



Message from the Executive Director

As we welcome another season of activity and renewal, we are reminded of the profound importance of community.

This past year, the Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County has continued its mission of helping to provide comfort and dignity to those facing end-of-life challenges - whether in Hospice, at An Cala, in long-term care, hospital or in the familiarity of one's own home.

Thanks to your generous support we have been able to expand our outreach, strengthen our partnerships and help improve the lives of individuals and families across Cape Breton.

From our expanded music therapy program to the continued support of the annual Memorial Service, we continue to respond to the needs of our community with compassion and care.

In this issue, we take a closer look at the people, programs and volunteers that make our work possible. We shine a spotlight on the team members whose passion drives our mission forward and share updates on the initiatives shaping our future.

***Thank you for being an essential
part of our Circle of Caring.***

Warm regards,
W. Corrie Stewart
Executive Director

Meet Meaghan Jackson: A Heartfelt Voice in Hospice Care

Grief is a universal experience, and music has long been one of the ways Cape Bretoners have navigated it together. Meaghan Jackson, a certified music therapist and registered counselling therapist, brings that understanding to her work as part of the Hospice Palliative Care Society's team.

With nearly two decades of experience in palliative and grief care, Meaghan has developed a deeply humanistic approach. "I strive to meet the unique needs of everyone I work with," she says.

Meaghan's work spans a variety of community settings, offering both individual and group-based grief support. In the Community Grief Choir, participants come together to express their grief through singing and songwriting, building connection and resilience in the process. In the Grief Relaxation Group, music-based relaxation techniques help regulate the nervous system and ground the body and mind.

"I support grieving individuals and families through a variety of music therapy programs," Meaghan explains. "We have a long history on this Island of using music to express grief and come together in community. These programs continue that tradition."

Meaghan's work with children and youth also stands out. "Play is a huge part of how I support grieving children. We often use art, songwriting, and even Minecraft-based play to help them process their experiences and remember their loved ones," she says.



While music therapy work like songwriting is a central part of her practice, what matters most to Meaghan is the sense of shared understanding that music can offer.

"What I wish is that more people understood grief isn't something we get over," she shares. "It's something we carry- and it's easier when we carry it together. Music helps us do that. It reminds people they're not alone."

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A Space of Comfort – The An Cala Palliative Care Unit

Since 2008, the An Cala Palliative Care Unit at the Cape Breton Hospital has provided a peaceful, supportive environment for patients and families facing end-of-life care. Created with nearly \$1 million in funding from the Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County, An Cala has served our community for over 16 years with dignity and compassion.

Today, the Society is proud to invest in a significant refresh of the unit. We've committed \$225,000 to update the large family room and kitchen, replace furniture, blinds, and artwork in all nine patient rooms, and enhance several common areas. These updates will ensure that An Cala continues to reflect the comfort and quality of care we aim to support.

Friends of Charity: Championing Comfort and Care at An Cala

At the heart of every community-driven initiative are the people who believe in its purpose. The Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County is proud to recognize the Friends of Charity for their extraordinary support of our An Cala Refresh project.

Led by Joe Guillena and Ray Doucet, this dedicated group of community-minded individuals operates bingo games at Membertou Entertainment Centre, donating all net proceeds to local charities. Their generosity continues to touch lives across Cape Breton.

Their impact includes:

\$100,000 donated to the Hospice Build Campaign

\$60,000 donated to the An Cala Refresh (Family Room & Kitchen renovation)

Ongoing support to the Salvation Army Food Bank, Loaves & Fishes, Christmas Cheer, and more

Thanks to their generosity, the Family Room and Kitchen—the heart of An Cala's gathering space—has undergone a complete transformation, ensuring that patients and families have a warm and welcoming space to share meals, gather quietly and find comfort during difficult times.

Kitchen Renovation Spotlight: A Warm, Refreshed Gathering Space

The refreshed kitchen and family room feature new cabinetry, countertops, a central island, pantry space and a new range. All furniture has been replaced, and new artwork will soon be installed to create a calming, home-like space for families to rest, reflect and reconnect.

A Season of Caring and Connection

From our annual Together We Care Golf Tournament to Strawberry Teas, our dedicated volunteers have been busy. We held our 26th Together We Care Golf Tournament on June 20th at Bell Bay Golf Club. The tournament was a tremendous success and this would not have been possible without the dedicated work of 42 volunteers. Under the leadership of Golf Committee Chair, Herb Martell, the committee and course volunteers delivered an event which many consider to be the best charity golf tournament of the year.

The Sunflower Choir, a brainchild of our music therapist, Jill Murphy, is a group of 11 volunteers. The Sunflowers have been busy these past few months. They were a special guest of the Second Wind Community Band during its annual concert in support of our music therapy program, they entertained players and spectators during the Palliative Care Service Softball Tournament and their voices enhanced the experience of the Strawberry Tea held in the hospice garden.

Our volunteer bakers, patient visitors and others came together to host strawberry teas at An Cala and hospice. Patients, their families and staff were treated to delicious strawberry shortcake and, of course, tea. The strawberry tea at An Cala created a terrific atmosphere for the grand reopening of the An Cala kitchen and family room.

Volunteers can share their time and gifts with many organizations. We are very grateful that so many choose to selflessly support the work we do.





How You Can Help - Carrying the Circle Forward

At the Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County, our mission is rooted in dignity, comfort and community. Every contribution, whether a donation, a shared memory or a helping hand, helps us to continue to surround individuals and families with the support they need at some of life's most vulnerable moments.

Your generosity ensures that services like grief and bereavement support, music therapy, community outreach and comfort care items remain available at no cost to those who need them. Together, we can continue to build a compassionate Cape Breton where no one journeys alone.

Ways to Give

Online: Donate securely at www.hospicecapebreton.org
Contact Us: Call (902) 567-8584 or email us at admin@hospicecapebreton.org

Donations are also welcomed at the Hospice Cape Breton office at 6 Charles Herney Awti Street (adjacent to Terry Way) in Sydney or through regular mail at:
P.O Box 561, Sydney, Nova Scotia B1P 6H4



☐ Yes, I would like to make a donation to the Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County

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