

Frequently Asked Questions

The Hospice Hub, April 20, 2023

What is the Hospice Hub?

The Hospice Hub is a community-led initiative that aims to provide comprehensive, compassionate, and integrated services to serve those at end of life and bereavement, including their family and caregivers.

Who is the Hospice Hub?

The Hospice Hub is a dedicated team of volunteers passionate about addressing the need in our community for end of life care.

Who is the Hospice Hub for?

The Hospice Hub is for those facing a progressive, life-limiting illness with a prognosis of 6 months or less as well as their families and caregivers. The Hospice Hub serves anyone who is at the end stage of a progressive disease such as cancer, COPD, dementia, heart failure or frailty and who require support for quality of life and unmet needs.

What is your catchment area?

South and West Lanark County, Smiths Falls, Westport and Portland. We serve the same community as the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital. We will collaborate with Home Hospice North Lanark (HHNL) who currently deliver hospice services to North Lanark. Ultimately, we will provide hospice service where the need is greatest.

Why are you creating The Hospice Hub?

We are creating The Hospice Hub to address the lack of coordinated end of life care and bereavement support in our community. It will be a 'one-stop shop' where patients and families can access clinical and compassionate care and receive support navigating the health care system at the end of life. The Hospice Hub will connect patients, families and caregivers to the most appropriate provider, service or agency to ease the transitions through end of life and bereavement.

What is Palliative, Hospice and End of Life Care?

Palliative care is an approach to care which can be delivered alongside curative treatments, at any point in the illness trajectory where there are Quality of Life issues or unmet needs. Hospice care is a philosophy of comfort care for the end of life specifically, and palliative care is a part of hospice care. Typically it is delivered at home or in a home-like environment. End of life is generally considered the last 6 months of life.

Are you connected to Home Hospice North Lanark?

We will collaborate with Home Hospice North Lanark (HHNL). HHNL's catchment area is North Lanark. The Hospice Hub focuses on the rest of Lanark County, Westport and Smiths Falls. For more information on HHNL, please see www.hhnl.ca.

Are you connected to Community Home Support Lanark County?

We will collaborate with relevant social service agencies to meet the needs of the dying and their loved ones in Lanark County, Westport and Smiths Falls. Community Home Support Lanark County (CHSLC) provides essential social support services. The Hospice Hub will provide comprehensive end of life support in the form of advocacy, symptom management, health system coordination and navigation, education and bereavement. For more information on CHSLC, please see www.chslc.ca.

Don't we already have palliative care beds at the Perth & Smith Falls District Hospital?

There are no dedicated palliative care beds at the Hospital. There are two "palliative care" rooms that were established with donations from two local families. In Smiths Falls this room is called Ruby's Room. These rooms were refurbished to provide some of the comforts of home (kettle, microwave, TV, reclining chairs). While these beds were meant to be for dying patients and their families, they have not been designated as such. The beds are "acute care" beds. Given the growing acute care crisis over the past several years, the Hospital has used these rooms to accommodate acute or Alternate Level of Care patients. Hence, there are no dedicated palliative care beds available to patients. The Palliative Care team does their best to provide care in this hospital setting and whenever possible, provides the patient with a single room.

While palliative care beds in a hospital are a necessity; they do not replace the need for Hospice beds. Most people want to die at home and Hospice provides a home-like environment where specialized and responsive care is provided 24/7.

Are you building a hospice residence?

The Hospice Hub would like to see the 4 hospice beds allocated to our area by the Ministry of Health in 2016 become fully operational. We want the community to have access to 4 beds providing Gold Standard* hospice care. Given the demographics and the central location to our catchment area, Perth is ideally situated; Perth has a very high seniors population with 39.2% of the Town being over the age of 65. The development of a Hospice Residence or the availability of Hospice beds and their location will depend on the involvement of the community and opportunities that arise. *Gold Standards as defined by Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association.

What happened to Dignity House Hospice?

In 2014, Dignity House Hospice (DHH) was merged with Community Home Support Lanark County (CHSLC). At that time, the governing LHIN (Home and Community Care) wanted all community palliative care services to be managed by one agency. This included DHH's planned residential hospice, the day hospice and the visiting hospice program. Given that CHSLC was a long and well established program with staff and infrastructure, it was better poised to manage all of the hospice programs. As a result, the money raised by DHH went to CHSLC, except for the donations designated for a residential hospice. Those funds were given to the Great War Memorial Hospital to support the creation of a palliative suite.

How can I help?

Currently, our priority is to establish the Hospice Hub as an organization while continuing to provide education, system navigation and bereavement support. To do this we are looking for an office and funds to set up a dedicated phone line, email and website. Our first priorities are to create a volunteer working group and hire a part time Director. Additionally, we will be fundraising, building partnerships and seeking sponsorship for our programs. We welcome your talents to help us create this compassionate community hub and care for our loved ones at the end of life.

Do you accept donations?

Yes. Cheques can be made payable to Perth and District Community Foundation (PDCF), who in turn will forward the funds to The Hospice Hub. In the memo line **please write The Hospice Hub**. PDCF is located at 33 Lewis St. Perth, ON. K7H 2R4. Online donations can be made on [the Canada Helps page](#) via PDCF. Donations exceeding \$20 will receive a tax receipt.

Do you have a website? Where can I get more information?

We have a lovely landing page while the content of our website is being developed! www.thehospicehub.ca Please visit our page and subscribe to stay in touch.