

Annual General Meeting

Spring 2024 – Winter 2025

our impact

our highlights

our goals

Annual General Meeting Report 2025

Organization Highlights

Highlights 2024-2025

- 1 Launched the first Young Caregivers Program in Nova Scotia
- 2 Canadian Centre of Caregiving Excellence (CCCE) released the National Caregiving Strategy, with input from Caregivers Nova Scotia and other caregiving organizations.
- 3 Created Nutrition video series for caregivers, released on our website and YouTube.
- 4 Joined Disability Partnership Network
- 5 Welcomed new staff and opened new positions

New/returning staff

Ana Merkureva – Communications Coordinator
Emily Gallant – Education Coordinator
Tomi Adesina – Social Prescription Project Coordinator
Ben Robertson – Outreach & Caregiver Support Coordinator for Eastern HRM
Nicole Byers – returned as Caregiver Support Coordinator for South Shore

By the numbers

2,680 support line calls
1,091 new caregivers accessing information
219 support groups
185 new caregivers joining support groups
34 Programs & Services presentations
17 in-person workshops

Looking forward

- 1 The Caregiver Handbook 4th edition
- 2 Social Prescription for Caregivers Project
- 3 Artful Connections Workshops
- 4 Caregiver Summit in Ottawa, Ontario

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Regional Highlights - Capital

Capital (Therese Henman-Phillips)

- 1 **Growing Community.** Approximately 104 new caregivers joined the region. 241 people attended support groups.
- 2 **Workshop highlights.** Hosted my first Understanding Dementia workshop and the RBC presentation for working caregivers.
- 3 **New facility.** Toured the West Bedford Transition Facility.
- 4 **Outreach.** Presented to 80+ medical professionals at the Geriatric Rounds with JoAnne. Hosted Programs & Services in Sackville, Bedford United Church, Comforting Companions. Assisted with facilitation of several mini-workshops.

Capital (JoAnne Connors)

- 1 **Spryfield Support Group.** Seeing how this group has grown gives me a sense of joy and satisfaction. Always lively, very huggy (as they call themselves), extremely understanding and supportive. They travel together through challenges of their caregiving journeys. Sometimes, it's the only place where they can share their experiences honestly – it's not always easy to share with family/friends. At Christmas time, without any prompting or planning, several members brought baked goods and one, dressed up as an angel, gave gifts.
- 2 **Caregiver kindness.** We have one caregiver who will periodically stop into the office and bring us flowers and treats in support of all the work we do. This kindness is a very special gift, it's nice to be seen in the often challenging work we do.
- 3 **Community connections.** I've been connecting with Constituency Assistants in my region. One new CA became a great community partner, working together to support caregivers and locate interpreters in our newcomer community.

I've been visiting a queer bookshop that has been vandalized, to offer support and bringing rack cards, business cards and information about Caregivers NS on their health shelf. I've got a few referrals from this shop, planning to offer a Programs & Services workshop there.

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Regional Highlights - Valley, Northern

Valley (Jennine Wilson)

- 1 Caregiver connections.** The continued honour to witness how beautifully caregivers support and hold space for each other in support groups. Growing caregiver connections. Building relationships with newcomers through international cafes, immigration and community fairs, international potlucks and newcomer choir.
- 2 Events and community partners.** I enjoy participating in Senior Safety academies, ASNS connection events, community senior expos and hospice societies amongst just a few. I've met with so many community partners, working together towards making our communities a place of belonging for all.
- 3 Potential new group.** Exploring the possibility of starting a new SG in Lawrencetown.
- 4 Rewarding teamwork.** It's a joy to work with a compassionate and talented ever-growing team.

Northern (Leanne Taylor)

- 1 Support groups.** Between May 2024 and April 2025, we successfully hosted 55 in-person peer support groups and 3 online support groups in my region. The in-person groups were more engaging than online ones. 23 new caregivers joined the support groups this year.
- 2 Workshops.** Facilitated two Understanding Dementia Behaviors workshops and one Advance Care Planning workshop, in Westville, Advocate Harbour and Parrsboro.
- 3 Support line.** Received 295 phone calls with new and existing caregivers, as well as seniors seeking assistance with finding services or support.
- 4 Event highlights.** Participated in the 4th Annual Freedom March in June 2024 in Shubenacadie. This significant event, coordinated by Sipkekane'katik First Nation, followed a route from the former residential school site to the river park near the old train station. Hosted a booth at the health fair in Millbrook in May 2024.

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Regional Highlights - South Shore, Cape Breton

South Shore (Sheila Landry)

1

Growing team. When I started about a year and a half ago, we were a small but mighty group of 9 people. It's been amazing to watch that number grow due to new initiatives and outreach.

2

Temporary position. In March 2025, I was hired for a term position. I feel so blessed to be able to continue being a part of CNS, working on the Social Prescription Project.

3

Educational highlight. Attended the Dementia-Understanding the Journey Course back in March. This powerful course gave me a new lens to look through and provided me with more tools to support dementia caregivers.

Cape Breton (Lyn Stuart)

This past year has come with its share of challenges, both in life and in work. Supporting caregivers through uncertainty, isolation and heartbreak is not easy, especially as a 'double duty caregiver', but it is deeply important. What has kept me going are the voices of the caregivers I've had the privilege to support. Their words have been more than feedback or thanks; they've been reminders of the power of connection and the quiet impact of simply being there.

One caregiver shared: "...**I've been doing well, too, since our call.** I think just the knowledge that there's this support out there has helped tremendously. Previously I felt overwhelmed from feeling like I had to carry everything on my shoulders, but it's good to know that some of that is getting alleviated. Also, we suddenly have a bunch of her appointments coming up thanks to you so we should be getting answers soon as to her condition...**Thanks again for everything you've done to help.** I know we only spoke on the phone a bit, but it's made a big difference for me."

Another wrote: "Lyn, I can't thank you & praise you enough for the compassion & knowledge you share with those who struggle with that curve ball. You have a gift that changes the world for people. **You listen! You affirm! You guide! You make yourself available!** You were there for me & for others. God bless you & those you help."

And then, in the most straightforward and moving way: "I'm realizing something that exists now that didn't before we spoke; it's hope."

These messages reflect the heart of what we do at Caregivers Nova Scotia. They speak to the difference that kindness and understanding can make in someone's life and are a call to keep showing up—for caregivers, for their families and for the hope that grows when people feel seen, heard and supported.