

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Celebrating a year of Growth and Innovation





OUR VISION AND MISSION



We enrich the quality of lives, no matter how short.

We meet the unique palliative care needs of infants, children, youth and their families. We lead by advocating, advancing clinical care and family support, and learning through research and knowledge sharing.



Annual Report 2023-2024

| RogerNeilsonChildrensHospice.ca

Land Acknowledgment



Roger Neilson Children's Hospice is located in Ottawa, Ontario, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe People.

We respect the traditional knowledge and healing developed over generations.

We reflect on Indigenous peoples and their ancestors' relationship with this land for thousands of years.



The past twelve months have been a transformative year

for Roger Neilson Children's Hospice, marked by unprecedented growth, innovation, and unwavering dedication to providing the highest standard of care in a nurturing and compassionate environment.

Drawing on the collective efforts of our dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters, we enhanced our services and facility. We deepened our connection with the community, all while staying true to our mission of delivering exceptional, family-centred care.

As we do every year, Roger Neilson Children's Hospice continued its unwavering commitment to providing exceptional care and support to infants, children, youth, and families with life-limiting illnesses.

So many memorable events and highlights were part of our year, with a few that particularly stood out for us.



Megan Wright
Executive Director



Ian Hendry
Chair, Board of Directors



OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

In January, we received up to \$1 million in funding from the Government of Canada's Health Canada department to initiate a cross-Canada project to advance equitable access to pediatric palliative care.

This two-year project will establish an online bilingual resource hub to support healthcare professionals, organizations, and communities in delivering high-quality care to children and families wherever they prefer.

Over the year, our team has continued to review our grief services. Our review involves a comprehensive evaluation of the grief support programs that we provide to families who have experienced the death of a child. It aims to assess the effectiveness of current services, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies to enhance support for grieving families.

The primary goal has been to ensure that families receive the best possible, evidence-informed support during their most challenging times.

Our entire team has been grateful for the ongoing support and engagement of our Family Advisory Committee through consultation and feedback on grief support.

A new Supporting Young Grievors online workshop for parents and caregivers is an exciting byproduct of the grief services reviewed. This free community resource will assist and equip adults who support young



OUR YEAR IN REVIEW



people coping with the death of a loved one. In the meantime, we continue our efforts to review and augment our grief services.

In the spring, we received the fantastic news that we had received permanent funding for two additional beds, increasing our total to 10!

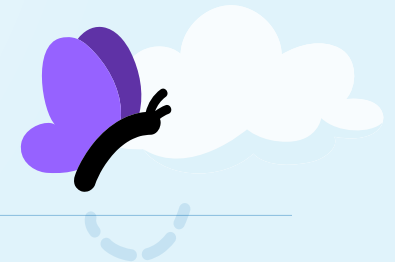
This funding will allow us to care for more children and strengthen community support.

We also proudly unveiled our new name, Roger Neilson Children's Hospice, and brand identity, which reflect our legacy of compassionate care and leadership in children's hospice palliative care. At the same

time, we launched a brand new website! We invite you to [visit us virtually](#) through our new website to discover our essential work and the vital services we provide.

We remain unwavering in our mission to meet the unique palliative care needs of newborns, children, youth, and families and enrich the quality of lives, no matter how short. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our staff, board of directors, volunteers, donors, and community partners.

Together, we can continue to make a profound difference in the lives of the newborns, children, youth, and families we proudly serve.



Marking a year of building a bigger and more diverse volunteer team.

In 2023-24, we continued our recruitment efforts and were successful in significantly increasing our volunteer team.

Each volunteer that we have recruited has brought their own set of skills, passion and experience. We are so proud that our new Roger Neilson Children's Hospice volunteers have continued to reflect diversity on our team, including with regard to age, language, gender, culture, education and professional backgrounds. Our team of

dedicated volunteers contributes greatly to the welcoming and inclusive care that Roger Neilson Children's Hospice offers every single day.

One of my favourite parts of my job is to check-in with volunteers. I am always interested to learn from them how we



Bruno Perrier
Manager, Community Engagement
and Volunteer Relations



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

can continually improve the volunteer experience. It is also always so heart-warming to hear how they feel valued and appreciated and how volunteering at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice is an experience like no other.

Volunteers feel energized and deeply touched by all the wonderful things that happen at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice and are well supported and appreciated as valued members of the broader team.

It brings us great joy knowing that volunteers feel this way and that they see just how much we appreciate them. Roger Neilson Children's Hospice just would not be the warm and friendly environment it is without them!

We were fortunate to continue our partnership with the Volunteer Advisory Committee under Ann Gordon's leadership.

Volunteers at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice make many things possible, from warm hellos at the front door to the smell of fresh-baked cookies, lively games and singalongs, smiles, laughter, precious memories and legacy-building.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

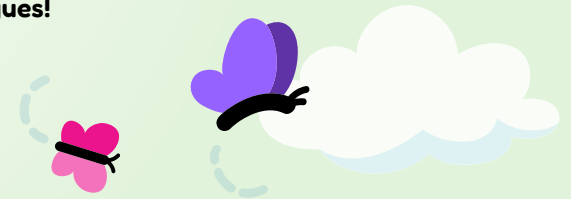


Members of the committee care deeply about their fellow volunteers, and during meetings, they actively engage in discussions to find creative ways to enhance the volunteer experience and engagement.

One of the projects that we brought to fruition was the implementation of an in-person orientation. We have transitioned some of the orientation content from online to an in-person format. This was an opportunity for new volunteers to meet one another, to learn interactively, and to ask questions. They were right! We now have a few orientation sessions under our belt, and the feedback has been great! One of the highlights of the session

is having an existing volunteer share their experience, answer questions, and ease some worries that new volunteers may have. This year we have continued to offer professional development opportunities to volunteers. Not only are volunteers completing the mandatory training to help prepare them for their roles, but we also invite them to attend a broad range of educational workshops on various topics, such as wellness, palliative care, grief, and many others. It is always so valuable to have volunteers join with other team members, both because it enhances their skills and knowledge and it also enriches discussions.

We are looking forward to continuing to work alongside our incredible volunteer colleagues!



We are continuing to create an invaluable link between volunteers and management.

2023-24 was another productive year for the Volunteer Advisory Committee, and we have continued to value our strong partnership with staff and leadership in essential aspects of the volunteer experience.

Our committee also saw some changes in membership in the last year, with some members stepping down from their roles, some due to changing circumstances or relocation. We have had some members move

on to other endeavours, such as medical school, and our team continues to recruit more members to round things out. Communication is vital for volunteers and remains a strong priority for the Committee.

During our fall meeting, we held a breakout session that generated great ideas for improving communications, particularly with new staff members.

Ideas for improving communications included identifying Roger Neilson Children's Hospice's strengths, pinpointing areas for improvement, determining the volunteers' most pressing needs, finding the best ways to communicate with volunteers, and suggesting improvements.



VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Some implemented improvements include reminding new staff to introduce themselves to reception and reinforcing the volunteer absence protocol to ensure all staff know who is available during a particular shift.

The Volunteer Advisory Committee also provided feedback on the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity work plan. Our committee was happy to have the opportunity to contribute to this significant work, which will ensure that Roger Neilson Children's Hospice is a welcoming place for all.

We continued our work with the new volunteer orientation program, emphasizing making it fun and interactive for everyone and allowing recruits to get to know other volunteers as they are on-boarded.

The committee produced a list of FAQ's for the website. Questions focussed on enhancing interest in becoming a volunteer at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice to show how we provide a positive experience for a volunteer in many roles and to understand the vital role of volunteers.



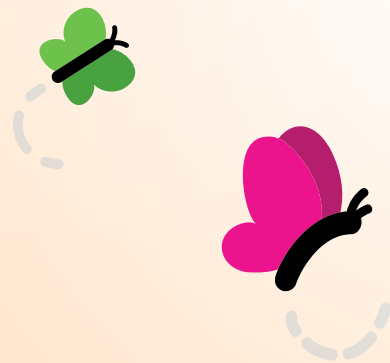
VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Topics included the scope of volunteer training, what it's like to work in such an environment, "what's in it for me," what kind of contributions I can make to the children and responsible volunteering.

We are proud that the Volunteer Advisory Committee continues to provide a vital link between volunteers and leadership at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice.



The central purpose of the Volunteer Advisory Committee is to connect volunteers to the staff and leadership team at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice, enhancing the volunteer experience. This key committee allows volunteers to add their voices and opinions to training, support, recognition, and more topics.



Ann Gordon
Chair, Volunteer Advisory
Committee





We thank our past members and welcome our latest recruits.

This year, the Family Advisory Committee (FAC) welcomed some new members, while others stepped down at the end of their term.

We are very thankful for the contributions of our previous members as we welcomed the latest insight from our recruits. We had a second wonderful year with Chloe Benoit as our Chair. The Family Advisory Committee met virtually and in person this year.

At our regular meetings, we were fortunate to have many fulsome discussions related to

activities, initiatives, and changes that Roger Neilson Children's Hospice (RNCH) was undertaking. We worked collaboratively with stakeholders from the different projects to provide feedback and suggestions.

At the beginning of the year, the FAC developed a work plan with four main goals.





Goal 1:

Provide input and advice on aspects of RNCH services and programs.

**Pediatric Hospice
Palliative Care Programs**



To achieve this goal, FAC had dynamic discussions and provided input into several programs and initiatives that RNCH was designing or implementing. Presenters came to discuss the Grief Services Review, and our social work colleagues inquired how we could facilitate the promotion of support

**Family & Caregiver
Programs**



groups and eliminate barriers to attendance. We provided input into the 2024 summer camp planning with the RNCH Recreational Therapy Team.

We also reviewed the recent Transition to Adult Care Information Session, provided

**Memory Making & Legacy
Building Programs**



Perinatal Programs



Grief Support Programs



feedback on what went well, and offered suggestions for future sessions and ideas on this topic. We invited the leadership members from the new Health Canada Grant to discuss their new project and responded to questions they had about involving families with the initiative.





Goal 2:

Engage and participate in RNCH quality improvement initiatives.

RNCH had a number of improvement initiatives that our FAC contributed feedback on. FAC reviewed and provided input on the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity work plan. We also met to discuss RNCH's evolving partnership with the Ottawa Art Gallery and provided feedback on RNCH's new website and branding.

Goal 3:

Recruit, engage, and maintain membership for FAC

It was important to our group to ensure that the timing and alignment of meetings worked for the majority of group members and also that there was a solid system in place to communicate messages from the meetings if a member could not attend. We did polls and surveys to determine and create an approach that worked for the majority. Most meetings were well attended and allowed for excellent dialog and contribution!

Goal 4:

Provide input on opportunities for family engagement at RNCH

To achieve this goal we had a very holistic brainstorming discussion with RNCH leadership to help identify different ways families could become more involved in RNCH initiatives. FAC provided a fresh perspective with innovative ideas



Aileen Blakeney,
Staff Family Advisory
Committee Liaison

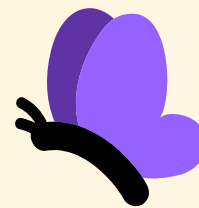


By the numbers

Category	All Time	2023-2024
Days of care provided to children	39,759	
Number of individual children cared for	647	
Number of children cared for during end of life.	288	
Volunteer Hours		230,000
Days of care		2,473
Number of counselling		2,128
Total admissions		460
Symptom management admissions		178
Children served		100



Board and committees



Children's Hospice

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ian Hendry (Chair)
Michelle Bouchard (Vice Chair)
Celine Fu (Treasurer)
Robert Houston (Secretary)
Mike Lupiano (Past Chair)
Alexa Brewer (Director)
Dr. David Creery (Director)
Paul Lalonde (Director)
Brian Morris (Director)
Megan Wallace (Director)
Janet Wilson (Director)
Megan Wright
(Ex-officio Director)
Caitlin Neil (Community Liaison)

FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chloe Benoit (Chair)
Lillian Kitcher (Family Member)
Caroline Signorini
(Family Member)
Linda Tabet (Family Member)
Pamela Emery (Family Member)
Julie Jewett (Family Member)
Glorianne Pelletier
(Family Member)
Christian Araujo
(Family Member)
Melissa Tourangeau
(Family Member)
Christine Wing
(Volunteer FAC Liaison)

Doogie Dick
(Volunteer - Recorder)
Aileen Blakeney
(Staff FAC Liaison)
Stephani Poirier
(Leadership Representative)

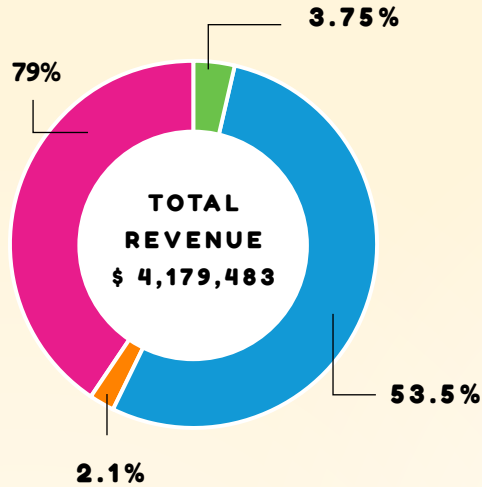


VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ann Gordon (Chair)
Julia Caswell
Greg Forman
Giselle Joseph
Rachel Parent
Cathy Parker
Doogie Dick
Villana Murray
Ali Abdalbari
Clare Pearson

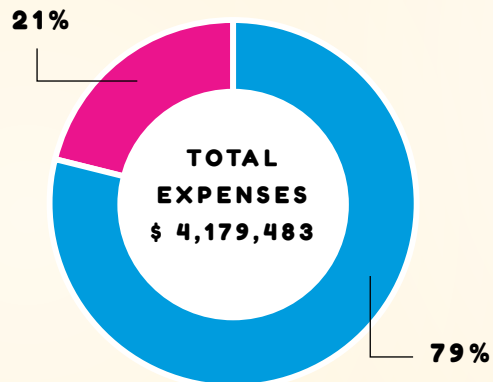


FINANCIAL REPORT



- CHEO Foundation and Other Funding Sources
\$ 1,700,690
- Ministry of Health
\$ 2,232,177

- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
\$ 157,500
- Health Canada
\$ 89,116



- Staffing and Benefits
\$ 3,298,604

- Operating Costs
\$ 880,879



FAMILY, STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

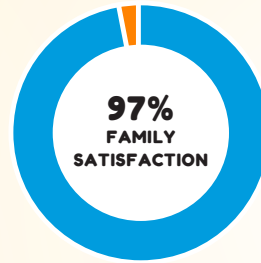
Satisfaction Rates

	2017	2024	Biggest Improvement Area
Family Satisfaction Rates	89.6%	93%	Visiting Home Hospice + 19%
Staff Satisfaction Rates	79.1%	76.5%	Pay & Benefits + 4.8%
Volunteer Satisfaction Rates	89.6%	89.1%	Health & Safety + 5.7%

Response Rates

	2017	2024
Staff Response Rates	73.5%	80%
Volunteer Response Rates	69.3%	67.5%

Satisfaction with Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



TOP FAMILY THEMES:

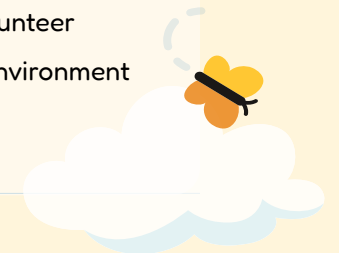
1. Amazing staff and facility
2. Gratitude for help during the most difficult times

TOP STAFF THEMES:

1. Supportive colleagues and environment
2. Living our mission and values

TOP VOLUNTEER THEMES:

1. An amazing place to volunteer
2. Supportive and caring environment





Help us enrich young lives, no matter how short.

When you donate to Roger Neilson Children's Hospice, your generosity and impact are felt in many ways, from purchasing equipment and technology to funding programs and services not covered by government funding. Without donor support, many of the things we do for children and families would not be possible. With your help, we can deliver the highest pediatric hospice palliative care and family support possible.

[RogerNeilsonChildrensHospice.ca /ways-to-give](https://RogerNeilsonChildrensHospice.ca/ways-to-give)

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