

A photograph of four women, likely hospice workers, standing in a row and smiling. They are positioned in front of two large murals depicting lush green trees. The woman on the far left is wearing a green top. The woman next to her is wearing a blue top. The woman in the center is wearing a maroon top and has a smartwatch on her left wrist. The woman on the far right is wearing a pink top and has an ID badge hanging from her neck. A teal banner with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Here for the
community**



**Dorothy Ley
Hospice**

Together, we make a
difference



Spring update



For many of us, thoughts of the end of life are overwhelming. Possibly even more challenging is watching a loved one face a life-limiting illness. With compassionate community support, the experience can be less alienating.

This is what we strive for at Dorothy Ley Hospice. Our mission to provide palliative support and hospice care for our community is what motivates us to care for others, show understanding, and provide companionship.

We do that with the help of our donors, community partners, government agencies, and the selfless acts of our tireless volunteers. We are grateful for the allyship we share with our community family. It's a comfort to be able to share the burden of life's health challenges with close friends and people who care.

We are happy to present our Spring Impact Report, with stories from individuals and their families, whom we've had the honour of serving at Dorothy Ley Hospice this past year. Our report revolves around sharing and showcases our impact, shared support and strategic direction, as we work towards a future full of continued compassion and understanding for Dorothy Ley Hospice and our community family.

Impact

This past year, we provided end-of-life care to approximately 1,300 people at home, 200 at the hospice and supported 640 caregivers and bereaved individuals. We did this with the help of our 250 volunteers over 12,300 volunteer hours.

"Dorothy Ley treats each person as an individual and celebrates each day that they're here. They don't treat them like someone who's dying - they treat them like they're a living person each day."

Support



Wellness programs

When we say, *take care*, we mean it.

During these past months, our **Wellness Program** provided over 1,000 hours of wellness treatments and programming both here at Dorothy Ley Hospice for those well-enough to visit us in person, or online in their own homes if needed.

Members of the community received compassion in the way of meditation, yoga, therapeutic and aroma touch. Individuals were visited by the Hospice's four-legged therapist, Sadie, who gave tender compassion through the stare of her caring brown eyes, soft fur, and gently wagging tail.



For others, the Hospice's **Expressive Arts Therapy Program** gave them an opportunity to navigate their grief and loss through creative projects like painting, journaling and other crafts.

The Expressive Arts program offers an alternative to traditional talk therapies for individuals who may not have had the words to express how they feel. The aim is to provide a creative, therapeutic and expressive environment to support people in their grief.



"The loss of a loved one can be a harrowing experience, both mentally and emotionally. The team's gentle approach to communicating with both the grieving and the mourning was incredibly comforting! I feel the process has given me hopes of finding a path. Thank you."



The power of compassion

The **grief and bereavement, and spiritual care programs** supported many individuals as part of their healing journey. Our counsellors, grief companions and spiritual care coordinator provided solace and comfort through sessions, group support and therapy to 650 individuals here at the hospice and in their homes.

Our men's support group encouraged men to 'feel their feelings', and gain confidence in expressing themselves among others experiencing similar losses. The same can be said for the spousal and parental loss groups, grief companion group and walking group, whose participants were welcomed to find comfort in a safe place to explore grief.

"People expressing similar feelings and concerns helps you feel less isolated and you're not alone in feelings that sometimes feel out of place. It's a great group for those with small social circles of support."

Tony and Barbara Power, community members recently supported by Dorothy Ley Hospice, shared their family's experience. With the support of the Hospice, they were able to focus on spending time together as a family during the last 3 weeks of Tony Sr.'s life. When Barbara asked our team why she should consider putting her father-in-law in our care, she was reassured it would allow them to be a family. Barbara explained, "You're no longer the caregiver, the PSW or the cook. From the moment you walk into Dorothy Ley, there is a feeling of peace and comfort."

For the Bryce family, honouring their mother's wish to die at home with the support of Dorothy Ley Hospice, gave them and her a sense of peace: "We couldn't have achieved her wish without the in-home care she received from the Dorothy Ley Hospice. Thank you! Words can't express how valuable the work you do means to families during extremely difficult times when losing a loved one."



How we are growing



Dorothy Ley Hospice has long been a leader in providing hospice and palliative care within our local communities. This past year, we identified significant gaps in service availability for underserved populations. Only 36% of Canadians receive palliative care at home, and there are significant barriers that restrict certain groups of people: new immigrants, racially marginalized and those living in poverty and homelessness, from accessing quality palliative care.

It is key that Dorothy Ley Hospice continues to create new ways of accessing our provision of care for all communities to help address equity concerns. We are dedicated to facing the challenge of adapting our services to meet the needs of populations that are not accustomed to accessing this type of service or assistance and provide it in a way that is accessible to them. By collaborating with local agencies, we hope to expand our services into underserved areas of Etobicoke, west Toronto and east Mississauga.

Last year, a **Community Palliative Care Clinic** was opened at the Hospice. People from the community who need palliative support and can be relatively early in their palliative journey are seen by Dr. Louie Mavrogiannis, (or Dr. Mav as he's known around the Hospice). As Dr. Mav explains: "These individuals are doing relatively well, but their family doctors might not feel they can support their needs as well as they should." Prior to having access to our palliative care clinic, people would have had to go to Emergency or attend clinics further away. This clinic has now expanded with additional days, making it more accessible to our community.

Dorothy Ley Hospice is grateful for your support this past year.

Because of you, we've been able to continue to provide dedicated, compassionate and supportive palliative and hospice services to individuals and families facing life-limiting illness. Thanks to you, Dorothy Ley Hospice will continue to be there for the community.

