

ANNUAL REPORT April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018



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President's Report

My first year as President of the Board of Directors at Evergreen has been a growing and learning experience. I am very passionate about Hospice and the role that Evergreen fulfils in the community and this year has only made me more committed and energized to serve Evergreen in my role. I had the opportunity to learn more about the services that Evergreen provides and see first hand the impact that they make in the community. There is always an opportunity to do more and I am overwhelmed by the commitment and dedication of the staff and volunteers that work tirelessly for the organization. I cannot thank them enough for what they do and the role they play in Evergreen's success.

I am pleased to announce that Evergreen received their certification this year from Hospice Palliative Care Ontario thanks to the diligent work and leadership of our Executive Director, Jan Pearce. Amongst several other exciting events this year, The Honorable Jane Philpott attend Evergreen to make an announcement of additional funding for one of Evergreens programs and it was an honour and pleasure to have her at our location. With the change in provincial government leadership this year, I am hopeful that there will be an opportunity to gain additional support for hospice services and Evergreen in particular.

Certainly, the work of Evergreen could not be done without the support of our donors and their commitment to our cause. Thanks to the generosity of the Scarpitti Foundation, we received a large gift in honour of the late Don Ferguson who was a champion for Evergreen. With the direction from the Scarpitti Foundation, the Living Room will be named in Don's memory. Many thanks to the Scarpitti Foundation for this generous and meaningful gift. I had the opportunity this year to work with a dedicated group of volunteers on a new initiative to help financially support Evergreen. Without a doubt, it is people like these and our donors and volunteers that allow Evergreen to continue serving the community, without their support, the 30% of funding that comes from the government would not be enough to deliver the services that we do. A special thanks to everyone who attends and supports our Gala and the Taste of Stouffville and other events in the community as these events provide financial assistance to Evergreen making a combination of all our efforts a success.

Again, this year, Evergreen saw a significant increase in the need for service, information and general advice regarding system navigation and options for care. At the close of the year in March we had seen well over 850 families thanks to our dedicated staff and volunteers. As we work towards our strategic planning session this coming winter, I am sure that the board and staff will develop a renewed plan and outreach for Evergreen into the community that will continue to support and add new services to the growing cities of Markham, Thornhill and Stouffville. I am honoured to serve in my role and I thank the board members for their support and commitment as we look forward to a successful 2019.

Warmly,

Kimberly Carson

Board Chair

Board List for April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018

BOARD CHAIR

Kimberly Carson CEO Canadian Breast Cancer Society

PAST BOARD CHAIR

Susan Lynge Real Estate Broker

TREASURER

Brij Gupta Financial Planner

Eddy Burella Chartered Accountant

SECRETARY

Jim Steen Broadcaster

Stephen Rayfield Marketing Strategy Mentor, Author, Trainer and Speaker

DIRECTORS

Jim Clubine Clergy

Deanna Perkins Global Campaign Manager

Hang Mei Chen IT Specialist

Teresa Riverso Occupational Therapist

Doris Kamwa Physician

Tom Davies Retired Executive

Aimee Gallienne Human Resources Specialist

Staff list for April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018

Jan Pearce BSc.N, RN Executive Director

Virginia Bidwell Coordinator of Volunteers

Patti Enright Supportive Care Coordinator

Melanie Gross Outreach (Thornhill) Administrative Assistant

Michelle Juer Supportive Care Coordinator

Hannah Mak Adminsitrative Assistant

Lerryn Pitcher Financial Administrator/ Counsellor

Rebecca Simkin Fund Development Cordinator

Heidi Spiar Coordinator of Living Room

Bonnie Strand Counsellor

Executive Director's Report April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018

Our dedicated staff team and over 85 trained committed volunteers were able to serve over 850 families this year. This included health promotion groups (Healthy Living Now and My Life Plus), palliative care home visiting, The Living Room day hospice services (including hundreds of sessions of complementary therapy), a support group for women with cancer, seminars for caregivers, a new monthly resource mailing for caregivers, several bereavement support groups and professional counselling for clients with life threatening illnesses, caregivers and bereavement clients.

In the community, Evergreen continued to have a role of informing and educating people about palliative care, normal bereavement and health care navigation. Presentations were made to service clubs, sports and hobby clubs, faith groups, school staff and students, government and other community agencies.

This year we began talking about a Compassionate Community Initiative. This is a new approach to caring for vulnerable individuals in our community. This approach recognizes that formal health care only provides a maximum of 10% of the care needed to be healthy. The rest comes from family, friends, neighbours and the community at large. For the people Evergreen serves, those at the end of life, those with chronic incurable conditions, those who are isolated and lonely, those who are grieving and those who are caregivers, this is an exciting way to provide better "whole person" care. Evergreen worked with 6 partners in 2017-18 and plans multiple new partners from all sectors to implement the first step towards a Compassionate Community City charter for our community in the coming year.

Evergreen continued to participate in the LHIN committees and working groups to help improve the coordination of care in the community and to be sure we were providing the services in the manner required for our provincial funding of 30% of our operating budget. Participation also ensures that Evergreen is aware of changes in the system from the government perspective as soon as they are presented so we may align ourselves accordingly.

The Board of Directors continued to ensure that Evergreen had a presence at Markham Board of Trade meetings this year. I continue to participate in the Stouffville Chamber of Commerce activities. We are looking to our business partners for sponsorship of events and programs, as well as an indication of how business will help in the Compassionate Community initiative.

The Board and Executive have begun discussions about residential hospice services at Evergreen. Investigations on the process have been completed but changes in government have not yet clarified the path for the process in the new health care world. More and more community support for such an undertaking is building, and we will bring together our current partners in hospice palliative care, palliative physicians, the local hospital, local government leaders, local seniors groups and all those working with us on Compassionate Community to move forward on this important service for the community.

Evergreen remains an active member of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition, which continues to inform the public of the important role of informal caregivers in the health care system and press the government for more support for caregivers. OCC is working to become a charity so that they can more easily raise funds for their advocacy activities with the various levels of government and the public at large. Family Caregiver Day was celebrated on the first Tuesday in April, highlighting the essential role of family caregivers in our health care system.

Ryerson student, Karen Kwok, was placed at Evergreen for the fall and winter semesters and, along with assisting weekly with the Living Room Program, developed a series of 12 packages of resources for caregivers. These will be mailed out monthly, or every 2 weeks, depending on the prognosis of the individual for which they are caring. (continued on page 7)

In January, Evergreen also began offering Powerful Tools for Caregivers, an amazing program developed by Stanford University. Feedback is very positive, and caregivers become connected to a network of other caregivers for support long after the groups are completed.

Evergreen continues to work with Better Living Health Services and the five York Region hospices as part of a leadership team across the LHIN. Sharing services across borders and collaborating on initiatives that affect us all is the goal of the team. Bereavement counsellors also meet regularly and share ideas and support across the LHIN. The client and volunteer management software purchased by Better Living for the hospices last year went live during this fiscal year. After months of issues and challenges, most of the data we require for provincial reporting is available to us.

Evergreen completed the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO) external accreditation review in February and received the accreditation certification formally in June. The process required the review and revision of all policies and procedures for governance, financial activities and client services. This was a huge group effort, and Evergreen should be congratulated for achieving this standard.

Evergreen also worked with HPCO on a project to implement collection of better outcomes measures that more effectively describe the value of community hospices in the health care system. Evergreen staff now continuously assess client and caregiver satisfaction with Evergreen support and the impact it has on their lives, and report to the provincial database. This data is available to Evergreen to analyse and use in funding requests and, more importantly, is tallied with other Ontario hospices' data and used provincially in HPCO negotiations for funding for visiting hospices.

As I look to the coming year, there is again change in the wind as a new provincial government takes the reins. As I speak, HPCO and our contact with the LHIN, Better Living Health Services, are working to determine what changes this will bring to our programming, services and funding.

No matter who is in charge and what decisions are made up the food chain, we know that Evergreen will continue to provide services to those with life threatening, life limiting and chronic conditions who need help in our three communities. We will work towards the development of a residential hospice in our community to provide another option of care at end of life right here, close to home. We will continue to expand our services for the caregivers who are the backbone of our health care system and advocate appropriate support levels in the community so families do not have to institutionalize loved ones because it is the only way to get a break from the 24/7 caregiving responsibilities. We will continue to provide support and counselling to those who have lost loved ones to death under any circumstances and at any age, so they may move to a new normal in life and live well. We will continue to build community support for a Compassionate Community in Markham, Stouffville and Thornhill so that the 90 percent of care that is not provided by formal health care is provided by our communities.

Many thanks for all your support during this past year. I hope we can count on you again as we move forward on our important mission for this community.

Jan Pearce

Executive Director

Client Services Report

Extending services to more residents of Markham, Stouffville and Thornhill while maintaining the best quality service possible was Evergreen's focus in the year 2017-18.

All of Evergreen's small staff (7 part time and 2 full time) provided service to clients and their families every day; by phone, in person and by mail/email. Some support is provided in one-to one sessions (by volunteers or staff), and some support is in the group format. Our front line staff devoted all their time to client services while the rest took on specific client support roles, in addition to other activities. As always, all of the staff supported the dedicated volunteers working within their sector of service.

With the amazing support from our over 85 client active volunteers, Evergreen care is able to focus on quality of life for the whole family starting at the initial diagnosis, through difficult treatment and, if necessary, through to end-of-life care and bereavement. With the combination of the staff team and trained volunteers, we were able to offer quality support to families through our in-home services, caregiver support, and wellness focussed services (including The Living Room, Healthy Living Now and My Life Plus), as well as provide one-to one counselling and bereavement support to hundreds.

During the year April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018, Evergreen served more than 850 families, held 225 groups, sent 1720 bereavement support monthly mailings, spoke to over one thousand community members at meetings and presentations, and celebrated 3 memorials. Our volunteers and staff provided 9884 visits, and this was only possible because of the generous donation of more than 10,000 hours by our committed volunteers. Of these 10,000 volunteer hours, over 7400 hours were spent directly with clients. The remaining hours provided by volunteers involved in office work, the all important fundraising activities and, of course, on the Board of Directors.

In Home Support Services

Providing services at an individual's home, at the time they want it, by a consistent volunteer, continued to be the most important part of what Evergreen did in 2017-18 and is where most of Evergreen's volunteer hours are invested.

After a professional assessment by nurses Michelle Juer or Patti Enright, clients let them know what is the most important need in their life at that time. If we can meet that need, we do. If not, a referral and warm hand off is organized to insure that vulnerable clients get the service they require, from one of many organizations and institutions with which Evergreen collaborates. Families are also offered the option of having a compassionate, well- trained volunteer visit their home to provide a variety of services, including:

- emotional support to the client or caregiver or both,
- respite care, to allow the family or friends who are doing the care an opportunity to go out, rest or have some time alone,
- · accompaniment on medical appointments, a walk in the park or an errand,
- · a non-judgemental listening ear when a client or family member wants to
- unload feelings without burdening the family,
- assistance with legacy work,
- · a silent presence in the room while someone sleeps, or
- a comforting touch when feeling alone.

Because Evergreen volunteers are regular visitors to the client's home, they may be the first people to notice when the caregiver is struggling or a client crisis is approaching. This early warning system may facilitate early intervention with extra professional home care from the LHIN home care providers in time to reduce emergency room visits and hospital admissions. Evergreen volunteers in the home are also in the position to inform families about other Evergreen services that might be of help to the family. Individual counselling, caregiver support groups, Healthy Living Now programs and The Living Room may be options for some clients or family members. Evergreen provides in-home support to people of all ages, from childhood to the very elderly, at the location of their choice.

Caregiver Support

Evergreen remains committed to helping families stretch their limited resources by assisting family caregivers through counselling, support groups and respite. Caregivers are contacted directly about their needs, which legitimize their position in the family and society. This helps the caregiver recognize the pressures they are under, as well as their limits; often leading to earlier intervention.

The Circle of Care support groups, held in Thornhill in conjunction with CHATS (Community and Home Assistance to Seniors) and at the Markham main office, facilitated by caring, experienced volunteers or staff, are a place for caregivers to meet with other like individuals and learn from and support each other. Telephone support on alternate weeks helps relieve some of the difficult emotions typical in caregivers struggling to cope when overtired and stressed. Counselling by Evergreen professionals is also available for caregivers when their stress is interfering with their ability to continue. Evergreen also intervenes when a volunteer or staff member identifies crises that may result in emergency room visits by informing the medical system of increased client needs for support.

This year we began offering a new program, Powerful Tools for Caregivers. This Standford University developed program is a six-session workshop for caregivers, focussing on self-care as a way to provide better care to a loved one. There are opportunities to talk about their own situation with others who understand and a great way to learn new strategies. Communication techniques and dealing with difficult emotions are other topics that are addressed. Graduates are very positive about how the sessions impacted their lives.

The Living Room

The Living Room has a team of dedicated volunteers led by Coordinator, Heidi Spiar, and remains Evergreen's most well-know program. Recognizing the inherent therapeutic value in organized curriculum and recreation, referrals to this palliative program continue to grow. While clients are enjoying yoga, massage, art expression, mind-sharpening trivia games and interactive social projects, caregivers can tend to their own needs, knowing their loved ones are enjoying a day out of the home. Generous community members and organizations provide a nutritious lunch as part of the program. Volunteers serve the meal so clients benefit from a truly fulfilling social and dining experience. This year, The Living Room capacity increased to 501 visits. We grew our community partnership capacity by adding seven new contacts that have enriched our program with cultural diversity, environmental sensitivity, and holistic health. We also added four contacts for the provision of lunch.

Healthy Living Now

Healthy Living Now is an evidence-based Stanford University program showing that individuals with chronic health problems of any type experience a higher quality of life and use fewer medical services when able to self-manage their symptoms and concerns. This six-week program, facilitated by specially trained Evergreen volunteers, looks at commonly experienced difficulties and focuses on the ones that the individual can change. Sleeping and eating well, getting moving, dealing with anxiety and depression, problem solving and making action plans that are actually successful are the basis of the sessions. This program was helpful for individuals with a chronic or life-threatening illness, caregivers of family members who are ill and for people struggling with grief. The program was available in both Markham and in Thornhill.

My Life Plus

Evergreen continued with this program for Healthy Living Now graduates to provide a monthly option to continue work on their self-management skills and gain energy from sharing their successes with others. Participants meet others who have taken the program at a variety of different times and places to learn from each other on dealing with changes in their health status and new challenges they have encountered.

Grief and Bereavement Programs

The feelings one experiences after the death of a loved one can frighten and sometimes immobilize the newly bereaved. Indeed, when a loved one dies, the initial shock and bewilderment may well last weeks or months. A great deal of bereavement support and counselling focuses on the normalcy of the grief reaction, in spite of how abnormal it feels, removing the additional burden of feeling inadequate or "crazy" as a result. This allows bereaved family members to really feel the loss and work through the grief experience in the way that is best for them. Understanding the normalcy of grief does not eliminate the pain of loss, but it can reduce the anxiety about their feelings and help them create more reasonable expectations about their progress.

Drop-in adult support groups are offered monthly and facilitated by trained volunteers, provide ongoing support to families struggling with the death of a friend or family member. These groups may help individuals work through a particularly difficult time of year (holidays, anniversaries, birthdays) or may be a person's first introduction to Evergreen's services.

Circle of Hope, an adult support group series facilitated by experienced volunteers, was offered four times this year. Often, the groups are all the support that is needed to help a person get back on track. Others may have more complex issues, requiring one-to-one counselling, which was provided in 2017-18 by counsellors Bonnie Strand and Lerryn Pitcher. Six or more (depending on the situation) professional sessions are provided at no charge to the client. Referrals to other agencies or professionals may also be made if the situation warrants.

Support for children and teens is also available. Evergreen takes referrals from school staff, parents and other agencies that may know of a child or teen who is having difficulty coping with a death or the serious illness of a loved one. Groups are age specific, teach about normal grief, and often involve activities that encourage the sharing of feelings about the loved one they have lost.

In November, Evergreen also provided two sessions of "Coping with the Holidays," for those who are grieving. As well as helpful tips, the evening included a memorial candle lighting ceremony and refreshments.

Evergreen's Front Line Client Service Providers

Michelle Juer RPN Supportive Care Coordinator (Markham and Stouffville)
Patti Enright RPN Supportive Care Coordinator (Thornhill)
Bonnie Strand BA, Counsellor (Markham and Stouffville)
Lerryn Pitcher, Counsellor (Thornhill and Markham)
Heidi Spiar, Living Room Coordinator

Volunteer Report

Evergreen Hospice would not exist without the efforts of all our volunteers. Evergreen is a dynamic organization providing many different programs with minimal staff. There are almost two hundred volunteers who give time, expertise and passion to Evergreen, either on a consistent weekly basis throughout the year or at a yearly event giving their time in a short block. We need you all!

About half of our volunteers directly support our clients in the community; these are the women and men who are available on a consistent weekly basis to meet the various needs of our palliative and bereavement clients. Volunteers visit clients in their homes, long term care facilities and the hospital.

Volunteer Board members set policy, work on committees and provide direction for the organization.

Office volunteers provide valuable support for staff and volunteers by answering the phone, compiling mailings, filing, sorting, calling, delivering, picking up, copying and so much more.

Fundraising volunteers do an outstanding job of raising the financial resources to fulfill our mission by planning, organizing and managing our special fundraising events such as the very successful Gala, a Night Down Under, Taste of Stouffville, Hike for Hospice and the Walk to Remember. Our event volunteers pick up, lug, set up, carry, organize the silent auction, arrange, haul, take down, move, put away and take back.

All our volunteers enhance their skills though structured learning opportunities and experience, and this allows them to make a difference for hospice families, their own families and in the community. We build community capacity!

Evergreen Hospice recognizes the very significant contributions of individual volunteers in a variety of ways. At our Annual General Meeting, it has become a tradition to acknowledge volunteers who have been with Evergreen for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years. Receiving 10 year certificates are Gerrie Storr, Stephanie De Bruijn, June Ferguson, Owen Pearce and Susan Lynge. The following have been Evergreen volunteers for 5 years: Marie Krikorian, Mary Tam, and Lynn Dawson-Parker.

It is an honour to say thank you to all our volunteers for your enthusiasm and dedication to the particular roles you play. It is a privilege to work with you. Your commitment, hard work and the joy you bring make a difference! You are inspiring!

Virginia Bidwell
Coordinator of Volunteers

Fundraising Report

Every year has its challenges and successes, and 2017 was no exception. In an effort to address the increasing time and energy being spent planning events, we combined our Hike for Hospice with our Walk to Remember. Once we had freed up some planning time, we were able to spend more time soliciting foundations for various specific program proposals and seeking out sponsorship of programs and events from local businesses. All of these efforts have seen worthwhile results, indicating this move was a good one.

In June, we held our now combined Hike for Hospice: A Walk to Remember at the Thornhill Community Centre. We released a group of doves, read inspiring poems and a group walked the trails of the nearby Pomona Park. In addition to being a fundraising event, the walk also served as a memorial event for past and present clients who wish to commemorate their loved-ones.

Last summer, we held our third "Taste of Stouffville" event under sunny skies. This is an event that hosts the local community, offering foods and drinks from local breweries and restaurants in Memorial Park, Stouffville. Games and a petting zoo attracted families with kids, and musical entertainment was offered on stage. The hot weather caused us to run out of beer before the evening ended, but we had added a mixed drink bar, so there were, thankfully, other things to drink. We also had our best attendance yet. We will continue to focus on growing our audience and our revenues in 2018.

In 2018, our gala organizing committee presented another exciting event with "Greece – Mamma Mia Style." It's always a challenge to outdo ourselves from the previous year, but our wonderful gala committee volunteers have managed to do this over and over again. Attendees were treated to a celebration of Greece culture blended with the breezy fun and cheer of a wedding reception held on a small Greek island, and they all went home smiling.

Every year, we review our efforts of the previous year and plan for the next year, attempting to adjust to the changing fundraising environment, as well as taking advantage of new opportunities that open up to us. In 2018, we will be focusing some efforts on acquiring major gifts that will sustain and help the organization grow. The programming of services has really taken off in recent years and fundraising needs to communicate and reflect that in the planning and execution of various campaigns.

Balance is important, and we strive to work on portioning our efforts over many types of fundraising. In addition to the varied events we have established in each area we serve, we also fundraise through direct mail appeals, foundation and government project funding, sponsorship of programs, and bequests to support the growing demand for our services.

Many thanks go to all of the individuals, businesses, organizations, corporations and foundations that have reached into their pockets to ensure that Evergreen will be able to continue to support people in need. Many thanks to all of our wonderful volunteers who have dedicated their time, energy and creativity to make our fundraising efforts a success. We wouldn't exist without you!

Rebecca Simkin,

Fund Development Coordinator











FAITH GROUPS, SERVICE CLUBS, SCHOOLS & GROUPS

Glynnwood Residents Council

Grace Church ACW

Knights of Columbus #11708

Markham Lions Club

Ontario Delta Zeta Master

St. Andrew's United Church UCW

Unionville Curling Club

United Way of Toronto

United Way of York Region

York University Hospice Helpers

FOUNDATIONS

Canada Chinese Computer Association Charitable Foundation

Ralph & Maureen Phillips Family Foundation

The Ben and Hilda Katz Charitable Foundation

The Egan Family Foundation

The Frank Scarpitti Charitable Foundation Inc.

HIKE FOR HOSPICE: A WALK TO REMEMBER - SPONSORS

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Clintar Landscaping

Dixon Garland Funeral Home

TASTE OF STOUFFVILLE 2017 SPONSORS

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David Mills, Royal lePage

Dixon-Garland Funeral Home

Farmer Jack's Gardens

Fieldgate Developments

Goliath Tech

JMX Contracting Inc.

Longos

PACE Credit Union

O'Neill Funeral Home Ltd.

Schell Lumber & Home Building

Centre

Sorbara / L & M Ltd. Partnership

Stouffville Toyota

Torres and Trentadue Real Estate

Town of Whitchurch Stouffville

United Soils & Tiny Seedlings

Vince's BBQ

Woitzik Polsinelli Barristers & Solicitors

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Volunteer Training

Beechwood Cemetery

C-Care Support Group

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Alectra Utilities

Children's Programs

100 Women Who Care - Stouffville

GALA SPONSORS

OPA! GREECE - MAMMA MIA STYLE

Aunt Sarah's Chocolates

Chapel Ridge Funeral Home

Dixon-Garland Funeral Home

Highland Funeral Home – Markham

Chapel

Highland Hills Funeral Home and

Cemetery

O'Neill Funeral Home

Kerbel Group

Kylemore Communities West Village

Ltd.

Markham District Energy

Minto Communities Inc.

Samco Machinery Ltd.

Sheri Kurtz

Stouffville Toyota

The Miller Group

The Team Group Management Corp.

Town+Country BMW



Saturday, August 26, 2017 2 p.m. - 11 p.m. Memorial Park

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