

Care for the Caregiver



Grande Prairie Hospice Palliative Care Society



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When you care for a loved one with an advanced illness you are doing a remarkable thing, but you are also taking on a challenging role. We're here to help.

GPHPCS is not only here to support your loved one, we're also here for you. We'll provide you with information, resources, encouragement, and spiritual and emotional support. Remember, you are not walking this journey alone, we're right here next to you. We can provide helpful resources that can support you and give you the information you need to provide care.

A common misconception is that deciding to accept hospice means giving up hope. Hospice does not mean giving up hope, it means changing the focus from aggressive disease treatment to providing quality of life, comfort and care for your loved one. Through this focus, many hospice residents improve and some may even find that they no longer require hospice care. Hospice can also bring your loved one a greater sense of control.

Self-Care for Caregivers

As your loved one is your main concern right now, it is important for you to take care of yourself as well. With that in mind, we are sharing a few tips:

- **Eat three meals a day.** It may be hard to eat if your loved one cannot, but remind yourself of why you need to eat - you need to stay strong.
- **Get adequate rest.** Some chores might not get done or there may be someone who would help if you let them know how. Can someone else shop for groceries or sweep up? It is important to realize you can't do everything, and that's okay. Let others help.
- **Get outside for a few minutes every day.** Twenty minutes in the fresh air will do wonders for your mood. You will return to your loved one refreshed.
- **Find some type for recreation.** If you have a hobby, try to do it at least twice a week. See a movie, bowl, golf - do something different each week.
- **Speak honestly about how you are feeling.** Good or bad, it helps to let another person know what you are thinking and feeling. Choose a person who makes you feel safe. Support is what you need right now.
- **Sometimes you need a break.** There may be times when caring for your loved one is too overwhelming. Ask your Care team about caregiver support options

Resources - Caregiver

Learn how to take care of your loved one, and yourself

[Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association](#)

Resources for professionals, volunteers, and caregivers.

[Living Lessons](#)

Research on family caregiving in palliative and end-of-life care.

[Canadian Virtual Hospice](#)

Information and support on palliative and end-of-life care, loss and grief.

[Start the Conversation About End of Life Care](#)

Learn about Advanced Care Planning, why it is important, and how to start the discussion.

[Advance Care Planning Guide Alberta](#)

Provides valuable information for seniors on making choices about personal care including health care, food, living arrangements, clothing, hygiene and safety. It also provides sources of further information and a list of important contacts seniors should know about.

Resources – Grief

We know searching the internet for information can be overwhelming. We're here to help. Below is a list of resources you may find helpful:

[MyGrief.ca: Because losing someone is hard](#)

Tools to help you understand grief and work through some of the difficult issues you may be facing.

[How do I get through this?](#)

The stages, symptoms, and supports for your grief.

[How Grief Can Make you Sick](#)

Losing a loved one is an emotionally painful experience that can have a significant impact on your mind and body.

[Canadian Virtual Hospice](#)

Information and support on palliative and end of life care, loss and grief.

[Bereaved Families Online Support Centre](#)

Provides compassionate non-denominational mutual aid support for families and individuals who have lost a significant person to death.

[What Do I Do Now?](#)

A resource guide for persons who have lost a loved one.

[Sault Area Hospital](#)

Crisis Services are available to you and your loved one. This is a confidential crisis counselling service. If you live in Sault Ste. Marie, please call (705) 759-3398. If you reside in the outlying areas of the Algoma District, please call 1-800-721-0077.

[Good Life. Good Death. Good Grief](#)

What to do if someone you know is bereaved.

[Dealing with Family Conflicts After the Death of a Parent](#)

Helping adult children handle the planning of final arrangements and their own emotions while minimizing conflict amongst each other.

[Supporting a Child When Someone Dies](#)

Children can tell when adults are upset, so it's best to be honest with them about what's happened as soon as you can.