Volume 11 Issue 2 www.trailhospice.org April 2022

The Greater Trail Hospice Society

News and Notes

Caring together...

Let's Celebrate Our 35th Anniversary of Hospice Service in the Greater Trail area!

We used to provide compassionate, end of life care…..and we still do! But we also offer so much more:

- Navigation support for people who have chronic or life-limiting illness
- Friendly visitors for people who are isolated and lonely
- Respite and end of life vigil
- Grief support for adults—one-to-one or in grief support groups
- Grief support for children ages 6-12
- Advance Care Planning presentations and personal assistance
- Extensive and on-going education for our volunteers
- Partnership with the local Palliative Rounds team
- Connection with our provincial BC Hospice Palliative Care Association
- Books and resources on a variety of topics related to EOL and grief

HOW CAN WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YOU?

All Hospice Services are Free.

Call 250-364-6204 for information
Or visit www.trailhospice.org

National Hospice Palliative Care Week May 1-7 "Living in Color"

How does hospice palliative care empower Canadians to Live in Colour? By fostering an environment of care, compassion, and comfort where each person and their family receives the support they want and need, so they can focus on embracing every moment life has to offer.

Just as there is more to life than physical health, there is more to hospice palliative care than pain and symptom management. A life is a work of art – created and coloured by our experiences, relationships, adventures, and importantly, through love. Those who have the privilege of working or volunteering in hospice palliative care dedicate themselves to providing each person the care they need across all aspects of their lives affected by illness, so they can enjoy Living in Colour, with vibrancy and meaning until their last breath.

This week, we celebrate the amazing care that hospice palliative care teams across Canada provide to our neighbours and families, empowering them to embrace life's kaleidoscope of colours until the very end. The invaluable work of health care workers, volunteers, and carers of every stripe is crucial to the well-being and to the quality of life of those receiving hospice palliative care. On behalf of all Canadians, we say: Thank you for your compassion and for your dedication to each person you care for – the impact of your work is felt by individuals, families, loved ones, and across communities.

JOIN US **Sunday, May 15, 2PM** for a Concert with musicians

Carolyn Cameron

& Hendrik Mendes

Bach Partita No. 1, Mozart Violin Sonata No. 4, Mussorgsky 'Pictures at an exhibition'

Location: Trail United Church 1300 Pine Street

Admission by Donation in support of Trail Hospice

ADVANCE CARE PLANS MATTER!

April 16th was Advance Care Planning Day 2022. If you don't know what this is, or if you know but don't have a personal plan yet, **please** read on.

Advance care planning is a process; it is part of life planning. It is a wonderful gift that you can give to yourself, your loved ones and your health care providers. It is making a plan that reflects what you would want for your health and personal care if you could not speak for yourself. Imagine….close your eyes and imagine that you just had a serious accident, or a health condition that suddenly got worse. You can't speak for yourself. Who would speak for you? And do they know what you would want? Do **you** know what you would want?

"But I don't want to think about that stuff", you say. "I'm fine. I don't want to think about being really sick and maybe dying. That is grim." OK, then close your eyes again and imagine your loved ones. They are now faced with your serious illness and the fact that you might not make it. They don't know what you would want in this situation. They are afraid, anxious and stressed and it is so much worse…because you haven't made a plan. There may be conflict because they have different ideas about what to do. Now: think again about this important part of life planning. Get started! Give yourself and your loved ones this gift of knowing what your values and wishes are, so they don't have to guess. Life can change in an instant. Be ready!

It might seem really hard to do, or to know how to begin, but there is plenty of help available. There are websites you can visit, workbooks you can go through, on-line tutorials, and there is help available at the Greater Trail Hospice Society. We have trained volunteers who will make a presentation to your group, service club, workplace or friends and help you to get started.

You need to think about what is most important to you, what kinds of health care and treatments you would want and also which ones you would NOT want. It helps to talk it over with someone close to you as you are planning. Once you've made your Advance Care Plan it is vital that you let your loved ones know about it, and also your doctor or nurse practitioner. Conversations are key! And you need to record your plan, any way you like. Make sure everyone knows your wishes. That gives you the best chance of getting the care that is right for you, even if you're unable to speak for yourself.

So, roll up your sleeves and get to work! Contact us if you would like a presentation to your group, or you need some help with your ACP.

Some great websites include: **advancecareplanning.ca**
bc-cpc.ca
planwellguide.com

Advance care planning is about life, living well, and making a loving gift to your family.

Life happens…..Be Ready!!!

CALL 250-364-6204 if you would like ACP support
or to book an Information Session.

SUMMER 2021

Canadians and Advance Care Planning

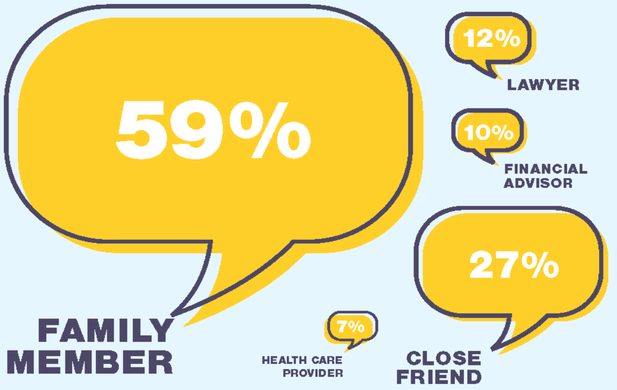
A Snapshot of Current Trends

Who would speak for you if you couldn't speak for yourself?

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a process of reflection and communication in which people express their wishes for their future health and/or personal care if they could not speak for themselves.

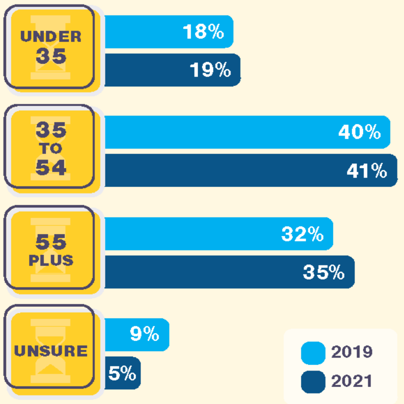
Learn more at advancecareplanning.ca

WHO ARE CANADIANS TALKING TO ABOUT THEIR WISHES?



KEY FINDING: Between 2019 and 2021, the number of Canadians who talked to a family member about their care wishes almost doubled: from one in three (36%) to almost two in three (59%).

WHAT'S THE BEST AGE TO START PLANNING?



KEY FINDING: In 2021, more than four in 10 Canadians (42%) thought it was important to start planning young: up from 36% in 2019.

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING IS A PROCESS THAT TAKES PLACE OVER YOUR LIFETIME. IT INVOLVES FIVE STEPS:

THINK about what is most important to you — your values, wishes and beliefs.

LEARN about your overall health. Talk to your healthcare providers about what you might need to prepare for over time.

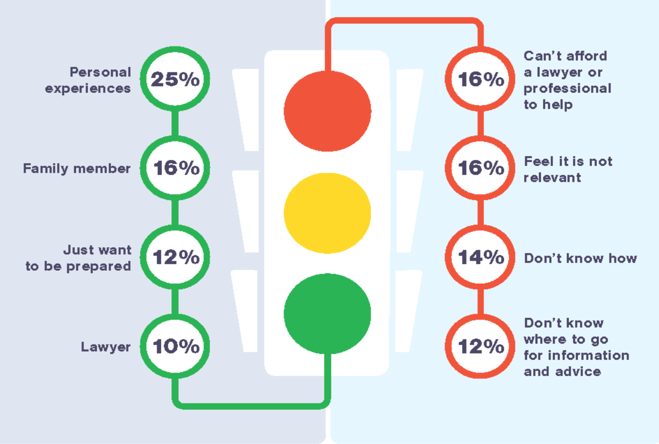
DECIDE on your Substitute Decision Maker(s), one or more people who are willing and able to speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself.

TALK about your values, wishes and beliefs with your Substitute Decision Maker(s), family, friends and health care providers.

RECORD your values, wishes and beliefs. This will help guide your Substitute Decision Maker(s) to speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself.

WHAT NUDGES PEOPLE TO START ADVANCE CARE PLANNING?

WHAT KEEPS PEOPLE FROM DOING ADVANCE CARE PLANNING?



Advance Care Planning CANADA

Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
Association canadienne de soins palliatifs

Results from February 2021 Nanos poll of 3,002 Canadians

Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.

Nav-CARE News

Did you know? The developed-in-Canada Nav-CARE program has sprouted wings?! It has recently landed in New Zealand, and Hospices in the United Kingdom expect it to touch down shortly. The *Greater Trail Hospice Society* is excited to be bringing this leading-edge wellness program to our local communities and helping to grow it right across Canada!

Who would benefit from the Nav-CARE program? Meet Cassandra….

Cassandra (not her real name) is in her early 80s, living in her own house and has family in town. She has always been very independent, but the heart condition she has lived with for the past ten years is starting to affect her ability to move around the house; her memory is not what it used to be, and she is concerned about what the future holds.

Cassandra called Hospice and asked if she would qualify for the Nav-CARE program. She wants to remain at home and not have to depend on her busy family too much. She definitely does fit the criteria of the program, and an intake interview was set up. The Nav-CARE coordinator arranged to visit Cassandra's home and talked with her about her challenges and what she saw as the most significant barriers to maintaining her quality of life. From this information, the Nav-CARE coordinator matched Cassandra with a Nav-CARE volunteer who meets with her every couple of weeks for 1.5 to 2 hours. Over time, the volunteer has helped Cassandra set up a wall calendar to keep track of important appointments and when her out-of-town family is planning to visit. Cassandra and the Nav-CARE volunteer have worked together to find credible health resources online to help her better understand how her heart disease may progress. This has encouraged Cassandra to arrange to have grab bars installed in her bathroom before the risk of falling increases, which she has discovered is a common problem with her condition. The regular visits also allow Cassandra to reminisce about her life experiences and talk about things that she finds important – a way of 'making meaning' of the life she has lived. One area they have started to discuss is Advance Care Planning. Who does Cassandra want to speak for her if she becomes ill and can't speak for herself? What are Cassandra's beliefs, values and wishes? Has she ever talked to her family, friends or health care provider about these? How and where does she record this information? If the time comes that it's needed, will those around her know what she would want? Over time the Nav-CARE volunteer will continue to support Cassandra through any future transitions and concerns that may arise.

Nav-CARE is a free program offered by specially trained volunteers who regularly visit people living at home with declining health that is affecting their quality of life. Volunteers develop relationships with clients and have time to listen, support decision-making, assist clients with practical information and find community resources to meet evolving needs—with a goal to improve their quality of life and life as fully as they can with their health conditions. *A doctor or Nurse Practitioner's referral is not necessary, anyone can refer a family member, a friend (please confirm they want a referral before contacting Hospice) or can self-refer.*

Interested in being a Nav-CARE volunteer?

Contact Linda for information at 250-368-7347 or trail.navcare@gmail.com

The Grief Corner

STUG - The 4-Letter Word That Saved My Life

Written By Betty Ann Rutledge

Knowledge is power. And for me, learning the language of loss has made the grief journey a lot less stressful and confusing. Here's an example. Almost two years after my mom had died, I thought that the most challenging part of grieving was over and the pain of losing my mother would be easier to manage moving forward. Don't they say, "time heals all wounds?" That spring, I was walking in the shopping mall and noticed a display of Mother's Day cards outside the Hallmark store. Bam! Gut punch. I could not catch my breath and felt the familiar tightening in my chest and tingling at the back of my throat. Hot tears sprang to my eyes, and I experienced the gravity of sadness I had not felt since the day she died when I walked out of the hospital and almost collapsed with the weight of realizing that my mom was dead. I stood in the shopping mall and thought, "What is wrong with me?! Why am I such a mess? What is happening to me?" It would be months before that life-saving, four-letter word, explained to me what was happening. And it was such a relief that I've been singing its praises ever since.

STUG is an acronym for a Sudden/Subsequent Temporary Upsurge of Grief (STUG). Coined by renowned grief researcher Therese Rando, a STUG is an unsettling, but natural occurrence experienced by bereaved people when something unexpected evokes their grief. Whether subsequent or sudden, these destabilizing moments can make a griever feel like they are "back at the beginning" and as if they have somehow "failed." It can be frightening when a STUG hits, because the world around us pushes us to "get over, get past or move on" from our suffering. We may think, "I was doing so well, and then out of nowhere, I felt that sharp pain of grief I haven't felt in months/years."

STUG

S sudden/subsequent
T temporary
U upsurge of
G grief

When my father died, I was an older and more seasoned griever than I had been when my mom had died. I thought that the deaths of dozens of friends, volunteers, and clients while I worked at the AIDS Committee of Toronto through the nineties had numbed me to the ravages of grief. But just after the fifth anniversary of my dad's death, I was not ready for the enormous STUG that confronted me inconveniently in the grocery store.

I was walking down the aisle of Christmas goodies when my eye caught sight of a can of Poppycock, and next to it was a row of Moritz Icy Squares. At that exact moment, I got a whiff of Old Spice aftershave as someone else's dad walked by. The final assault to my senses was Frank Sinatra's "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" playing on the grocery store speaker. These sensations hit me, and without warning, I was gripping the shopping cart to keep from collapsing as the tears spilt from my eyes. When I could catch my breath, I texted fellow grief-journeying friends to say: "Oh no! I'm having a STUG in Loblaws!" Their responses remind me that I'm not alone and what I'm feeling is perfectly normal:

"Oh honey, take a deep breath. Remember the T stands for Temporary,"
"I hear you. I've been feeling pretty STUGGY lately too with the upcoming holidays,"
"Oh friend, that's hard...sending LOVE to your STUG."

In the present moment, years later, I expect my annual holiday STUG and am relieved when it happens. I experience those feelings and memories as a "hello" from my beloveds who have passed on. For the uninitiated, having an upsurge of grief can be awful, no matter how temporary.

(continued on next page.....)

(Continued from P. 5)

Grief is already such an isolating experience. Many people who have lost a loved one find that friends and family stop asking, “how are you?” far too soon. The glazed and uncomfortable looks when we bring up our dead people signal that we should keep those unpleasant thoughts and feelings to ourselves. Even when we want to reminisce about how they loved Poppycock!

I recommend that everyone have their own “grief pod” – a group of folks who understand us and our messy, unpredictable and all too human experience of living with grief. Nobody “gets over” the death of their parent/partner/sibling/child. The impact of relentless, multiple losses of friends and clients is genuine, and STUGS do not just happen around the holidays.

It can be a birthday or anniversary that evokes a STUG.

It can be a smell or sound that takes us back in time. It can be a song, a word, a movie, a joke, a news story, or anything that reminds us of people who are no longer here with us in physical form. Our grief pods know that grieving people do not want or need fixing. Grievers need to be heard. We loved and lost (or struggled with and lost) people who were part of our lives and always will be. Grieving well means learning to live with our grief and telling the story of our loved ones’ lives and deaths in ways that strengthen us and even bring us joy.

Whatever holiday, holy-day or special event - or simply a random Tuesday afternoon - please don’t be discouraged by the arrival of a Sudden Temporary Upsurge of Grief. Try to be prepared and keep a tissue in your pocket and your well-chosen grief pod at the ready. Remember to stop and breathe. The T stands for temporary. Connect with your grief pod for assurance, validation, and space for you and your STUG, and reciprocate when they need the same. Learning about STUGs for me was lifesaving. Lifesaving may seem like an overstatement, but understanding this particular four-letter acronym and its meaning helped me navigate and learn to live with my grief in a way that allows me to remember with joy alongside the sorrow.

Trail Hospice has volunteers who can support you through ‘Stuggy’ days! Call 250-364-6204

CHECK THIS OUT: MyGrief https://www.mygrief.ca/

Confidential and free, MyGrief.ca helps you to understand and move through your grief.

- In your own place, at your own pace
- Developed by people who have "been there" and grief specialists
- Features "real life" stories and experiences

"Did you know that as a Teck retiree you and your family still qualify to participate in a great deal of our programs and events? That includes people who have chronic or life-limiting illness. We have a wide variety of programs and courses that suit all ages and abilities. Check out our website at www.inspiringwellnessandlearning.com or read our page in the latest *AfterOurs* newsletter for all the latest opportunities. If you have any questions, feel free to email Gord gordon.menelaws@teck.com".

#nhpcw #livingincolour

chpca.ca/week

Living in colour.

national hospice palliative care week | may 1-7, 2022

INNOVATIVE MEDICINES CANADA