

cowichan
hospice



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Christa Fox
Board President



Monika Kawka
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Every day someone in our community is impacted by a loss, by receiving difficult news, or by the complicated challenges of caring for a loved one.

Every day, Cowichan Hospice remains committed to providing compassionate, person-centered care through the journey to end-of-life, through grief, or through anticipated loss. Thank you for making this care possible.

We are humbled and inspired by your spirit of compassion and humanity that shaped the work of Cowichan Hospice in 2022.

Through much of 2022, the pandemic continued to test the resilience of our volunteers and staff and the individuals we served. We became familiar with the complicated grief and regret felt by those who hadn't been able to be there for loved ones in their last hours, not allowed even to touch their hands or kiss them. We also observed that more and more people were losing loved ones to toxic drugs and suicide. Our staff and volunteers continued to provide safe and non-judgmental support to those experiencing these particularly stigmatizing and isolating losses.

As the months progressed, however, the year brought inspiration and progress. With the lifting of pandemic restrictions, we carefully returned to gathering in person and reconnecting with our community with a renewed sense of optimism. We resumed some in-person support and held gatherings that had been put on hold for far too long. Lessons we learned through the pandemic made us an even stronger and more adaptable organization.

Partnerships with Island Health and community organizations helped us provide quality support for individuals and families living with end-of-life challenges and grief. Through educational workshops and community events, more people became aware of our services. This increased awareness helps ensure that hospice services are understood as an accessible and important resource for those who need them.

None of this is possible without the caring support of the Cowichan community. Your generosity ensures support for those grieving the death of someone they love, facing their own serious illness, or caring for a dying loved one.

Thank you—to each and every person who has contributed to Cowichan Hospice, whether through donations, volunteering, or spreading the word about our services. Your belief in this work is making a deep and lasting impact in the lives of many individuals and families.

With gratitude,

Christa Fox *M. Kawka*

Our Vision

Compassionate,
person-centered
end-of-life and
bereavement care
available to anyone,
anywhere in the
Cowichan region.

Our Values

Compassion
Respect
Integrity
Collaboration
Honouring Life

Cowichan Hospice is honoured to provide care in the unceded traditional and ancestral territories of the Quw'utsun, Stz'uminus, Halalt, Lyackson, Puneluxutth' (Penelukut), Ts'uubaa-asatx, Ditidaht and Meluxulh (Malahat) people.

WHERE YOUR SUPPORT IS HELPING

Chemainus • 101	Honeymoon Bay • 3
Cobble Hill • 80	Ladysmith • 123
Cowichan Bay • 36	Lake Cowichan • 58
Crofton • 17	Malahat • 1
Duncan • 365	Mesachie Lake • 3
	Mill Bay • 28
	Shawnigan Lake • 51
	Youbou • 1
	Out of Area • 14



One-to-One
Grief Support
Appointments
Now Available in
Ladysmith

How Your Generosity Made a Difference in Our Community

In 2022, **882** people in the Cowichan Region were served by one or more Cowichan Hospice programs:

- 372** Support for those grieving
- 220** Support for people living with serious illness (including 79 patients at Hospice House)
- 336** Support for family members (caregiving and anticipatory grief, including 166 loved ones at Hospice House)
- 54** Advance Care Planning
- 13** Information and referral

New Adventures for Gretchen



After 18 years of vision and leadership, we said goodbye to Executive Director Gretchen Hartley.

We wish her a very well-earned retirement rich in all that brings her joy.

A part of Gretchen will always be felt in the warmth and comfort of Cowichan Hospice House.

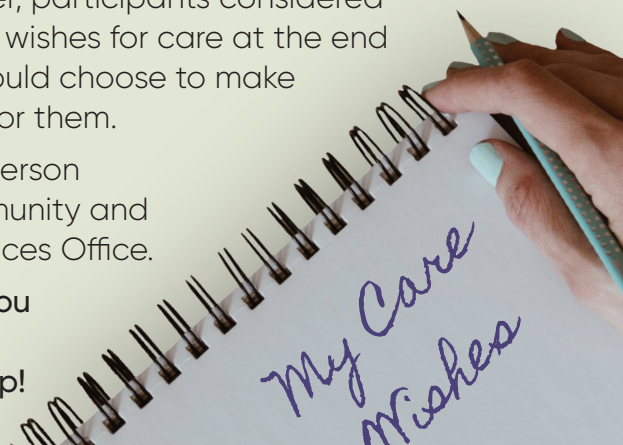
Advance Care Planning

In 2022, **54** people attended free Advance Care Planning workshops presented by Cowichan Hospice.

Two workshops were held via Zoom and a third was held in person. Together, participants considered and talked about their wishes for care at the end of life and who they would choose to make health care decisions for them.

We have resumed in-person workshops in the community and in our Community Services Office.

Please get in touch if you would like us to host a workshop for your group!





Welcome Changes in Cowichan Hospice House in 2022

As pandemic restrictions began to lift, Hospice House could finally be used as

it was intended. Whole families could gather together in their loved ones' rooms, the family area, kitchen, sacred space and children's play area. As Jodi Strom, Hospice House Volunteer Coordinator, says, "It feels like Hospice House is coming alive."

A few highlights:

The aromas of home cooking drifted from the kitchen as patients and families prepared favourite foods. Even for patients who could not eat much, the smells of familiar food brought a sense of comfort and home. Hospice House volunteers and staff made meals and treats for patients and guests, with special requests encouraged.

The children's play area could finally welcome children to play, read, make art, or simply have quiet time alone. Children from different families formed friendships and used the dry-erase wall to leave messages for each other between visits.

Island Health staff provided excellent medical care to patients, easing challenging symptoms and honouring each person's needs and priorities.

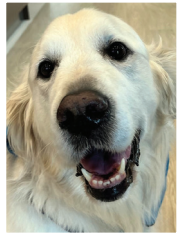
Hospice volunteers provided emotional and practical support, information and resources to patients, their caregivers and their loved ones. Many volunteers shared their specialized skills such as Therapeutic Touch, Reiki, hairstyling and more.

The gentle and calming Olaf, a trained therapy dog, shared his sweetness with any patients and guests who needed a furry fix.

Holidays were celebrated, from a traditional Christmas turkey dinner and a Boxing Day pancake breakfast to a (small) wedding ceremony, with family attending from across the globe.

The Rotary Garden was even more beautiful last year, as plantings matured, and patients and guests took sanctuary in that peaceful setting.

It is because of you, the Cowichan Community, that Hospice House exists to support our loved ones, friends and neighbours in living their last days in peace and comfort. *Thank you.*





Driving with Rocke

Former Cowichan Hospice Volunteer

Entering Rocke's Wightman's room in Cowichan Hospice House, you couldn't miss his comfort items: a few bags of potato chips and a stack of history books.

"I really, really like history," Rocke would say. "I think that's our instinct, to pass on our knowledge. You get to a certain age, you want to tell your stories, you want to pass on your knowledge."

At the end of his life, Rocke was doing just that. In particular, it was important to him to let others know what it was like to spend his last days in Hospice House.

Rocke experienced his stay in Hospice House from a broader perspective than some, having been a hospice volunteer himself for many years. Much of his volunteer experience was one-on-one in clients' homes, but he also provided administrative support and talked over the phone to palliative patients in hospital.

Expressing his appreciation for the volunteers and nurses at Hospice House, Rocke shared, "You need empathy as well as compassion for this job. For people like myself who live alone, the big fear is being sick and alone. They don't treat me like I'm sick. I am much more comfortable. The fear is gone. You allow yourself to rest."

When asked about some of his favourite things, Rocke pointed to the books and chips, then mentioned something not in the room. "I love driving. My dad drove all

over North America. My son Stuart drives whenever he can. I don't know what it is about driving, or if it's genetic, but it's when I do my best thinking." One more thing that brought him joy? "I love A&W hashbrowns."

“...the big fear is being sick and alone. They don't treat me like I'm sick. I am much more comfortable. The fear is gone.”

After Rocke died, his son Stuart drove from Kamloops to clean out his room and his house. "I decided to go for a 600km drive all around the island with my father's things," Stuart shared. "The clothes he wore, the hat he wore, his books. He wasn't there, but he was there with me. I was talking to him. I drove through A&W twice on his behalf. Driving and A&W were the two constants between us. Most our visits involved driving. I guess I got it from him."

I had the privilege of interviewing Rocke for this story and I am grateful for his candor and generosity. My trip home after our meeting was a short one, but Rocke was with me on the drive.

- Todd Foley, Cowichan Hospice

What is Good Palliative Care?

Good palliative care, whether it's provided in your home or in a facility, means:

- **You have good pain and symptom control.** Pain and symptom management is not one-size-fits-all. Your care team is knowledgeable about medications and procedures available to alleviate your symptoms and manage pain, working with you to meet your individual care goals.
- **You are knowledgeable and aware.** You are clearly informed about your condition, and about any medications and procedures that are offered.
- **You are empowered to make your own choices.** You're encouraged to make decisions that are aligned with your goals, not the goals of your medical care team.
- **You feel respected.** You feel heard and are given the time to ask questions and process incoming information before making decisions.
- **You feel valued as a human being.** You feel seen as a person, not an illness. Your care team considers your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

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Harold Lawson

Adele MacLeod

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To learn how you can support hospice care in Cowichan, visit cowichanhospice.org or call 250-701-4242

Cowichan Hospice with your gifts in 2022

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We have done our best to include everyone who made a contribution of \$200 or more between January 1 and December 31, 2022. We apologize in advance for any errors or omissions.

Thank you, Betty Locke,
for making your donation even more beautiful!

Hospice: The Space where I could be Heard

You don't get to my age without losing a few people. I lost my parents and friends through sickness and accidents. I have been involved with rescues. I thought I had a pretty good understanding of what death was. But when I lost my wife, I was overwhelmed with grief. I realized that we don't really do dying well in our culture. We don't talk about it enough, so we don't understand it enough.

My wife Karen was diagnosed with terminal cancer in May 2021. We went through a number of treatments and tried to prolong her life as long as we could, but by January 2022, we were out of options. Dr. Valerie Masuda, our cancer specialist at the local hospital, suggested we reach out to Cowichan Hospice. Karen unfortunately died before she could take advantage of Hospice services.

A month after Karen died, I also lost my best friend in life, my brother-in-law who had been in the family for 50 years. Up until his death, there hadn't been a day that went by that we didn't talk. He had been my confidant as Karen went through treatment.

As I no longer had that outlet and confidant, I reached out to Cowichan

Hospice for grief support and was connected with volunteer Jim. While it was not the same, it was still healthy and good. I also had some Reiki sessions. I didn't really understand it or believe in it, but for a curmudgeonly old fart, it was extraordinary—and helpful for me on a mental and personal scale.

Following that, I joined the Grief Group at Hospice. Men don't always communicate their feelings well, so Grief Group was really magical—an "aha moment" when I realized there were other folks like me. Hearing other people's stories made me realize I'm not broken, that there is a natural course to things. Each of us had different journeys.

Hearing other people's stories made me realize I'm not broken, that there is a natural course to things.

any judgement, without any quick fixes, without being told to just "do this or learn this skill."

I can't speak highly enough about how Hospice has supported me. I'm still struggling, but I can see the difference from where I was a year ago to where I am now. It sounds a little dramatic, but I would be in a far different place if Hospice hadn't been there.

- Keith MacKenzie, Duncan



An Opportunity to Listen By Beryl Mallinson, Cowichan Hospice Volunteer

For over 25 years, I worked as an educator, counsellor and psychologist. In all of this, I really learned to listen. When I started volunteering with Hospice in 2012, I worked with grief and palliative clients in the community, and now I support patients and their families in Hospice House.

My role as a hospice volunteer is to be present, centered, calm and open to what someone is saying and what they desire. Some people want me to read them a book. Some want me to joke with them. Some want me to leave them alone and just check in every so often.

My professional background also helps me be aware if a

person might benefit from other assistance in the community. I appreciate how Hospice support can be part of an overall network of care.

In my years of Hospice support, I've found that a lot of people think what they're experiencing is wrong, or that it shouldn't be like that. My work is to listen and to help normalize what they're feeling. It has been very inspiring to me to see my clients begin to accept where they are and process their reality, understanding it isn't about finding a quick fix.

I have learned so much working with these wonderful people. I continue to do this work because it's important to me to be of service somehow. It gives me so much more than what I give.

Thank you Hospice Volunteers for your dedicated service to our community!

15 years _____ 10 years _____



Pam Malt

As a Reiki Master and Hospice Volunteer, Pam was

instrumental in the creation of the Hospice Care Clinic and Wellness Room. With an estimated 3,000 hours of volunteer service, Pam has brought her beautiful heart, skills and experience to support a great many palliative and grief clients.



Nancy Cornell

Nancy brings her Therapeutic Touch skills to support Hospice palliative and grief clients in the Wellness Room.



Rick Stordeur

Rick shares his counselling skills and a gentle heart, supporting his Hospice clients

with their complicated grief experience.



Marg Budd

Marg provides one-to-one grief and palliative support and is an integral part of the Advance Care Planning team.

_____ 5 years _____

Angela Atkins

Daniel Collins

Anne Mathieson

Lorraine McWilliam

Did you know that Cowichan Hospice offers volunteer training each year?

After completing initial training, new volunteers are supported by an experienced mentor through a six-month apprenticeship. Peer support meetings are held twice monthly and advance training opportunities are available throughout the year.

Volunteers are guided by Hospice values and protocols, but each brings something unique and authentic to the role.

They are the heart of this organization.



The 2022 team, L to R: Mary Hof, Gretchen Hartley, David Pope, Marianne Palou, Rachel Anderson, Joanna Sofield

Thank you to the Cowichan Life Cyclers and everyone who sponsors these amazing riders. You help keep Hospice care rolling in Cowichan!

“I ride because it’s a way of giving thanks to the many who provide end-of-life care. My dad didn’t want to die in hospital but there was no Hospice House. I am thankful there is one now and will ride in his memory.

- Mary Hof

“Since becoming involved with Cowichan Hospice, I have become aware of just how much valuable support is available to its clients, and is provided free of cost. The Cycle of Life is physically challenging, emotionally rewarding and fun!

- David Pope

“I ride in memory of my parents. My mom wanted to die at home. My dad never had a chance to go into hospice as he died really fast.

- Marianne Palou

“My brother’s wish to die at home was assured by the beautiful care of palliative support and his family. Both joy and sorrow are a communal reality, so this year I ride both for joy in this life and for assurance that this same joy helps others as they pass to the next life.

- Rachel Anderson

Grief, Loss and Maternity Leave



When her mom came by to wish her three-year-old son a happy birthday, Stephanie had no way of knowing it would be the last time she would see her mom before she died by suicide.

With a toddler and a newborn demanding her attention, Stephanie had no opportunity to process this devastating loss. She describes the challenging situation, saying, "I'm grieving the loss of my mother while I'm on maternity leave, when women need

their mother most. I'm responsible for creating joy and laughter and imagination and hope while simultaneously trying to juggle the worst moment of my life."

Although friends and loved ones checked in on her, Stephanie noticed that it seemed easier to focus on the newborn baby

Hospice was a place I could come and not be a mom.

I could just be a daughter.

than to talk about what had happened, trying to keep things positive. "I felt like there wasn't anybody to talk to who could understand this complicated grief. Even other people who had lost parents couldn't relate," she recalls, "and I found myself wanting to protect them from their own discomfort."

As a homecare nurse, Stephanie was familiar with the resources and support available at Cowichan Hospice. Within two days of the tragedy, she

called the Community Services Office and was connected with a volunteer for one-to-one grief support. For a year after her mother's death, she met weekly with her volunteer, never feeling rushed through the traumatic nature of her grief. She felt safe to express every part of herself, even during the fear and uncertainty of the pandemic.

"Hospice was a place I could come and not be a mom. I could just be a daughter. It was the only time I didn't feel like there was anything too heavy, too scary, too sad, too dramatic, too anything."

Stephanie's husband and stepfather also sought grief support from Cowichan Hospice. While her husband didn't receive support for as long as she did, he developed more insight into her loss, and ways he could support her in her grief journey. "My husband and I didn't fall apart in all this," she says. "If anything, we got stronger."

Now, in their home, she and her husband and children have honest talks about difficult topics like death and sadness – which she believes honours her mother, her daughter and herself. "We have built a really happy, healthy home, but I also feel it is okay for me to continue my journey of grief and it's okay that I feel sad."

As she looks at her daughter, Stephanie reflects on the support she received from Cowichan Hospice and where she is today. "It hasn't even been two years since this happened, and I feel really proud of how I am doing and how much joy we have."

We are interested in hearing YOUR Hospice story.

We gather stories from clients and volunteers to share with those who might wish to help, and those who may need support but don't know what services are available through Cowichan Hospice. Email us at stories@cowichanhospice.org

2022 FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet

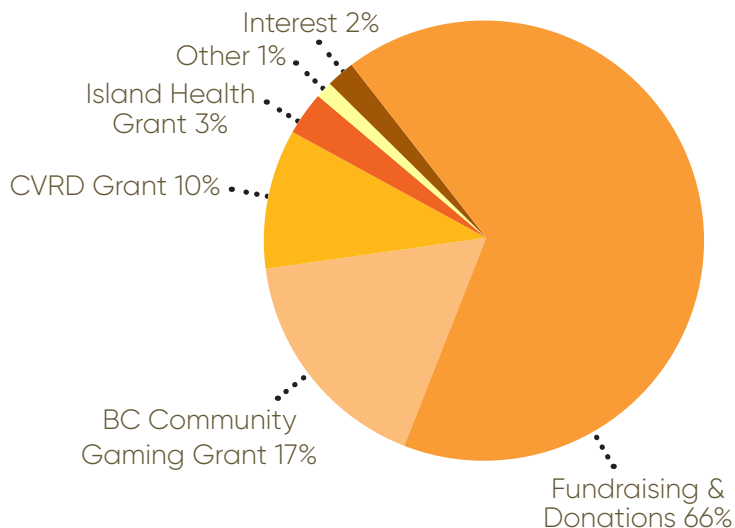
	Operating Fund 2022	Capital Fund 2022	Hospice House Fund 2022	Total 2022	Total 2021
Current Assets	\$ 839,603	\$ 260,498	\$ 1,688,515	\$ 2,788,616	\$ 2,917,742
Current Liabilities	\$ 206,971	0	\$ 1,688,515	\$ 1,895,486	\$ 2,047,117
Net Assets	\$ 632,632	\$ 260,498	\$ 0	\$ 893,130	\$ 870,625
Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 839,603	\$ 260,498	\$ 1,688,515	\$ 2,788,616	\$ 2,917,742

Income Statement

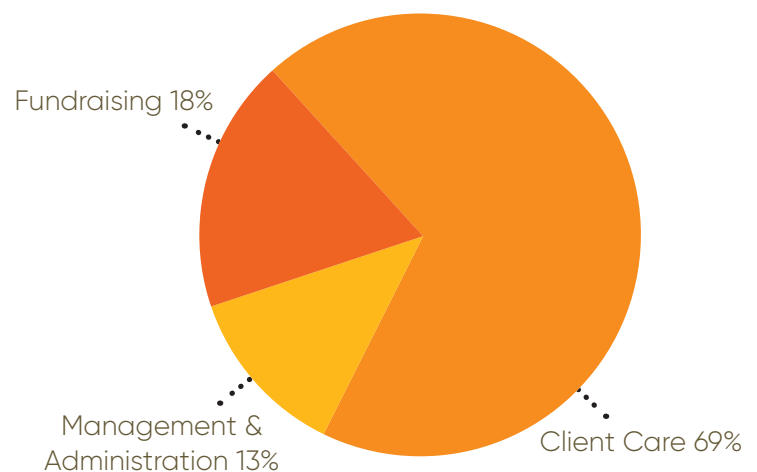
Revenues	\$ 600,649	0	\$ 234,577	\$ 835,226	\$ 1,032,522
Expenses	\$ 569,199	\$ 12,443	\$ 231,077	\$ 812,719	\$ 821,315
Excess Revenue Over Expenses	\$ 31,450	\$ -12,443	\$ 3,500	\$ 22,507	\$ 211,207

Volunteers contributed \$111,960 of value in 2022 when calculated at \$20 an hour.

OPERATING REVENUE



OPERATING EXPENSES





COWICHAN HOSPICE
COMMUNITY SERVICES

3122 Gibbins Road
Duncan • BC V9L 1G2
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Cowichan Valley Hospice Society
Charity BN/Registration number:
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Open your
Heart
to Hospice.



Vanessa Rocchio, Member of the Cowichan Hospice Legacy Circle



When Vanessa let us know she was leaving
a gift to Cowichan Hospice in her will, we
asked her why she made this decision.
This is what she shared.

"When my mom was diagnosed with dementia I became more aware of the places people spend their last days and the ways some of us have to die. That was the impetus for me to give more to Hospice. I think we all want to leave this life with a heart attack or a stroke in the middle of the night at 92 but most of us aren't that lucky. Cowichan is so fortunate to have Hospice House and hospice support companions. For a small community it's truly amazing!

I'm surprised more people don't know about Cowichan Hospice and everything it offers. The resources they provide are available to everyone. Grief doesn't have a start line or a finish line and it's different for each one of us. When my mom was diagnosed I started grieving and for the five years she suffered I grieved. Knowing there is hospice support can help manage grief whether it's long or short term. It's your choice as you navigate through this emotional time. Cowichan Hospice is so much more than our beautiful Hospice House facility.

When I named Cowichan Hospice in my will there was no question. We have an exceptionally committed hospice group. The volunteers and staff are remarkable. Because of them we have a remarkable Hospice House facility. I'm truly not sure I will have much money when I leave this world but if it's there it will have impact and it will benefit others. In promoting Legacy gifting my hope is people understand it doesn't matter how big or small your 'Legacy' gift is, it will make a difference."

Vanessa is a recently retired Realtor, a "wannabe artist" and dedicated Hospice supporter.

She has lived in Cowichan for 25 years.

The Legacy Circle is a group of supporters who have left a gift to Cowichan Hospice in their wills.

If you would like to learn more about the Legacy Circle, please reach out. *You have more power to make a difference than you realize.*