



No One Should Die or Grieve Alone





“My counsellor helped me a lot. She helped me with how to be happier in sad times and she helped me feel better about myself. We played games, made a box of things to remind me of Dad, and we made a book about Dad. She encouraged me to do things I love, like breathe and spend time with my dog when I feel sad.” ~ Isla

Death isn't the end

1 in 14 children in Canada experience the death of a parent or sibling by the time they turn 18.⁽¹⁾

Isla recently lost her dad.

Supporting Isla during her grief journey helped her understand his death and provided her with the tools to manage her loss as life moves forward.

The loss of a parent is a traumatic and life altering event for any child. The Central Okanagan Hospice Association (COHA) sees many children and youth come through its doors every year, seeking grief counselling services for the loss of a significant person in their life. Losing a loved one can have lifelong implications for children and youth. Providing support for future generations to help endure and accept the magnitude of loss helps build a stronger community for us all.



YOUTH BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

COHA's youth bereavement services continue to see an increase in demand each year. In expanding our children and youth support services by offering anticipatory grief counselling, children and youth can receive support for potentially longer periods of time. This allows them to express their feelings in a safe and playful way and to help embrace hope and encourage conversation surrounding death.

THE NEED

To support children and youth like Isla, COHA spends **\$150 per month** on bereavement services for a total of **\$1,800 per year**.



Of the over 270,000 Canadians who die each year, 90% of them die due to chronic illnesses like cancer, heart disease, organ failure, dementia and frailty.⁽²⁾

Numbers don't lie

By 2026, the number of deaths is projected to increase to 330,000, and to 425,000 by 2036. Despite Canadians' wishes to die at home, 60% die in hospitals.⁽³⁾

Those who receive home palliative care services are 2.5 times more likely to die at home, and are less likely to receive care in an emergency department, or intensive care unit.⁽⁵⁾

Historically, when all curative treatments had been exhausted, palliative care was offered only in the final weeks or months of life. At that point, the focus shifted from cure to comfort.

Living in an aging population means we need to be more focused on meeting the full range of people's needs as well as their families. We also need to continue our support for family caregivers. Our focus is to provide the support needed for caregivers to enhance their ability and strengthen resiliency in caring for their loved one.

There is an overwhelming need in the Central Okanagan to adequately support the demand of those approaching end-of-life. Support for individuals to remain in their own home for as long as possible, and supporting their family caregiver's emotional, social and respite before exhaustion materializes is important to the overall death experience.

15%

Have access to palliative care

While 75% of Canadians would prefer to die at home, only about 15% have access to palliative home care services.⁽⁴⁾

Growing with our community



Two things we all share are, we will live until we die and the ones who live on will grieve. A fundamental focus of our services is to provide quality, dignity, meaning, connection and solace to both the dying and grieving.

To companion individuals through illness or supporting their family caregiver, COHA is there every step of the way.

Sitting vigil during one's dying time in all hours of the day or night, holding a hand or embracing the silence is a gift of time COHA volunteers offer so no one has to die alone.

Wellness offerings of yoga, reiki and mindfulness are provided to help integrate one's journey as they experience illness or grief. Focusing on nourishing the mind, body and spirit and balancing one's inner self to help restore a sense of normality in their daily lives.

Supporting comfort measures in helping people find transportation options to visit their loved ones, making a last wish come true, or sharing food and entertainment are all comforts that provide quality and connection.

We will all face grief on many levels. Grief is a normal response to loss and offering diverse grief and bereavement services to meet an individual's specific needs reflects an organic and methodical approach to healing. Grieving should never be hurried. COHA helps people understand their grief by providing guidance and support in the midst of emotional bewilderment brought on by death.

Training, learning and supports for our volunteers are essential to the quality of our services delivered in the Central Okanagan. Without our trained and compassionate volunteers we would not be able to meet the continued growing needs in our community ♥

DID YOU KNOW



Only 16% to 30% of Canadians who die currently have access to or receive hospice palliative and end-of-life care services – depending on where they live in Canada. Even fewer receive grief and bereavement services.⁽⁶⁾

With your help

COHA exists to provide quality compassionate support and services to people facing vulnerable moments, ensuring there are no financial barriers.

GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT PRIORITY

With your help COHA can continue to be a safe outlet for children, youth and adults to access anticipatory grief and bereavement services. Providing a space where they can share feelings of fear, confusion and uncertainty while instilling normalcy and hope back into their lives.

VOLUNTEER & ACCESS PRIORITY

With your help COHA professionals will train more volunteers to meet growing demands and connect with individuals earlier who are placed on the Palliative Care Program. Helping create immediate access to our services and resources to those who need it the most.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS PRIORITY

With your help COHA can raise awareness through public educational initiatives and help shift a culture fearful of talking about death, dying and grief. Important conversations like advance care planning and life planning shouldn't happen at the end-of life, conversations like these evolve as life evolves.



YOU CAN HELP

You can help by making a gift to one of our three priority areas or become a monthly donor, helping us build a stronger community for us all.

To make a donation click below.



COHA'S COSTS FOR EDUCATION & AWARENESS

COST PER YEAR:
\$45,000



COHA'S COSTS PER PERSON FOR BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

COUNSELLING SESSIONS:

Adult: \$732
Children and Youth: \$1,755

GRIEF GROUP: \$690



COHA'S COST PER VOLUNTEER TRAINING PROGRAM

OUR VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTE:
22,000 HOURS PER YEAR

COST PER VOLUNTEER TRAINING: \$655

Volunteers are the heart

Our volunteers are essential to our programs. They contribute to high quality supportive care, individual's wellbeing and the grieving journey.

Volunteers provide a higher quality of life and well-being to both the dying individuals and their families. They can help limit suffering through volunteer supports, provide relief for caregivers and help bolster overall health when one is dying. They provide a unique role to compliment medical professionals and families who are caring for their loved ones.



Anne - 3 year volunteer

“The Central Okanagan Hospice Association collaborates with care partners throughout the community along with Interior Health in providing quality hospice palliative care. This collaboration creates an integrated palliative approach to supportive care, with a team of professionals and volunteers who strive to meet individuals needs. Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. Their actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud of.”

Natasha Girard, Executive Director,
Central Okanagan Hospice Association



Jeremias - 4 year volunteer



Val - 3 year volunteer

THE NEED

To train one volunteer COHA spends **\$655**.

Connection through grief

When you're told that the love of your life for the last 20 years has only a few years left to live, it's hard for that reality to sink in, but for Jack that reality was all too real.

Jack and his wife Penny were the perfect match, sociable, outgoing and as Jack puts it, their personalities were like Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis.

Eight years after being diagnosed with liver cancer, Penny died in November of 2019. Jack had lost his best friend and soulmate. This is what brought Jack to COHA, Jack knew he needed to speak about his grief, times were lonely and the feeling of grief was never ending.

Through our bereavement support services Jack joined COHA's men's grief group where he gathered with a group of men who had experienced similar hardships. This made Jack more comfortable with speaking about Penny's death and allowed for a bond amongst strangers to form, where each story told helped Jack realize he was not alone in his grief. Finding solace in someone else's pain is an uncommon feeling, but a feeling that many who are grieving find helpful.

That solace is what COHA's grief groups are all about, helping different individuals throughout the community deal with the loss of someone they loved and finding normalcy in the world again.

THE NEED

To support someone like Jack COHA spends **\$690 per grief group.**



“The Central Okanagan Hospice Association is very valuable to those who have lost someone, to be able to talk and help face reality. Holding in your emotions will only make getting through the grief harder, talking about your loss is a powerful tool when trying to heal and COHA offers that outlet of relief to those in our community who have lost a loved one.”



Vision

COHA is creating a community where no one has to die or grieve alone.

Mission

Offering compassionate care, comfort, support and learning to those who are dying or grieving alone within our community.

You can help us, help the most vulnerable.

To discuss the details of your donation or to consider leaving a gift in your Will, please contact our **Executive Director, Natasha Girard**

✉ natasha@hospicecoha.org ☎ 250-763-5511

The Central Okanagan Hospice Association serves:
Peachland | West Kelowna | Kelowna | Lake Country



200 – 1890 Cooper Road, Kelowna, BC V1Y 8B7

250.763.5511 | hospicecoha.org

Charitable Registration No. 118843515 RR0001

¹ Children and Youth Grief Network CA. Education Support Resources. [Online] <https://www.childrenandyoungriefnetwork.com/>

² Government of Canada. Framework on Palliative Care in Canada [Online] <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/reports-publications/palliative-care/framework-palliative-care-canada.html>

³ Government of Canada. Framework on Palliative Care in Canada [Online] <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/reports-publications/palliative-care/framework-palliative-care-canada.html>

⁴ Access to Palliative Care in Canada [Online] <https://www.cihi.ca/en/access-to-palliative-care-in-canada>

⁵ Access to Palliative Care in Canada [Online] <https://www.cihi.ca/en/access-to-palliative-care-in-canada>

⁶ Fact Sheet: Hospice Palliative Care in Canada, Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association [Online] https://maisonstraphael.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Fact_Sheet_HPC_in_Canada-Spring-2014-Final.pdf.