

NOTES from KAREN

We have just completed our first year of meeting with our volunteers in smaller groups by hosting birthday luncheons. I am very glad that we had this opportunity to bring some updated program info to our volunteers, find out what was working well, suggestions for improvement and generally what our volunteers thought about their role in the Palliative Care Team.

Have you ever thought that the Palliative Care Team is like a cake?

The cream and the sugar are like the patient and family care givers. They are all different and come in different shapes and consistencies. They have been dealt a blow when the eggs (diagnosis) have been broken into their midst and they are now swirling in a mix of health care appointments, treatment regimes. Their life seems out of control and they feel beaten. In Palliative Care we want to gently fold in the team that can support them and change them from a liquid puddle and firm up their support structure. So, we will add in their family physician, home care staff, nurses, personal support workers, OT and Physio therapists, dietitian, social workers and spiritual support persons.

Vanilla Cake from scratch

Cream ½ cup butter and 1 cup sugar.

Beat 2 eggs and add to the above mixture.

Fold in (1½ cups all-purpose flour + 1¼ tsp. baking powder) and (½ cup milk + 2 tsp. vanilla extract) alternately.

Pour in a greased pan.

Bake for 20-25 minutes in a preheated oven at 350° F.

As this is all mixed together we pour it into the pan and bake and over time we see a plan forming. End of life decisions are made, affairs are put in order, and the everyday structure of life has changed. Good Palliative Care has the cake coming together well, not collapsing in the center or burnt on the edges. It is a challenge and a work in progress and can only be completed by the team. Our Volunteers are the icing on the cake.

Definition of Icing 1: A sweet flavor usually a creamy mixture that is used to coat baked goods. 2: Something that adds to the interest, value or appeal of an item or event— Phrase; “the icing on the cake.”

Our Volunteers truly are the icing, the added flavor and beauty of our Palliative Care Team and the heart of our program .



MVHPC

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MONTHLY STATISTICS

Month	Nov	Dec
Active Volunteers	100	101
Total Reporting Hours	362	214
Total Reporting Kms	4,718	2,541
Total # of Families Served	44	52



MESSAGE from LISA

Notes from our recent Touch Base.

211—you can call this number to receive information on support services, (homemaking, transportation, meals on wheels, etc.) that are available in our area or you can visit 211.ca

Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) - we discussed that MAID deaths are accounting for about 1% of the deaths in Ontario since it became law, and that is expected to grow. We provided a resource to volunteers about how to respond to the question of MAID and that resource is available by email or to pick up. Volunteers are NEVER to either encourage or discourage but can ask why they are asking or what is leading them to ask. To be eligible people must have a provincial health insurance card, be 18 and over, a grievous and irremediable medical condition, make a voluntary request in writing with 2 independent witnesses, 2 independent medical assessments, and a 10 day waiting period between request and MAID procedure and at every stage have the capacity to consent.

Remember as a MVHPC volunteer we must always treat everyone with compassion regardless of a difference in beliefs. It is not our role to judge but to lovingly respond and support the dying person and their family.



MVHPC Compassionate Teen Program

Schools can play a vital role in the development of Compassionate Communities. By educating children and young people about palliative care, whole person care and dementia, we can influence a generation to be more compassionate and caring towards a vulnerable sector of our population. As our population ages our young people will come in contact with their grandparents, parents, neighbours, a relative or a member of the community struggling with life-limiting illness and dementia.

In a Compassionate Community people will be aware of and understand more about End of Life choices, goal setting, quality of life and how caregivers and community work together to provide services and support our dying. Our youth



will learn that Whole Person Care involves physical, social, emotional, spiritual and practical aspects of life and that the Family often is the primary caregiver. They too need support and assistance from our Compassionate Community to cope with the struggles illness poses on the family.

By educating youth about dementia, we can create a dementia-friendly generation—a generation that is more aware and supportive of people with dementia

in their community. Young people would recognize dementia and know instinctively how to help their grandparent or others. They will also learn that starting a healthy lifestyle early in life may prevent certain risk factors associated with this disease from occurring. Eventually they will take this knowledge and understanding into maturity and into their Compassionate Community, helping people live well.



On December 8th, Dawn Cruchet and Karen conducted a Dementia Workshop to 15 students at Madawaska Valley District High School. Activities that limited mobility, sight, breathing, hearing and dexterity were used to demonstrate what it is like to live with physical limitations and help students understand how this impacts emotional and spiritual wellbeing. Students also learned ways to enhance the life of those with dementia or a life-limiting illness.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP and BEREAVEMENT FOLLOW-UP



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP—we will be organizing a local support group to meet for 6 weeks with Dawn Cruchet and a volunteer to assist. We will host this event at a local venue in a quiet area. We hope to begin the week of Feb 21st but more details will follow. If you know of anyone that can benefit from some extra grief support, please tell them about his opportunity and ask them to contact our office.

We will be having a **Bereavement Follow Up Training** Session in February or early March. Dawn Cruchet, Grief Educator and Bereavement Counsellor, will be providing valuable information to help us support grieving families in our community. She has offered her time to provide assistance in helping to streamline our Bereavement Follow Up Program and to be consistent in delivering this service.

The Bereavement Follow Up Form and the Guidelines will be reviewed as well as the “Understanding Grief” and “Coping with Grief” brochures as this information is the fundamental knowledge for both you and your families.

This educational opportunity will be beneficial to volunteers who have not taken part in bereavement follow-up. Volunteers who are currently supporting families are strongly encouraged to come out and share your experiences. More details will follow.

Grief is like a snowflake... sometimes it comes one flake at a time; other times it comes like a blizzard. It melts away, but it always comes back. Just as each snow flake is unique, each person experiences grief in their own unique way. Julie Cook

HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS EVENT



On November 26th MV Hospice Palliative Care Staff and Volunteers welcomed anyone who was experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, to join them for an afternoon at the Opeongo Seniors Centre to honour their loved ones and to create a memory candle followed by a candle lighting ceremony. Dawn Cruchet, Grief Educator and Bereavement Counsellor, gave a presentation on coping skills for grief, especially the grief that is experi-



enced for all firsts without a loved one who has died - their first holiday, first birthday, first anniversary. Karen shared resources that are available to everyone in the community. She also provided information about MV Hospice Bereavement Follow up Program.

COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC PROGRAM

If you think you have the flu and you are considering going to the Emergency Department, please call the Community Paramedic Program first.

The County of Renfrew Community Paramedic Program has a 24/7 phone number—1-844-860-2778—available for you to call to get advice and possibly a house call. The paramedics will do assessments, possible some tests and offer some treatment options.

Please use this amazing service instead of going to



**ADVANCE CARE PLANNING
(ACP) DAY**

APRIL 16, 2018

**For Ontario ACP resources,
visit the Speak Up**

Ontario website.

IMPORTANT DATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS



DATE & TIME	TOPIC	LOCATION
February 22nd 6:30-8:30 pm Light supper provided at 6 pm	Thursday Evening Education Series: DELIRIUM This is primarily for health care workers but volunteers can join if interested	Lakeview Room (previously called Old Physio Room)
Late February (more info to follow) 1-3pm	Grief Support Group	Ash Grove Inn—Fireside Room
March 20th 3-5:30PM	Volunteer Touch Base— Dying processes and symptoms, End of life wishes, Memorial	Lakeview Room
May 10 th 2018	Champlain HPC Education Day	170 Colonnade Road South Ottawa

MV Hospice Apartment



I am taking this opportunity to review expectations and make some suggestions of what our volunteers do when in Hospice. Our role is to support patient and family on their end of life journey. When you arrive it is important that you introduce yourself to family members, stating you are a volunteer and asking if there is something you can do to assist them such as:

- ⇒ Clean up kitchen, do the dishes, initiate something for the next meal, fill the crock pot, make a batch of muffins or put on a bowl of soup or simply warming up something for the coming meal.
- ⇒ Tidy the common areas, sweep up the sand tracked in on boots, restock linen in bathroom, supply room
- ⇒ Offer to assist with turning and positioning bed patients. This is extremely important that our volunteers become comfortable doing. You may feel unsure but you have had training and can always be buddied with someone who is practiced in doing this. Many patients get bed pressure areas on their bottom from lying or sitting in one position too long. We should turn at least every 2 hours. Do a gentle foot or hand massage. You can teach family that this is a way they can bring comfort to their loved one. Family need your guidance for these simple acts of comfort .
- ⇒ If you have offered but cannot find anything to do, tell the family you are assisting in the hospital for a 1/2 hour, there are many lonely people who would love a 1 to 1 visit or assistance with eating. You can also get the laptop out. It has lots of educational videos. There is also a binder with interesting articles.

IN PRAISE OF MV HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS

Dear Hospice staff and volunteers,

Thank you for the tremendous support you provided to Rita and our family at a very difficult time.

Your kind deeds and words will be remembered with great appreciation.

Michael and family



Hospice,

Many thank you's. I as well as all of us are so grateful how well you looked after my dear husband, Edward, also our children. We could all stay there all the time. We love you for it.

My thanks goes to all the help we got from everyone who came to help. The volunteers hearts are so big and helpful.

Love you all.

Sally Beanish and all my wonderful family

