



*Hospice*  
NORTHWEST SERVICES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024



2023/2024 were our years to

*Flourish and Grow*

PHOTO BY LAURA CHANDLER





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HNW STAFF AT THE 2023 HIKE FOR HOSPICE



## A message from HNW's Past Executive Director Cherie Kok, 2023/24



Cherie Kok,  
Executive Director

### Leaving on a High Note:

This annual report is an opportunity to explain and illustrate how this was a year for our organization to Flourish and Grow. I do feel Hospice Northwest Services is becoming more well known and recognized for its programs and services than ever before. This past year was a year where we served more clients than ever before, offered more programming than ever before, expanded to the region in a couple of different ways, were invited to speak at an international conference, and we held our very first Grief Conference. The staff team is exceptional and have been in place now for

over 3 years, which has provided consistency and allowed for this growth. They have all hit their stride and have really developed their departments and have done exceptional work in 2023-24 that you will read about on the following pages. We have recovered from our Covid years and been able to bring our active volunteer numbers back up to that of the pre-pandemic period and our amazing volunteers are putting in more hours than we have ever seen. I am EXCEEDINGLY proud of the work of our volunteers and our staff and exceedingly proud of the support that we give to our clients.

I signed off in March 2024 as the Executive Director of this fine organization. I leave it in a very strong way. In the last 6 years, I have helped grow this organization from a staff of 3 to a staff of 7 full time and 2 part time. In that same time our operating budget has almost quadrupled, as our funding sources have been diversified and our fundraising stronger. In my first year, we were serving approximately 350 clients and this year we will have served almost 700 clients! I leave this organization feeling very proud of many accomplishments and many connections I have made.

I am particularly proud of the starting of two programs. When I first started with Hospice Northwest Services, one of my very first phone calls was from a woman in Geraldton who had just lost her husband due to a motor vehicle accident and although she was delighted that we could help her with her grief, she was very upset that we did not have a program to help her children. Three years later and with the help of our Grief Coordinator, Jessica Bruce, we were able to start HUUG – Help Us Understand Grief. We started HUUG in Thunder Bay,

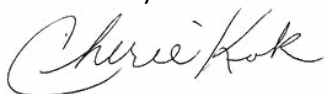
with money raised after a Giving Tuesday Campaign in December 2021, where we raised \$15,000 in one day. Fast forward to 2023, it is now funded in part through Ontario Health and North of Superior Counselling; it is operational in 7 communities in our district and we supported over 60 families.

A second program I am proud of is Gashkendamide'e. This program started after an application to Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2018. With this funding we hired Kimberley Ramsbottom, and with an Advisory Committee of Indigenous peoples, we went to work in developing an Indigenous Grief Program that is now getting international attention. Through the sustainable funding of First Nation Inuit Health Branch- Home and Community Care Division, Kimberley has been able to train Helpers in all parts of the province. This program helps so many to heal and I am extraordinarily proud to have been a part of the start up of this program within Hospice Northwest Services.

Looking to the future, I hope that Hospice Northwest Services continues down the path that we started, of finding a new home and being the lead agency in a new Community Hospice where our compassionate care can shine on. I hope to hear about HUUG and Gashkendamide'e being funded for years to come. I hope that our Caregiver department continues to grow and that the work for palliative clients endures. I do hope that Ontario Health continues to see the value in all of our exceptional Grief Programs and will fund it appropriately so that we do not have to do any more fundraising to keep those programs running. Additionally, I trust that volunteers will continue to be recruited and trained to be able to offer all of our incredible services. I want to wish this organization well, as I want to see it continue to FLOURISH and GROW!

In general, I want to thank all the staff, the Board of Directors and all the volunteers for your support, guidance, your willingness to try new things and spread our wings! This organization is set up for success for the future. I look forward to hearing all about its successes in the future. Thank you and blessings to everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cherie Kok".

Cherie Kok, Past Executive Director





**Rosy Brizi, Chair**



**Alison Dentor, Past Chair**



**Amy Bottos, Vice Chair**



**Candice Bottle  
Regional Representative**



**Susan Raynak  
Volunteer Representative**



**Grace Frenette,  
French Language  
Representative**



**Michelle Elliot  
FBoard Member**



**Barb Philp  
Board Member**



**Hilary Mettam  
Board Member**



**Joanne Kembel  
Board Member**



**Christy McClelland  
Board Member**

# **2023/24 Hospice Northwest Board of Directors**



# HOSPICE NORTHWEST

## WHO WE ARE

### VALUES

- **Courageous**
- **Community Focused**
- **Compassionate Caring**
- **Conscientious**

### WE ARE:

#### **Courageous:**

Hospice Northwest provides culturally safe care at the end of life in areas that are challenging, diverse, underserved, under-resourced and sometimes forgotten.

#### **Community Focused:**

Hospice Northwest responds to the needs of the community. Our grassroots organization strives to promote normalization of dying and death in our community and region.

#### **Compassionate Caring:**

Hospice Northwest provides a high quality service utilizing specially trained and well supported volunteers from a variety of backgrounds.

#### **Conscientious:**

Hospice Northwest is governed by a volunteer board of directors, responsible for the sustainability of the organization, now and into the future.

### MISSION

Hospice Northwest is a community volunteer organization that complements, enhances and delivers end of life care, including grief and bereavement services. The mission of Hospice Northwest is to foster a compassionate community response to the needs of anyone living with, dying from, or affected by illness and disease.

### VISION

Hospice Northwest will be a leader in providing compassionate companionship, education and support to individuals and their families as they travel through the final stages of life and death.

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hospice Northwest Services wishes to respectfully acknowledge this sacred land on which we deliver care. We work and live in the territory of the Anishinaabek Nation, as well as the lands of what is now known as Fort William First Nation, a signatory to the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850. We also wish to recognize the historical contributions of Métis People, and that today the Thunder Bay District is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We are privileged to call this land home.



# HOSPICE NORTHWEST

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### 2022 - 2025

**COMMUNITY**

**CLIENTS**

**VOLUNTEERS**

**NEW HOME**



*Hospice*  
NORTHWEST SERVICES

MAKING MOMENTS  
MATTER

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2022-2025



- Our new home will become the heart of our work in a compassionate community: we will explore opportunities for a new home for Hospice Northwest.



- Our people will be compassionate, skilled ambassadors of our mission: we will continue to invest in our staff and volunteers.



- Our clients will be supported through their end of life journey. We will provide programs and services that reflect the diversity and needs of our clients and their families throughout the palliative care continuum.



- Our future will be focused on our mission. We will strengthen community awareness of our work and our brand.

## MISSION, VISION & VALUES

**Mission:** The mission of Hospice Northwest is to foster a compassionate community response to the needs of anyone living with, dying from, or affected by illness and disease.

**Vision:** Hospice Northwest will be a leader in providing compassionate companionship, education and support to individuals and their families as they travel through the final stages of life and death.

**Values:** Courageous, Community Focused, Compassionate Caring, Conscientious  
We are:

**Courageous:** Hospice Northwest provides culturally safe care at the end of life in areas that are challenging, diverse, underserved, under-resourced and sometimes forgotten.

**Community Focused:** Hospice Northwest responds to the needs of the community. Our grassroots organization strives to promote normalization of dying and death in our community and region.

**Compassionate Caring:** Hospice Northwest provides a high quality service utilizing specially trained and well supported volunteers from a variety of backgrounds.

**Conscientious:** Hospice Northwest is governed by a volunteer board of directors, responsible for the sustainability of the organization, now and into the future.



# HOSPICE NORTHWEST

## A SNAPSHOT OF THE 2023/2024 YEAR



### 11 DEDICATED BOARD MEMBERS

Met monthly from  
September until June,  
along with numerous  
committee meeting

11

10

### 10 STAFF MEMBERS

Hospice Northwest  
staff grew to 7 full  
time, 2 part time and  
1 NOHFC intern



662 total clients served in  
2023/24

We assisted clients in the  
following program areas:

- Palliative Support
- Grief Support
- Caregiver Support
- Community Outreach Support

662

204

### 204 CLIENT GROUP SESSIONS

were conducted in  
2023/2024, with 1250  
clients attending  
multiple sessions





# VOLUNTEER DRIVEN ORGANIZATION



## 122 TRAINED VISITING VOLUNTEERS

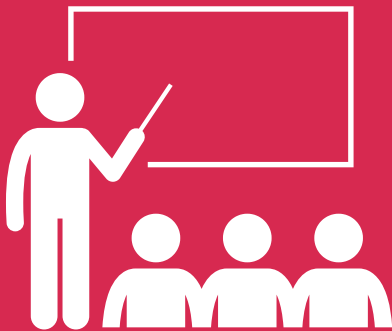
visited 662 clients  
in 2023/24  
+ 29 non-client volunteers  
helped with events

122

4160

## 4160 ONE-ONE CLIENT VISITS

took place in the  
2023/24 year



## 288 TRAINING & OTHER VOLUNTEER SESSIONS

took place in  
2023/24

288

8507

## 8507 VOLUNTEER HOURS

were completed in  
2023/24, including 1:1 and  
group hours







# VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR REPORT

Melissa Hazen,  
Volunteer Coordinator

## SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT THIS YEAR:

**Clay Mosley Award 2023:** Owen Littlefield was presented with a gift and a plaque as this year's recipient. He gave a heartfelt acceptance speech and went on to share his positive experiences as a HNW volunteer in a Chronicle Journal article.

**Volunteer Intake, Recruitment and Training:** Spring 2023/Fall 2023/Spring 2024 campaigns were successful in attracting a total of 83 volunteer applicants to the training program. At this time, 30 of those volunteers have successfully graduated the training program, while 43 are ongoing with their studies.

**Volunteer Luncheon Dec. 2023:** We had a lively and fun volunteer luncheon at the DaVinci Centre with a fantastic turnout of 62 volunteers and even Santa made an appearance! Lots of games and prizes helped to make it a memorable and celebratory event!



VOLUNTEER ROBERT FENTON WITH SANTA  
AT OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

**Volunteer week April 2023:** Teresa and Melissa planned and executed a full week of fun and engaging virtual activities for volunteers: name that tune, bingo, riddles, lots of laughs and prizes were shared.

**Grief & Self Care Event:** Jessica and Melissa created a virtual self-care grief workshop for volunteers. The event focused on how the body processes and holds onto grief. Each volunteer was gifted with a skin care tool called a guasha, moisturizing eye patches and a thank you for volunteering card. The facilitator covered lymphatic drainage and described the physical and mental benefits of caring for your skin and lymphatic system.

**Volunteer Barbeque:** In September 2023, HNW staff and 23 volunteers came together at the Adelaide St. Butterfly Garden for a volunteer appreciation barbeque. Volunteers were thanked for their hard work and dedication. There were fun games, prizes and some delicious food.



VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF AT THE ANNUAL VOLUNTEER BARBEQUE, SEPTEMBER 2023



I would like to share an excerpt of an email from HNW's longest running client service volunteer:

*"Ohhhh Melissa, Jessica and ALL team members of HNW – YOU are Simply The Best!!  
In my many decades of volunteering with HNW I sincerely say that  
I currently feel very rewarded and cared about and my concerns are listened to. Best group of staff!  
Remember that self care is essential for your health also!!  
Peace, XO"*

**Art Therapy Placement:** Hospice Northwest Services supported volunteer Katrin through her education and work developing skills in Art Therapy. Melissa supervised Katrin as she supported HNW clients in a one-to-one and also workshop capacity and clients truly enjoyed the diverse approach to engaging with their grief.

**CERAH Recognition Luncheon Oct 4, 2023:** HNW volunteer Larry Dicks was honoured for his outstanding achievements in volunteerism with Hospice Northwest.

**The Forget-Me-Not Volunteer Team:** Assessing increased numbers of clients living with dementia or in addition to their palliative diagnosis, HNW has partnered with the Alzheimer's Society of Thunder Bay to offer free Gentle Persuasive Therapy training to all HNW volunteers or any new volunteers wishing to help support clients as part of the newly developed Forget-Me-Not Volunteer Team.



ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



ANNUAL VOLUNTEER BARBEQUE IN SEPTEMBER 2023





# GRIEF PROGRAM REPORT

Jessica Bruce,  
Grief Program Coordinator

## SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE GRIEF DEPARTMENT THIS YEAR: Grief Conference October 2023

Hospice Northwest Services hosted our first Grief Conference, which was held at Goods & Co. This full day grief conference allowed participants to gain healthy coping strategies from local experts in the field. This conference featured local practitioners in alternative therapies, along with a vendor's market of holistic & alternative therapies.

This conference was a partnership with Hospice Northwest Services, CERAH, Palliative Care Link, St. Joseph's Regional Palliative Care Program and was partially funded by the Thunder Bay Community Foundation.

Thank you to keynote speaker C. Elizabeth Dougherty from Southern Ontario who spoke virtually about Demystifying Grief & Honouring Loss: Exploring Healing While Caring for Others & Ourselves. Locally, sessions were offered on Navigating Grief with Jessica Bruce & Kimberley Ramsbottom, Traumatic Loss with Diana Prairie and Cultural Perspectives on Grief & Loss with Beatrice Twance-Hynes. The afternoon allowed for interactive sessions: Healing through Storytelling with Claudia Otto, Self-Compassion & Mindfulness with Monique Mercier and Art Based-Therapy, Mushkiki Boxes with Helen Young-Brizard.

### Feedback after the conference was very positive:

- "It would be wonderful to have this Grief Conference once a year. I think the more our community learns about grief & grieving, the more empathetic, compassionate, it will help to create a more understanding community."
- "The speakers took very vague concepts and made them easy to understand, put a name to my experience. Very validating, very professional, calming facilitators."

**Personal Lens on Grief November 2023:** In 2022, we hosted our Personal Lens on Grief Exhibit which was recognized and won a Community Safety Award in 2022. The funds from this award helped us to host Personal Lens on Grief in 2023.

We hosted a special Artists, Friends & Family Night on Thursday, Nov. 9 where we heard many comments on how needed it is to have a special event for artists and their close ones to see their work. This special event helped artists and the community to voice their grief in a way words cannot.



PARTICIPANTS AT THE GRIEF  
CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 2023



ARTWORK ON DISPLAY AT THE  
PERSONAL LENS ON GRIEF  
EXHIBITION



## Circle of Friends Workshops Throughout the Fiscal Year

Thank you to Sargent & Sons and Blake Funeral Home for their generous support of our Circle of Friends Program. Circle of Friends allows participants to gather for a 2-hour workshop on a specific grief related topic from an expert in the field. Throughout the fiscal year, we hosted 18 workshops, with much positive feedback from participants. The topics included:

- Grief & Trauma (Apr 2023)
- Coping with Pregnancy & Infant Loss with the PAIL Network (May 2023)
- Expressive Art Workshop for Grief (May 2023)
- Understanding Grief (May 2023)
- Grief Walk & Talk (June 2023)
- Introduction to Therapeutic Art (June 2023)
- Coffee & Grief Chat (1 in July, 1 in Aug)
- Bereaved Parents & Grandparents (July 2023 & Aug 2023)
- Anticipatory Grief (Aug 2023)
- Self-Compassion & Mindfulness (Sept 2023)
- Grief & Gardening (Oct 2023)
- Suicide Bereavement (Oct 2023)
- Celebrating Grief (Dec 2023)
- Holiday Collage (Dec 2023)
- Grief & Mental Health (Jan 2024)
- Grief Journaling (Jan 2024)
- Grief & Nutrition (Feb 2024)
- Grief & Sleep (Mar 2024)

***"Thank you for offering incredible workshops, especially at the Christmas season. What amazing staff at Hospice Northwest and wonderful presenters"***

## Hearts and Hope Grief and Bereavement Groups

We facilitated 11 Hearts & Hope Groups throughout the fiscal year, such as support for bereaved parents, general grief and loss, support for those who have lost someone to addiction or substance use, and a virtual group. This year, we hosted more groups and supported more clients through the Hearts & Hope Program than ever before. Group participants left many positive comments, including the following:

*"I felt very comfortable being myself and expressing my feelings while listening to others express theirs. A very excellent group with fantastic facilitators"*

## Disenfranchised Grief for Norwest CHC Staff: Sept, Nov 2023 to January 2024

3 sessions were facilitated by Jessica Bruce & Kimberley Ramsbottom for NorWest Community Health Centre Staff to support disenfranchised grief in Sept 2023, Nov 2023 & Jan 2024. Two sessions were held in-person in Thunder Bay and 1 virtually for staff in district communities. Verbal comments from participants stated how needed this session was, many participants better understood disenfranchised grief and how grief impacts them personally, professionally and their clients.



### **Candlelight Memorial Service Dec 2023**

Hospice Northwest Services hosted our 19th Hearts & Hope Candlelight Memorial Service. The service supported 100 people at the Da Vinci Centre which included readings by grief staff members, music and vocals by Jonathan Poenn & the Holland/Fontaine Family, and a candlelighting ceremony led by Archdeacon Deborah Kraft. The centre of the room was filled with photographs of those who have passed, and the ceremony allowed folks to gather to celebrate their grief and honour their loved ones.

### **Jan 30 – Apr 2024, Men's Grief Supper & Support Group**

The Men's Supper & Support Group was facilitated by a male facilitator (Nolan Maenpaa) and male HNW volunteer (Larry Dicks) bi-weekly. Participants attending this group were provided with supper before the group started and an opportunity for the men attending to bond and enjoy a meal together. The male participants were able to share their stories and grief in a safe space amongst other men. This group provided a space specifically for men where they could freely express themselves and be vulnerable amongst other men who understand their grief and feelings.

### **Grief Counselling - Feb 1 – Apr 18, 2024**

For the first time, Hospice Northwest Services has been able to provide a grief counselling program. In 12 weeks, on average 7 clients received counselling. There were 5 counsellors on rotation providing support, including 2 Registered Psychotherapists, and 3 Registered Social Workers, MSW. One of the counsellors shared the following:

*"Every Thursday I look forward to meeting with the clients because I find that the counselling sessions have been incredibly helpful for them. For example, in one of the sessions yesterday I spent quite a bit of time talking about different stages of grief with a client and I normalized her grieving experience. At the end of the session she said she felt so much better because she felt she understood what she had been going through and that it was all very normal".*

### **Hearts & Hope Content Update**

As our grief supports are growing and flourishing, a deep dive into program content was made in the fall of 2023 for the Hearts & Hope Program that was created in 2013. In collaboration with Cherie Kok, Jessica Bruce, Kimberley Ramsbottom & Claudia Otto, materials for the Hearts & Hope Program have been "revamped" with more relevant and up to date materials and information to support individuals through their grief. In March 2024, all facilitators received training in this new 5-week program as well as skills training. The new program will begin starting Apr 1, 2024.

### **55 Plus Grief Support Group Ongoing, bi-weekly, Friday afternoons**

This year was the second year Hospice Northwest Services has continued to facilitate the 55+ Grief Support Program. At the beginning of January 2024, Cherie Kok & Jessica Bruce attended a meeting with the 55+ Centre Board of Directors for a request for funding and have secured funding for another year of this program. The 55+ Grief Support Program provides support bi-weekly on Friday afternoons at their Centre. This program is generously sponsored by the City of Thunder Bay Recreation & Culture Division, and the Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre.

Comments from participants:

- "Have found group helpful – ideas of how to proceed, good listener although as yet have been unable to verbalize my grief & struggles. Support of others in similar position"
- "I enjoy meeting everyone. Good source of information"
- "It feels like I can express anything I need to, it's okay to cry"



# Grief Program Statistics

GRIEF DEPARTMENT FLOURISHED AND GREW IN 2023/24  
PLEASE NOTE: STATISTICS COVER NON-UNIQUE # OF CLIENTS

## Hearts & Hope Grief & Bereavement

# of Hearts & Hope groups: 11  
# of Hearts & Hope sessions: 58  
# of unique clients attending Hearts & Hope: 97  
Specific groups: Drug Overdose, Bereaved Parents



## Circle of Friends Workshop Series

# of COF sessions: 18  
# of clients attended/supported in above sessions: 127 (not unique # of clients)

## One-to-one Counselling Program

60 clients received support between February 2023 – April 2024 through a new pilot project counselling program



## Help Us Understand Grief

# of HUUG sessions (for all communities): 48  
# of participants attending sessions: 332 includes parents & children in all communities, not uniquely identified)  
6 communities receiving training, 19 Facilitators trained  
3 information sessions in community  
# of coordinators: 2

## Men's Group Sessions

4 sessions between February and March 2024  
18 clients attended the sessions in total, with several attending multiple times  
6 unique clients



## 55+ Centre Grief Sessions

# of 55+ Centre Sessions: 21  
# of clients supported in above sessions: 159  
(not unique)



**Felicia Hiscock**  
Children's & Teen Grief  
Program Coordinator



**Lisa King**  
Regional Family Grief  
Coordinator

## HUUG PROGRAM COORDINATORS' REPORT

The HUUG (Help Us Understand Grief) program continues to grow in both Thunder Bay and the Region. The Thunder Bay program will be completing year 2 in May 2024. This year, more than 40 families have benefitted from attending monthly grief workshops for children, teens and families. In October 2023, the HUUG workshop was held at Lakehead University, making use of the fire pit. An Elder and Fire Keeper were invited to lead the group in creating letters to loved ones and to oversee a ceremonial fire where participants had the opportunity to place their letters in the fire. In February this year, one family shared a breakthrough that occurred during a HUUG workshop. The child had rarely spoken about the death of their mother prior to this. During a workshop, the child had drawn a picture representing their mother and spoke to the group about their feelings around this loss. The family was amazed and shared that the conversations continued at home. They felt that their attendance at HUUG had helped their child begin to move through their grief journey in a supportive and child focused way. At each workshop, families continue to share stories and bond over common grief experiences. Connections are made that grow outside of this group experience. Children and teens continue to find peers that are experiencing similar emotions.

HUUG in the region began last year. Beginning in May 2023, HUUG workshops were delivered in Nipigon, Terrace Bay, Marathon, Manitouwadge, Geraldton and Longlac. As these programs have grown, Lisa King was hired in December 2023. She is the Regional Family Grief Coordinator. Her role is to oversee and grow the HUUG program in the region, as well as to develop grief support services for adults that have children experiencing grief. Lisa has been busy hiring and training facilitators for both HUUG and Hearts and Hope. In one community there are three women that are all bringing their children to HUUG workshops. In all three families, the father had died in the last 1-5 years. The families did not know each other personally prior to attending HUUG. They have all shared that they are now connected by the common bond of connecting children and teens in seven communities, and supporting families in their grief journeys; knowing they are not alone.







# PALLIATIVE PROGRAM COORDINATOR REPORT

Suzanne Nuorala,  
Palliative Program Coordinator

## Fall/Winter 2023

It has been a very busy year here at HNW in the Palliative Department. We have seen significant increases in self referrals, as well as from LTC, Alzheimer Society, Home and Community Care and through other health care providers. It is wonderful to see our community working together to improve the well being and health of our residents.

Our volunteer core continues to provide safe, compassionate care and companionship through in-person visits or phone support. They continue to go over and above for their clients, by supporting them through social stimulation, active listening, advocating, attending medical appointments, picking up groceries....and the list can go on forever. These selfless acts of kindness are seen and acknowledged by not only HNW staff, but by the clients/families themselves. The following testimonial was provided by clients and their families:

*"When I was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer last year, I was preparing for the worst. I was afraid and worried what my future had in store. When my physician asked if I would approve a referral to HNW I was hesitant as I didn't want to talk about my illness, especially with a stranger. Boy was I wrong. My volunteer has been a constant support and patient as all heck. They get me out of my house and bring me to places I never thought I would see again. They make me laugh, they make me cry (in a good way), and are always willing to go the extra mile for me. Sometimes I don't know what I did to deserve such a wonderful person in my life. I am so grateful for my volunteer and HNW".*

**Caregiver Drop-In Sessions:** HNW provides a wide variety of programs and resources to our 40+ caregiver clients. These services consist of a caregiver support line, monthly wellness check-ins and a 5-week caregiver workshop series. The workshops are offered twice a year in November and May. The sessions are offered to our Thunder Bay residents, as well as the Western region, via zoom or in-person. Attendees do not have to be a client of HNW.

During our workshop evaluations and client check-ins, we often hear caregivers say how much they miss getting out/having a moment to themselves, or to simply have someone to talk to who is going through a similar situation. This sparked the idea of offering an environment once a month where caregivers can come together in a safe space, where they can talk openly and freely about their caregiver challenges, as well as learn about other community resources they may be able to access. Some of these caregiver sessions have included presentations by: Ontario Caregivers Organization, Alzheimer Society and in March we offered a free Italian themed Spaghetti supper. Many participants commented that it was nice to eat with others, and to have someone cook for them for a change. The feedback received has been very positive, and clients are looking forward to future programming. As the needs of our caregivers change, HNW hopes to change with them by providing additional supports, resources and opportunity for continued self care.

*"Self care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel." ~ Eleanor Brownn*



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Kimberley Ramsbottom,  
Outreach Coordinator

## Gashkendamide'e Grief Support Group

2023-24 was a full year of helping individuals and staff who support others with understanding grief, how it can manifest uniquely within each individual, and developing skills on how to navigate the grieving process. We built relationships, engaged with regional communities, supported home and community care staff and expanded our Helper Team to almost triple the numbers we had last year. We have trained individuals to deliver this workshop from all over

Northwestern Ontario. The Helper team went to Toronto in June of 2023 to deliver training of the Gashkendamide'e Loss and Grief Support Group Helper training. We also hosted an information session where we shared information on the development and growth of this support group.

We have had many requests to have the staff from communities trained in this support group. We supported Dilico Anishnawbek Family Care Team, Lac Seul, Pic Mobert, and Pic River First Nations.

## Other Outreach Program Activities

The Outreach program was actively engaged in the community through the 2023-2024 year. I was able to support many individuals and frontline staff in their grieving journeys, share information and education at multiple public presentations. These included Die-alogue sessions, Advance Care Planning workshops, Grief and Bereavement workshops at Norwest Community Health Clinic, and debriefings with Options Norwest. I also participated in the Ontario Health Team Naming Ceremony, hosted an educational session for 200 frontline workers at the Hospice Palliative Care Association, participated in meetings for the Palliative Care Advocacy Team, supported an Anticipatory Grief workshop in August 2023, presented at the Nishinawbe Aski Nation AGM, and provided frontline staff grief information session to local businesses.

In September 2023, the Outreach Department hosted the 4th Annual Memorial for Vulnerably Housed Community Members. We also offered volunteer grief training, supported community members in Lac Seul First Nation at the first Mental Health Wellness conference, participated in the Indigenous Service Providers exhibition, support planning and delivery of Norwest Ontario Grief Conference and Personal Lens on Grief, actively engaged in Palliative Care Education and Indigenous Cancer Care Collaborative, organized and participated in advisory team meetings, supported Palliative Care Advocacy Team training, participated in luncheon for Vulnerable Housed Clients, supported vulnerable community members and their journeys, participated in Indigenous Knowledge Exchange and offered ongoing support of Caregiver Workshops regarding grief and advance care planning.

We look forward to another year filled with supporting individuals in their own grief journeys, and to assist care providers in understanding the uniqueness of the grieving process.



GASHKENDAMIDE'S (BE GRIEVED FROM THE HEART) LOSS AND GRIEF  
TRAIN THE HELPER WORKSHOP AT DILICO ANISHINABEK FAMILY CARE TEAM





# REGIONAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR REPORT

Teresa Roberts,  
Regional Coordinator



The Regional Program continues to offer support to clients in 5 communities.

**Recruitment and volunteers:** We have recruited 2 new volunteers in the region this year with one more potential volunteer who expressed interest after the health fair in Terrace Bay. Our total number of volunteers in the region is now at 28 with 11 of them being grief trained.

One of our regional volunteers, Owen Littlefield won the Clay Mosely Award this year. Owen has been a volunteer for many years and his dedication to HNW is inspiring.

We have one volunteer who has taken on two home clients. Because of travel times it is often difficult to get volunteers to do home visits so we are so grateful that we have her dedication to help out with those who need support and are not in LTC or hospital.



OWEN LITTLEFIELD RECEIVING THE CLAY MOSLEY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER

**Health Fairs:** We attended 2 health fairs this year to promote Hospice in the region, with one in Schreiber and one in Marathon. The health fairs promote hospice in our communities and highlight our volunteers who help out with them.

**Grief Cafes:** We have started towards our goal of having grief cafes in all communities in the region. At this time we have cafes in Marathon and Terrace Bay/ Schreiber.

These cafes have been very successful and we are reaching a wide variety of residents who need to have support but do not want to become clients.

We are working towards starting a café in Manitouwadge in September.

The cafes function as drop in sessions for those who attend and are run in conjunction with a Professional and our wonderful grief volunteers.

Jessica has been very helpful in providing us with scripted questions to help facilitate the conversations.



**Clients:** We have increased our client numbers in the region over the past few months and have been very successful in matching clients and volunteers. We have also increased our number of grief clients and have grief trained volunteers in each community.





# THE 2023 HIKE FOR HOSPICE REPORT

Kathleen Buso,  
Communications Coordinator

## TOTAL RAISED: OVER \$60,000

On May 28th, 2023, Hospice Northwest Services celebrated the 12th anniversary of our major annual fundraiser, the Hike for Hospice Palliative Care. Our goal was set at \$50,000 and our theme was ***Hike to Remember, Hike to Support.***

Over the past 12 years, the annual fundraiser has evolved into a moving memorial event. This year, our Hike committee focused on adding new elements to the remembrance ceremony to offer an even more meaningful experience for participants. In addition to the flower ceremony and the colourful personalized ribbons on the Butterfly Remembrance Wall, a new addition to the Hike was introduced. On Sunday, May 28th, Thunder Bay's first Wind Phone was unveiled. The unconnected phone was there for all those who had messages of love they wished to share with their deceased friends and family and for saying the goodbyes they may never have had a chance to say. Each unique and meaningful memorial piece at the Hike for Hospice is meant to help people who are grieving feel connected to their friends or family members after a loss.



Thunder Bay's first ever Wind Phone was set up at the Adelaide Monarch Butterfly Garden at Boulevard Lake

The 2023 Hike saw 22 teams and approximately 200 people in attendance.

In addition to the funds raised at the walk, our Hike for Hospice 50/50 raffle raised a total of \$26,770, with \$13,385.00 going to the lucky winner! HNWS made \$10,100 after expenses.



Many families showed their support at the 2023 Hike for Hospice!



# OUR 2023 HIKE SPONSORS AND FUNDERS



## CORPORATE DONORS & PROGRAM SPONSORS



## MAJOR FUNDERS & FOUNDATION FUNDING





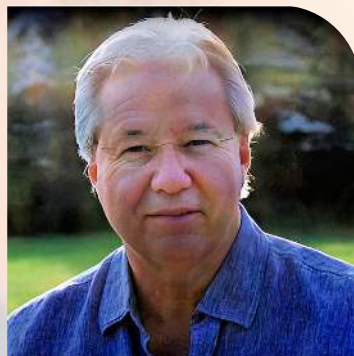
# 2023/2024 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

## TOTAL RAISED \$40,000!

The 2023/24 Annual Campaign raised approximately \$40,000 for hospice palliative care and grief services in our community! We are proud of the fact that our Annual Fund total has progressively grown over the past six years. As difficult as fundraising can be during these times of global strife, it is a necessity for our organization. In order to maintain our high quality programs, we must continue to raise the necessary funds to carry on our work. Hospice Northwest is 70% funded by government grants. The additional 30% of our costs need to be raised through the generous support of our community.

Our Fall 2023 annual campaign raised funds that were used to support our Caregiver and Grief Programming. The following is an excerpt from the 2023 Annual Campaign letter that went out to hundreds of people in our community, asking for their support. This quote was provided by Stephen Wright, one of our grief clients, who received grief support after the death of his wife Marlene. The couple was married for almost 40 years.

*"My grief was like a big knot. All these emotions are knotted together and one is called guilt, one's called sadness, one's called love, one's called loss... and on and on and on. How do you tear those apart without hurting yourself and at the same time deal with the things you need to deal with? It's a big undertaking. My Hospice Northwest Services volunteer was able to help me pick them apart a bit. She made me feel like its okay."*



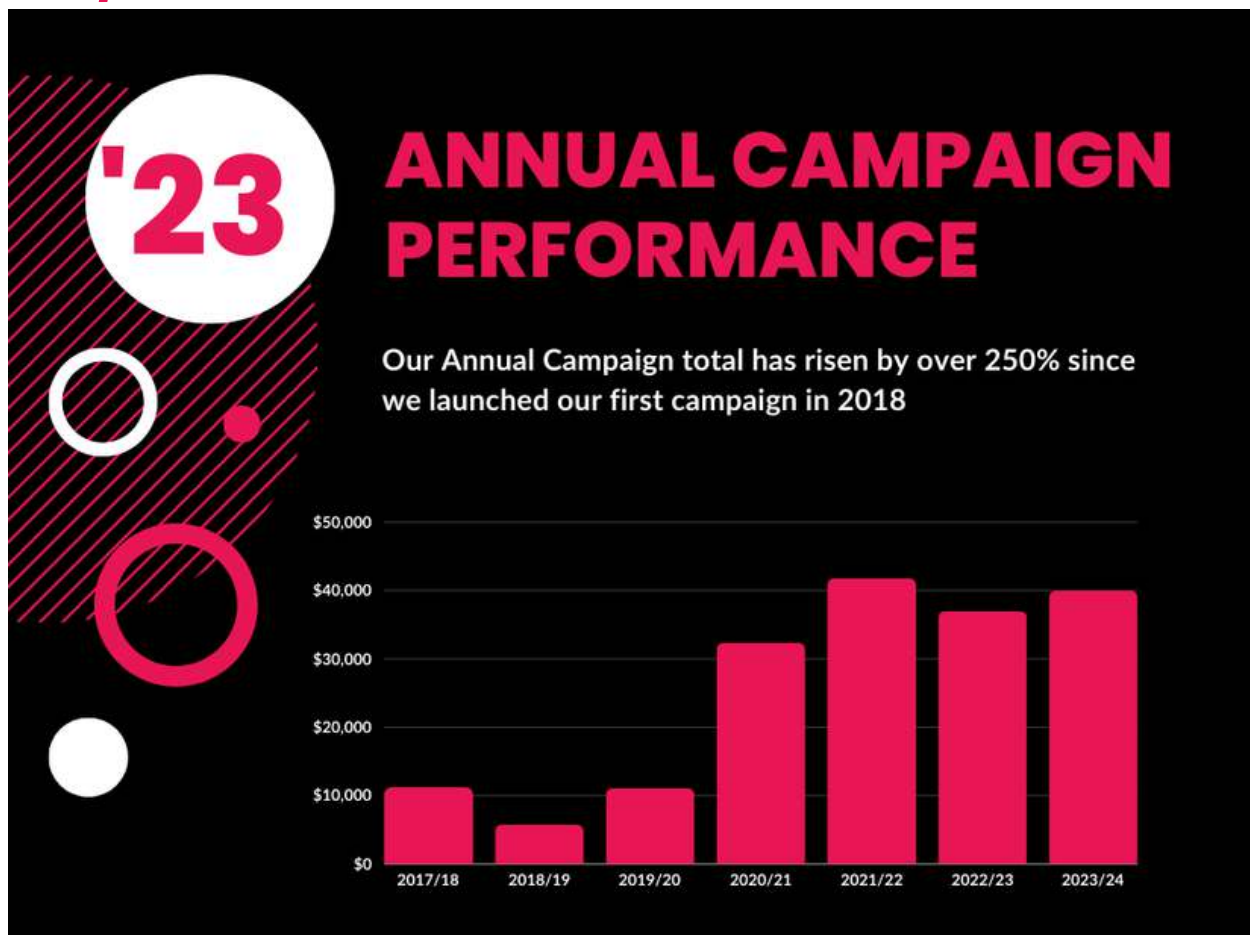
Another client, Terry, also shared his story. Terry is a caregiver for his wife Debbie. Terry and Debbie have been living with the devastating effects of dementia for the past 11 years. Debbie's disease has gotten progressively worse. When she started wandering away from their home, Terry made the difficult decision to move her into a long-term care facility, so that she could receive around the clock care.



*"I reached out to Hospice Northwest Services because I can't be with Debbie 24 hours a day. I really wanted someone to visit her when I can't be there. I wanted someone to walk with her and hold her hand because she likes to hold people's hands."*

The 2023 Fall 50/50 raffle brought in another \$11,000 which was added to the Annual Campaign total, making our grand total over \$51,000!!

# 2023/24 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN & TOP DONORS



## 2023 Top Donors

Wings of Hospice \$2500 & up	Friends of Hospice \$500 - \$999
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anonymous</li><li>• Ken Blonde and Gwynivere Davies</li><li>• Jacqueline &amp; Maurice Black</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kathy &amp; Kevin Kortés-Miller</li><li>• Amy Bottos</li><li>• Joanne Kembel</li><li>• Kevin Bezanson</li><li>• K&amp;M Logging Inc.</li><li>• Deborah Escott</li><li>• Rosy Brizi</li><li>• Shawn Kunnas</li><li>• Peter Buchan</li><li>• Anonymous</li><li>• Charlene Burford</li><li>• Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario</li></ul>
Hearts of Hospice \$1000 - \$2499	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• David Morellato</li><li>• Alison Denton</li><li>• Kathy Simpson</li><li>• Terry Redden</li><li>• Catherine Donohue</li><li>• Zsuzsa Elchuk</li><li>• John and Barb Luft</li><li>• Leah Savage</li></ul>	



# Financial Statement of Operations

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

REVENUES	2024	2023
Grants	\$810,902	\$621,470
Donations	2,844	13,930
Fundraising Income - Net of Cost (Schedule C)	114,981	101,343
Lottery Income - Net of Cost (Schedule D)	15,042	15,772
Other Income	49,787	13,032
	<b>\$993,556</b>	<b>\$765,547</b>
EXPENSES		
Bank Charges	478	256
Board Development & Meeting Costs	5,872	279
Building Costs	34,906	14,313
Consultants	-	-
Dues and Memberships	3,978	5,278
Fundraising Expenses - Annual Fund	1,592	7,555
Insurance	4,704	4,704
Office Equipment and Maintenance	1,360	8,185
Office	16,007	11,758
Postage	766	137
Professional Fees	52,466	24,356
Program Costs	178,289	90,859
Public Awareness	22,767	10,887
Telephone	4,949	5,929
Volunteer Development & Training	22,969	16,948
Wages	489,380	451,725
Wages - Benefits Costs	62,891	59,313
	<b>\$903,374</b>	<b>\$712,482</b>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<b>\$90,182</b>	<b>\$53,065</b>

## Looking Forward to 2024/2025

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- Hospice Northwest welcomed our new Executive Director, Donna Jeanpierre on April 29th, 2024
- 13th annual Hike for Hospice: May 26, 2024
- Two 50/50 Online Raffles, Draw Dates May and December 2024
- Memorial Service for Vulnerably House Individuals, September 2024
- A Personal Lens on Grief Art Exhibition to be held in November 2024
- Christmas Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon December 6, 2024
- Candlelight Memorial Service December 3, 2024
- Regional HUUG workshops ongoing throughout the year
- 7 Hearts and Hope Grief Groups in Thunder Bay
- 2 Regional Hearts and Hope Groups
- Funding approved for 55+ biweekly grief sessions
- Planning has started for November 2025 Grief Conference
- Part-time Grief Counsellor hired to provide support to hired needs clients
- 18 Circle of Friends Workshops scheduled for the year
- 5 Gashkendamide'e Workshops
- Recruit and train 60 volunteers, with 4 having more than one language
- Monthly volunteer training and support meetings
- Caregiver 5 week workshop series November 2024
- Monthly programming for caregivers and palliative care clients

***Any questions regarding the content of this report can be sent to [info@hospicenorthwest.ca](mailto:info@hospicenorthwest.ca) or by calling (807) 626-5570.***