

### Introduction

North Grenville is a caring community. Building on this strength, we align ourselves with the international public health palliative care movement known as Compassionate Communities. In these communities talk of illness, advance care planning, dying, caregiving, and grieving is no longer taboo; it is accepted and creates a healthy setting for asking for, offering, and receiving help. Compassionate Community- North Grenville, in consultation with local, regional, national and international leaders and resources created a Charter which sets out nine aspirations for what our community can accomplish in the coming years. It is an evergreen document, that will develop and shift with our growing community.

### What is Compassion?

We respond with a shared humanity and kindness to each person's pain, distress and need. We look for the things we can do, however small you think they may be, to give comfort and relief. We have time for those we support and work alongside. We do not wait to be asked, because we already care.<sup>1</sup>

### What is a Compassionate Community?

- Compassionate Communities grow connectedness and compassion, working together, to create a supportive environment for those in need.
- Compassionate Communities is a practice that openly encourages, supports and celebrates caring for each other, especially at those times associated with life threatening or life limiting illness, chronic disability, being a carer, frailty, ageing, dementia, dying and grief.
- Compassion is the community's responsibility, that's me, you, all individuals, families, peers, neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools, health services, government, faith based, voluntary and other organisations and services.<sup>1</sup>

### Why a Compassionate Community?

- Compassionate communities help people to live their best lives.
- Death is not just a medical event, it is a social, relational and spiritual process that involves more than the health services system.<sup>2</sup>
- 95% of the care of the dying is done by your family and support network. Less than 5% of total care is provided by health care services.<sup>3</sup>
- Compassionate Communities are a resource for fostering public awareness of palliative care.<sup>4</sup>

### Regional Context

- North Grenville is an amalgamation of the three former townships of Oxford on Rideau, South Gower, and Kemptville.
- North Grenville's population is predominantly rural. 67% of the population lives in rural areas and 33% of the population lives within the urban service area of Kemptville.<sup>5</sup>
- North Grenville's population has grown more quickly than many parts of Canada. Between 2016 and 2021, North Grenville's population increased 9.2% whereas Canada's population increased 5.2%.<sup>6</sup>
- North Grenville's population trends show growth among individuals in the 25-39 age group as well as faster rates of population growth among people over the age of 55, with the fastest growing age category being over 65 years of age.<sup>5</sup>

### Land Acknowledgement

Compassionate Community North Grenville operates on the territory of the Anishnabek. We recognize all First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples who now call North Grenville their home. We respect and support the need for cultivating a strong relationship, and we commit to Indigenous-informed decision making to foster the path towards reconciliation.

### Vision

North Grenville is a compassionate community that nurtures and supports compassion and connection as we live, die, grieve, and care for each other.<sup>1</sup>

### Mission

Our mission is to foster a compassionate and inclusive community that embraces the full journey of life, illness, death, caring and bereavement. We are dedicated to helping normalize and destigmatize these universal experiences through sharing stories.<sup>7</sup>

### Values

- Compassion is inclusive and diverse
- How we do things is as important as what we do
- We work in partnership to build communities and networks
- We respect the individual and their choices
- We approach our work with openness and curiosity
- Cultural humility guides our conversations, engagement, and decision-making. Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection and discovery to understand oneself and then others in order to build honest and trustworthy relationships.<sup>8</sup>

### Charter for Compassionate North Grenville

We aspire towards:

1. Policies and guidelines that are reflective of compassionate community values regarding caregiving, dying, and grieving are in place in our:
  - a. Schools
  - b. Workplaces/Unions
  - c. Residential facilities (long-term care homes, retirement homes, shelters, prisons)
2. Supporting faith communities that have designated individuals or care teams for the care of caregivers, dying, and grieving people
3. Arts centres/galleries/historical societies organize annual exhibits, murals, or events featuring living well, dying well, caregiving and grieving
4. An annual memorial event to mark the loss of those who have died due to illness or accidents
5. A short-story or art competition that helps raise awareness of living well, dying well, caregiving, and grieving
6. An annual award, given by the Mayor and Council to an individual or group in North Grenville which demonstrates creativity in compassionate care and is consistent with the mission of Compassionate North Grenville
7. A collaborative relationship with our Municipality, working together to promote compassionate community programs, services, public events, education and funding opportunities that address the mission of Compassionate North Grenville.
8. Supporting communities that engage in activities for those who experience caregiving, dying, and grieving
9. Annual reviews of these aspirations with the intention of expanding the scope of compassion throughout North Grenville. This is a living document which will be revised as needed.

Adapted from Julian Abel & Allan Kellehear's 2021, The Compassionate City: A Charter of Actions<sup>9</sup>

## References

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