also been held. We have been pleased with the support of all Cumberland County for this worthwhile project.

The team has met every week and now we are working on our outreach meetings; we have all of our outreach volunteers on board. There are over 40 in Cumberland County.

The team, assisted by Ken Agar, worked on kits for the volunteers. These kits include information, pictures, a flyer, a book mark, and a registration form and card for membership sign-up.

The next stage will be to have a table at special events for information and registration. Also, the team feels there is a need now to meet with the communication team to avoid overlapping.

Howard Spence

Chair Membership Team



Back Row (l-r) Howard Spence; Beverley Smith; Rev. Charlotte Ross;
Front Row (l-r) Linda Campbell; Lola Estabrooks

What Is Palliative Care?

The cornerstone of Palliative care is **hope**. What we have come to expect from medical science has made us believe that hope in health means long term treatments and cures. Yet at some point in our lives we all face death.....

So does hope just disappear? No. The hope we feel at our own or loved one's end of life is no longer focused on cure but is focused on **Quality of Life** in whatever time that is left. In 1990 the World Health Organization (WHO) stated, *"The goal of palliative care is the achievement of the best possible quality of life for patients and their families."*

For most people that have been told their time is limited, no matter what timeline they are given, their desire is to die comfortably in a peaceful place. The most comfortable and peaceful place, for most, would be at home. The least peaceful place, if not the least comfortable, would be in hospital. Yet so many die in the hospital setting. Why?

The most common reasons for patients ending up in hospital for end-of-life care are:

- Firstly, the patient does not want to be a burden to their family;
- Secondly, the family is unable to give the level of care the patient needs;
- Finally - and most disturbingly - there is just nowhere else to go in these situations.

The first two reasons, albeit sometimes difficult for patients and families to come to terms with, are understandable, acceptable, and even noble. But the third reason is both a problem and a challenge: there **MUST** be an alternative!

The Cumberland County Hospice aims to be the alternative to dying in hospital.

What is a Hospice?

Hospice care is the alternative to dying in a hospital or alone at home.

A Hospice is a place in a peaceful and comfortable setting where patients and their families can deal with the end of the patient's life with the physical, emotional and spiritual support they require.

There are many wonderful examples of hospices throughout the world. They have proven that hospice is not just a place to die, but it is **a place to celebrate life**. The support of the staff and the volunteers allows the patients and their families to truly enjoy every moment of life the patient has left.

The members of the **Cumberland County Hospice** believe that the people deserve to have hospice care as an option in our county. As you may guess, this takes money and volunteers. Please **join us** in our quest to bring hospice care to Cumberland County.

The most common myth about hospice ...

Myth: A hospice is where you go when there is nothing more that can be done.

Truth: A hospice is the 'something more' that can be done.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

This came from Rosemary Donkin, who read in the Bobby's Place information that the Secrets of Success are the following:

Don't give up, this will be an amazing, frustrating, exhausting and exhilarating journey.

We must learn to live on the brink of disaster – it's the norm.

Keep moving forward.

Hard times bring strength, solidarity, clarity, unity and success.

Things outside of our control will come along to propel us forward when we need it the most.

You cannot appreciate the highs without suffering the lows.

Contact Us

For more information
phone 902-669-0261

Email:
cchpcs@gmail.com

Office: 98 Church Street,
Amherst, NS (upstairs)

*A good death
does honour to
a whole life*

Petrarch

