



Pictured: Patrick, Kayla, Tessa, Liliana

WHEN WORDS AREN'T ENOUGH: THE POWER OF EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING IN GRIEF SUPPORT

In the Spring of this year, our team was able to bring together a Child and Family Grief Support Group, which included two sessions of Equine Assisted Learning and Wellness.

The group supported six families with 8 children participating. The offering was focussed on families healing through grief by exploring this journey with a child focussed art centered group alongside a parent/guardian/older sibling group that connected the many facets of the grief experience.

Two of the six meetings took place at Shannon Stables with the STaRS (Southlands Therapeutic Riding Society) team facilitating. Alongside their incredible horses, a safe space was created for youth and adults to build skills, and overcome grief related challenges through connecting with these special horses.

It became apparent after our first day with the horses how much learning and healing they were

providing for our youth participants. By interacting with the horses directly, the children processed difficult emotions and built bonds with one another in a supportive environment.

It was valuable to witness how the horses' created pathways of communication for our participants when words evade us in capturing our grief stories.

It was a beautiful tapestry of learning from our four-legged friends around how to embrace the non-verbal aspects of grief. These learnings and connections took visual form when we were then able to meet again, where words were found, and stories shared, and meaningful art was created.



One participant shared, "I believe we were able to cope with our loss more easily and with greater strength because we felt supported by people who were there for us—and, of course, by the connection we shared with the horses."

We hope to work with our horse allies again in a future offering of this group. This has fostered a myriad of ideas around different ways we can incorporate animal companionship as well as connection to nature alongside art and community building.

Our Child and Family Grief Support Group at this time will be an annual offering to provide a healing space for families and children coping with a death. Sessions run for 6 weeks and welcomes individuals from all backgrounds.

DID YOU KNOW?

Horses are highly attuned to non-verbal cues, responding to human emotions like fear, sadness, or calmness. Their non-judgmental and gentle presence offers a calming influence, allowing grieving individuals to open up and feel understood without words.

A FOND FAREWELL AND A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAM



Pictured: VHS Clinical and Admin Teams

As we say goodbye to two valued members, we're also thrilled to welcome three new faces. Their unique talents and passion will help us continue providing compassionate care to our community. Here's to new beginnings and heartfelt farewells!



Omega's New Chapter at Dogwood Lodge

For more than 10 years, Omega has provided compassionate care to countless patients and families. As part of our expansion, she will now continue her journey at Dogwood Lodge, bringing the same dedication and warmth to her new role.

Dr. Gloria's outstanding service

Alongside Omega, we also honour Dr. Huang. After 10 years of exceptional care, Dr. Huang is stepping back from her duties. Her commitment and compassion have left a lasting impact on our community.



LET US WELCOME

Bre Silva - Counsellor

Born and raised in Vancouver, Bre has dedicated over 6 years to working in low-income housing and five years as a support worker for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. She is also a passionate visual artist and singer-songwriter who finds joy in all things handmade.



Kayla Cribley - RN

Originally from Ontario, Kayla moved to Vancouver 9 years ago. With a decade of nursing experience, she has worked in various areas but has always had a passion for hospice care. Helping individuals and families during difficult times is near and dear to her heart, and she finds fulfillment in being part of their journeys. Outside of work, Kayla enjoys hiking and exploring the great outdoors.



Donna Mondani - Cook

Donna has spent 25 years as a dedicated flight attendant, bringing her warm hospitality to the skies. Born in Montreal and raised in Toronto, she has called Vancouver home for the past 30 years after transferring here with her airline. Donna also has a love for the culinary arts, having spent a year in culinary school and gaining experience in catering and various food service roles. An avid traveler with a passion for exploring Europe—particularly Italy and London—Donna finds balance through her love of gardening and yoga.



CELEBRATING THE HEART OF VANCOUVER HOSPICE SOCIETY: OUR VOLUNTEERS

At Vancouver Hospice Society, our volunteers are the heart and hands of our mission. This year, we're celebrating an astounding 22,058 volunteer hours contributed across various programs and services.

These numbers highlight the incredible dedication of our volunteers, who make an enormous impact on the lives of the patients, families, and community members we serve.



Pictured: Healing Touch volunteers

Client-Serving Hours

Volunteers dedicated 930 hours to direct support, providing care and compassion in some of life's most vulnerable moments. This includes: Bedside Visiting, Volunteer Music, Bereavement Walking Group, Carnegie Bereavement Programming, Bereavement Support Groups, Family Member Support, Healing Touch, Threshold Choir, and Community Bereavement Events.

Through these hours, our client-serving volunteers offer companionship, emotional support, and specialized healing activities that ease and uplift both clients and their loved ones.

Non-Client Serving Hours

With an impressive 21,467 hours devoted to support services, our non-client-serving volunteers ensure the hospice operates smoothly. This includes: Front Desk Support, HOB Too, HOB, Healing Touch training, Holiday Decorating, and training sessions.

Additionally, volunteers keep our outdoor spaces beautiful and safe, with many hours spent on gardening and maintenance. Special thanks to Ali King for assisting with these essential areas.



Pictured: HOB Too volunteers in 2010



Pictured: Bereavement Walking Group Volunteers

We would also like to extend heartfelt gratitude to the Quilt Angels, whose beautiful, handcrafted quilts bring warmth and comfort to our patients.

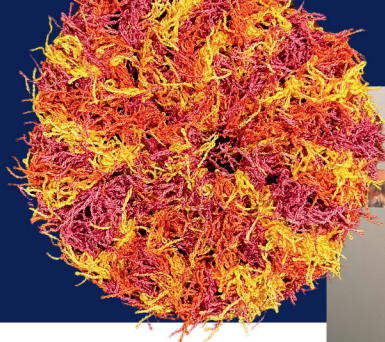
A Legacy of Compassion

Our volunteers' contributions reflect a profound commitment to our mission: to provide compassionate end-of-life care for those facing death and bereavement.

From comforting clients and families to managing daily operations at our HOB stores, each hour given strengthens our hospice community and extends our reach.

We thank every volunteer who has shared their time and skills with us. Your dedication shapes Vancouver Hospice Society, and we are truly honored to have you by our side.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: VICKI'S VOLUNTEER JOURNEY



Vicki began her journey with Vancouver Hospice Society nearly a decade ago, first volunteering at our Hospice Opportunity Boutique (HOB) when it was located in Dunbar. She initially started helping at The HOB and soon found herself wanting to contribute even more by also volunteering at our reception desk.

Since then, Vicki has been an invaluable part of our community, appreciating the warmth of patients, families, and her fellow volunteers. "Everyone here is wonderful," she says. "The people, patients, and families are all so nice, and they appreciate everything we do."

One of the many additional ways Vicki supports our hospice is through her unique handmade "scrubbies"—

a special project she dedicates herself during each shift at the hospice.

Vicki crochets each scrubby by hand, a skill she's honed since she was a young girl. Remarkably, she can make up to four per hour, selling them at The HOB for \$3 each to raise funds for the hospice. These versatile scrubbies are made from polyester and have become a favourite at The HOB, perfect for use on skin, or as a cleaning tool around the house.

Vicki's scrubbies have become more than just a product—they represent the dedication and care she brings to her volunteer role.

Thank you, Vicki, for your kindness and commitment!



Pictured: Volunteers like Vicki, are the heart of Vancouver Hospice Society



Pictured: Vicki crocheting a scrubby

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SUPPORTS OUR VOLUNTEERS WITH KEY TRAINING SESSION

On August 22nd, we had the pleasure of hosting Adrienne Poirier from the Alzheimer Society of British Columbia for an insightful two-hour training session. The session, designed to equip our volunteers with essential skills for supporting patients with Alzheimer's disease, was a vital addition to our ongoing efforts in compassionate care.

Adrienne brought a wealth of knowledge and experience, guiding our volunteers through the complexities of communicating

with individuals affected by Alzheimer's.

The training focused on understanding the progressive nature of the disease, the challenges it presents for both patients and caregivers, and practical strategies for offering meaningful support.

One of the key takeaways was the importance of patience, active listening, and empathy when engaging with individuals living with Alzheimer's.

Adrienne also emphasized the value of non-verbal communication, adapting to different stages of the disease, and offering reassurance to both patients and their families.

This presentation marks an important step in ensuring that our volunteers are well-equipped to handle the unique challenges faced by those living with Alzheimer's. It reflects our ongoing commitment to providing holistic care not only for the patients but also for the families who love and support them.



Pictured: Our palliative care and support team

"It was incredible to soak up the knowledge from palliative clinicians across the globe and see the innovative research and projects."

- Bev Nolan



Pictured: Omega and Sophia

VANCOUVER HOSPICE SOCIETY'S PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM ATTENDS MCGILL INTERNATIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE CONFERENCE

Our palliative care and support team recently attended the McGill International Palliative Care Conference in Montreal, held from October 15 to October 18.

McGill University's International Congress on Palliative Care, established in 1976 by Dr. Balfour Mount and colleagues, is the longest-running event in its field. Hosted biennially, it welcomes over 1,500 delegates from more than 65 countries, making it one of the most interdisciplinary gatherings for palliative care worldwide.

Every two years, professionals from diverse roles—including physicians, researchers, nurses, psychologists, social workers, pharmacists, and therapists—come together to share knowledge and advance palliative care.

The sessions offered cutting-edge research, emerging practices,

and approaches that emphasize patient-centered care, compassionate communication, and innovative therapies aimed at enhancing the quality of life for patients and families.

Bev Nolan, our dedicated social worker and counsellor, shared her experience: "It was incredible to soak up the knowledge from palliative clinicians across the globe and see the innovative research and projects. This conference was an inspiring reminder to continue learning in order to do better for the clients and families we serve."

A special thank you to Dell Whelan for generously sponsoring part of the costs for our team's continuing education. Support like this enables us to invest in our team's growth and professional development, which, in turn, strengthens the quality of care we provide.

MUSIC THERAPY SOCIAL

Every month, the harmonious duo Josh Denny-Keys and Jenny Gilmour host our very own Music Therapy Social – an event where patients, their families, and our staff come together to enjoy the healing power of music.

These sessions are not only therapeutic but also a wonderful opportunity for everyone to connect and create lasting memories.

Adding an extra touch of warmth to one of our recent events was Feivel, Josh's dog, who never fails to bring smiles to everyone's faces.

A special thank you to *Music Heals* and our donors for generously sponsoring part of the costs of our music programs.

We invite you to join us at our next Music Therapy Social and witness the magic of music in action.



Pictured: Josh, Jenny, and Feivel

**CREATE A LEGACY OF
COMPASSION:
SUPPORT VANCOUVER
HOSPICE SOCIETY**

At Vancouver Hospice Society, we believe that no one should face their final moments alone or in discomfort. Every day, we're dedicated to providing compassionate, personalized care to patients and families navigating one of life's most challenging journeys. But we can't continue this vital work without **you**.

A Lasting Legacy of Compassion

One of the most profound ways to support Vancouver Hospice Society is through Legacy Giving. By including the hospice in your estate plans, you're not only extending comfort and dignity to those in need today, but also securing a future where end-of-life care will be available for generations to come. Legacy Giving allows you to leave a meaningful mark on the community, helping us continue to provide music therapy, grief counseling, and tranquil spaces that comfort patients and their families. With Legacy Giving, your impact lives on, ensuring that no one must face their final journey alone.

Monthly Giving for Immediate Support

For those who wish to make a difference now, joining as a Monthly Donor is another wonderful way to support our mission. With a recurring gift of as little as \$25 a month, you'll enable us to meet urgent needs and provide continuous, compassionate care to those we serve.



Both Legacy Giving and Monthly Giving are essential to the future of Vancouver Hospice Society and our ability to provide care when it's needed most.

Join us in leaving a legacy of compassion. Visit vancouverhospice.org to learn more, start your Legacy Giving plan, or become a Monthly Donor today.

Thank you for standing with us and helping create a compassionate future.


Sarah Cobb
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR


David Gruber
BOARD CHAIR

Yes! I want to help: ☐ Monthly ☐ One-time ☐ \$100.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ Cheque or money order enclosed (payable to Vancouver Hospice Society for one-time gift)

Credit Card: ☐  ☐  ☐ 

Cardholder Name: _____

Please print as it appears on your credit card

Credit Card #																Expiry:				
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Signature: _____

CVV:

(Amex is 4 digits)

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Yes, I would like to receive emails from Vancouver Hospice including e-newsletters, event invites, updates, and reminders.

☐ Please send me information about leaving a gift in my Will

Vancouver Hospice Society, 4615 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3M1 - you can also donate online at vancouverhospice.org