



HOPE & HEALING



Annual Report
2024



OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anne O'Keefe
President

Donna Koch
Vice President

Gary Schlenker
Treasurer

Shane Mosley
Secretary

Breanna Collins
Director

Vanessa Mastroianni
Director

Haley Oliver
Director

Jennifer Strachan
Director

MESSAGE FROM COHA



BOARD PRESIDENT
ANNE O'KEEFE



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATASHA GIRARD

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with immense gratitude and pride for the resilience and dedication shown by our community, staff, volunteers, donors, members and collaborators. Navigating the post-pandemic landscape has been challenging, yet we have emerged stronger and more committed to our mission than ever before. In the year, we made significant strides in policy development and risk management processes, ensuring that we remain vigilant and adaptable to meet the evolving needs of our community in our work.

Despite experiencing wait times for the first time for grief and bereavement services due to the significant increase in requests, we have continued to provide compassionate and effective support to those in need. We provided support to more individuals receiving palliative care at home, ensuring their end-of-life care wishes were honored, respected and dignified.

Our accomplishments are a testament to the unwavering support and hard work of our 153 active volunteers during the year, who have given countless hours to serve others in various ways. Their dedication is the heartbeat of our organization, and we celebrate their contributions with deep appreciation.

In these times of economic uncertainty and inflation, the stewardship of our donors' funds has been more crucial than ever. We have remained diligent in managing resources wisely, ensuring that every dollar is spent with the utmost care to maximize our impact.

We also acknowledge the generous support of our donors, whose contributions have enabled us to continue our vital work. Their generosity during such challenging times has been inspiring and has made a significant difference in the lives of many. Together, they have fostered a community of care and resilience, ensuring that we can continue to offer our services and support to those who need it most without cost.

As we move forward in our third year of our strategic plan, we remain steadfast in our mission and dedication to adapting in response to the needs of our community ensuring quality is a priority. We feel strongly in achieving the goals we have set forward with success and embarking on a new strategic plan with an equity, diversity and inclusion focus. A pathway forward we are committed to.

Thank you to everyone who has stood by us, supported us, and worked alongside us. Your contributions are the foundation of our success and the reason we can continue to make a meaningful impact. We look forward to another year of service, growth, and community togetherness.

Anne & Natasha



Volunteers play music outside Kelowna Hospice House

VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT



VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVE
DONNA KOCH

Reflecting on the past year, I am especially grateful to represent our incredible team of volunteers. It is beyond heartwarming to consider the immense impact volunteers provide our communities within the Central Okanagan.

As the volunteer representative, it was my intention to participate in as many volunteer meetings and events as possible. I attended the following events:

- April: Volunteer Appreciation Event
- September: Volunteer Supportive Care Monthly Meeting
- November: New Volunteer Meet & Greet attended
- December: Volunteer Holiday Appreciation
- January: New Volunteer Training
- February: Swinging with the Stars

The Uplift Newsletter included two brief notes with the intention to expand awareness of this role and its purpose. Volunteers were able to connect with me directly and share experiences.

The most common sentiment I hear among volunteers is that the gifts we receive seem even greater than what we give. I share this sentiment and this quote to express the priceless gift each of us at COHA offers those in our community experiencing grief and death.

It is my pleasure to serve alongside the volunteers, board and team at COHA this past year.

"One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone." — *Shannon L. Adler*

Donna

COMMUNITY IMPACT

PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

152 Clients & Families Supported

ADULT GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

580
Adults Supported

1,600
Counselling Sessions

10
Grief Groups

CHILDREN & YOUTH GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

152
Children & Youth Supported

267
Counselling & Art Therapy Sessions

3
Grief Groups

4
Expressive Art Nights

2
Horse Camps

WELLNESS PROGRAM

642
Reiki Sessions

3
Yoga/Meditation Groups

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

153
Active Volunteers

30
New Volunteers

8,636
Volunteer Hours

71
Individuals Supported

In October 2023, COHA created a pilot project to rent space in Emmanuel Church one day a week to evaluate the need for West Kelowna and Peachland residents of all ages to access in-person grief counselling. The pilot project is still ongoing, and the data and feedback collected is very positive. Evaluation will be completed in our 2025 fiscal year.

During the timeframe of October to March, COHA supported 71 individuals for in-person grief counselling.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



The Bridge proudly partners with the Central Okanagan Hospice Association (COHA) to offer support to participants at Bridgeway Ethel and Bridgeway Gray during Grief Week, an important part of our a structured six-week, participant centered program designed to examine the underlying causes of participants' substance use and practice skills to create a healthy way of living.

A COHA staff member facilitates healing grief circles at both Bridgeway program sites, where participants have the opportunity to share their grief stories and find mutual support. Following the grief circle, participants are offered an art therapy session guided by a licensed art therapist at the COHA August Centre. The Bridge Youth and Family Services' partnership with COHA also provides opportunities for participants to explore COHA's other services, including grief counseling and Reiki healing sessions to extend support beyond our six week program and supporting transitions in services that are needed.

Together, The Bridge and COHA create a nurturing environment and approach for healing and support.

Michelle Hopkins
Director of Services, The Bridge

The Bridge is the largest provider of substance use services for Interior Health and provides Supported Recovery programs, Intensive Live-In Treatment (Bridgeway Ethel and Bridgeway Gray for adults and Youth Recovery House for youth), community-based naloxone training, Outreach Overdose Prevention, and Withdrawal Management – detox – for both young people and adults.



BAPTIST HOUSING SENIORS LIVING

When a Resident becomes actively palliative, our team is often stretched thin. They battle between the things they need to do for others, and wanting to be with the Resident so they aren't alone. Often there are family members that will stay with the Resident but there are those times when a Resident doesn't have family members nearby or the family is getting exhausted from the emotional turmoil of grief and loss. Our Team at Village at Mill Creek is so grateful to be able to call COHA and access their wonderful volunteers. Staff are quick to come up with a schedule of volunteers for our Team and you can't begin to imagine the relief they feel knowing that a caring individual will be sitting with our Residents, often in the wee hours of the night, so they are not alone. When I let distant family members know that a volunteer has sat with their Mom or Dad during their final hours, they are so grateful. At Mill Creek, we feel very blessed to be able to partner with COHA to provide families, residents and team members the gift of peace and presence during the last days or hours of a person's life.

Jacki Barbour
Chaplain, Village of Mill Creek
Baptist Housing, Long-Term Care

IMPACT STORY



Everyone at COHA knew exactly what to do to make me feel comfortable. I wasn't just another grieving soul; I was treated with kindness and sincere humanity. This wasn't some impersonal, bureaucratic place — it was a place where people truly understood and cared about my pain.

I began my journey with COHA by receiving Reiki, which provided me with a sense of calm and balance I hadn't felt in months. I also participated in a grief group and walking group. These experiences were profoundly healing. Being with others who were navigating their own grief made me realize that I wasn't alone. Sharing our stories and supporting one another created a bond that helped me feel stronger and less isolated.

Counseling sessions at COHA were another cornerstone of my healing process. The counselor I had was warm, softly spoken and lost a partner too a number of years ago. She was compassionate and skilled, offering me the tools and support I needed to cope with my loss. They didn't try to fit me into a preconceived mold or push any agendas; they simply provided the help I needed to start rebuilding my life without Diana.

COHA's genuine approach made all the difference. They weren't just offering a service—they were offering a lifeline. This powerful feeling of being truly supported motivated me to give back. I donate to COHA because I believe they do this work with excellence. They help people like me in the most profound ways, and as I get older, I see how important this kind of support is. Many of my friends and I are at an age where these life-changing experiences are becoming more common. Knowing that COHA is there to help gives me peace of mind.

I am committed to the incredible work COHA does, and I want to continue being a part of their mission. Their support made a significant difference in my life, and I am determined to ensure they can continue helping others. By donating to COHA, I am helping to provide the same compassionate, effective support that I received, ensuring that no one has to navigate their grief alone.

Thank you COHA for all that you do and I am glad to be a part of a community of caring!

Roger G.

“ I learned the most from other grieving people. Key words came to mean the most to me, (such as) ‘belonging’.”

Laura

“ I knew that I needed help in my grief. I absolutely know now that I could not have dealt with this on my own or even with family and friends.”

Beth

“ Thankful to have a program that helps my daughter deal with her grief when I have no clue how to help.”

Kayla

“ I am so grateful for COHA and how it fuels my life. Everyone is so kind.”

Monique

COHA IN ACTION



Youth Expressive Arts Night "Pieces of Grief Smash Pot"



Horse Whisperer Grief Camp (October, 2023)



Boston Pizza Kelowna, Valentine's Day Fundraiser Donation



Gratitude + Grapes, Yoga and Vino Event



Recognizing Jane Hoffman Realty, COHA Volunteers and Impact Events at National Philanthropy Day



2023 New Volunteer Graduation



Holiday Volunteer appreciation event



"Heartfelt Thank You" Donor Appreciation



Pushor Mitchell LLP Thompson Okanagan Business Excellence Awards. COHA Named 2023 Non Profit Organization of the Year



Lisa Mirabent receives 2023 Volunteer Compassion Award



Children's Grief Support Group



Kelowna Legion making a generous donation



Youth create an "Altered Book" in Grief Support Group



Volunteer Appreciation Event (April, 2023)



Butterfly Effect, June 2023



Interior Savings Credit Union Volunteers at Hospice House

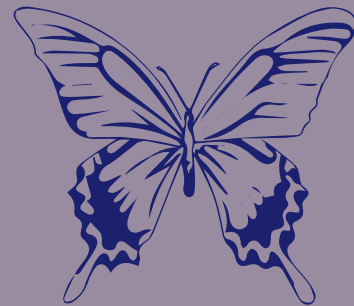
THANK YOU



Swinging with the Stars hits record breaking year.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed foundations for their gracious support to help grieving children and youth.



Central Okanagan Foundation, Grief Foundation of Canada, Hamber Foundation, PURKIDS Foundation, and RBC Foundation.

Caregivers play a vital role in supporting their loved ones.

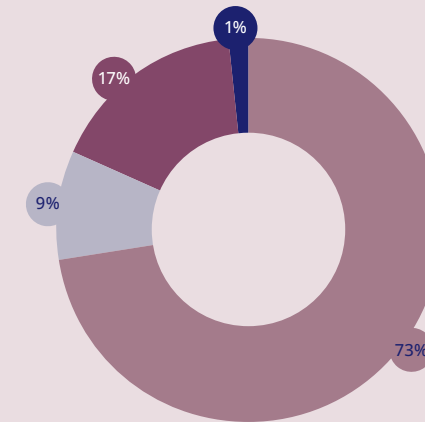


Thank you Petro-Canada ChangeMakers Foundation for helping us help caregivers receive respite, emotional support and anticipatory grief counselling.

FINANCIAL REPORT

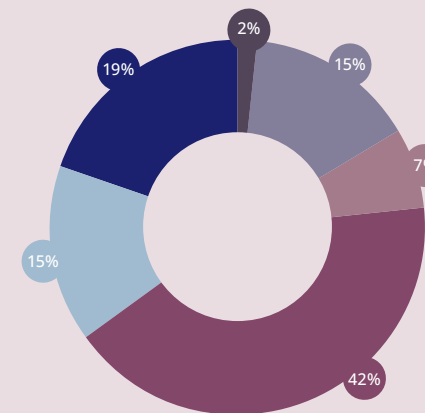
SOURCE OF FUNDS

Donations and Fundraising	\$980,930.00
Endowment and Legacy	\$125,223.00
Grants	\$224,486.00
Other	\$20,022.00
Grand Total	\$1,350,661.00



USE OF FUNDS

Amortization	\$23,521.00
General	\$195,384.99
Occupancy	\$94,481.00
Programs and Services	\$555,654.77
Salaries and Benefits	\$203,449.23
Fundraising	\$259,558.00
Grand Total	\$1,332,048.99



“

We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.”

Dame Cicely Saunders

Founder of St Christopher's Hospice

AUGUST CENTRE **COHA** 

200 - 1890 Cooper Rd
Kelowna, BC V1Y 8B7

250-763-5511 | hospicecoha.org

