

NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2024

# Inspiring Journeys



## WELCOME

Every day, I hear incredible stories of recovery and healing, I see the impact of your gifts, and the dedication of our staff and volunteers. It gives me hope - hope for new discoveries and a future where everyone has the support they need, when they need it.

Welcome to *Inspiring Journeys*, our new bi-annual newsletter for donors. You make a difference in the lives of so many people. We want to share some of their journeys with you and highlight the impact you are having.

Twice a year, in the Spring and Fall, we will gather stories from patients, volunteers, community partners, staff and donors, and send them to you in a newsletter. The newsletter will also provide mental health resources and information.

Please, share these stories and our newsletter with your friends and family. We also hope you will reach out to us with ideas and questions. We value your voice and want to share the stories and information that matter to you most.

I look forward to walking this journey with you.

With sincerest gratitude,

Dr. Nadiya Sunderji  
President & CEO



# Breakthroughs in Mental Health

The 2023 Shine the Light event raised more than \$151,000 for the Breakthrough Fund. With the help of this Fund, we are placing patient voices at the heart of our research and undertaking exciting, groundbreaking work. We are also integrating research across the hospital and in community services, bringing new discoveries and information to patients seamlessly.

Some of our recent projects include:

- Providing preventative mental health **support for youth**
- Using digital tools and AI to identify patients at risk and intervene earlier to make care safer
- **Supporting survivors of intimate partner violence** and building safer communities
- Bridging gaps in the mental health system and supporting Emergency Departments to **reduce wait times**

These are just a few examples of our recent projects. We are also in the preliminary stages of developing and launching a robust clinical trials program at Waypoint.

These projects happen because of research grants and because of people like you, who donate.

With the generosity of individuals, corporations and foundations, we are able to break new ground and be innovative. We cannot do this alone.

This work is making a difference. With your help, new research, and evolving clinical support, we are helping people like Sean. Here is a glimpse into Sean's journey.

I have been to multiple treatment centres and then I found Georgianwood at Waypoint. The nurses were incredible, unbelievable. The great thing about this program, I struggled with alcohol, opiates, and mental illness, but this program isn't just mental health and it isn't just addictions, they do a combination. They treat you like a person. They don't just brush things aside, a nurse will take the time to talk to you or play a game of cards with you. It's great.

People need help. Mental health and addictions, it's no joke.

*Sean Conlon,  
Mental Health Advocate & Former Patient*





# Youth Mental Health

## EARLY INTERVENTION IS VITAL, YOU ARE MAKING IT HAPPEN.

Our kids, grandkids, and youth across Canada faced significant psychological challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the face of this crisis, the investments made by donors like you made it possible for us to act fast and create a new online mental health program for youth-accessible even during lockdowns.

With your help we launched the *Preventative Online Mental Health Program for Youth*, an early intervention tool that helps youth at any point in their mental health journey.

Working proactively to foster the development of resiliency skills and coping techniques is better situating youth for improved long-term quality of life and mental well-being.

This program has been a remarkable success thanks to you, and we are delighted to share that the program is expanding once again, serving youth in schools in our region.

*“The conscious effort to allocate time for self-care provided a smidgen of control over the chaos of Covid for me. Recognizing that I had so little control over Covid, the things that I was able to control provided some relief and reassurance that I am able to change some things. It works.”*

*- S.A., Youth Participant*

*“These have been the hardest years of my life. Thank you for giving me a life-raft. I feel like I may actually be able to get through this.”*

*- C.R., Youth Participant*



# Hiking the Camino for mental health



## MAKING AN IMPACT ONE STEP AT A TIME

A thousand kilometres in 40 days. On foot. Through terrain that includes lush valleys, historic locales and stunning mountain vistas.

And all to benefit Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care.

Steve Parry, Vice-Chair of the Waypoint Board of Directors, set out March 13 from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, France, taking his first steps on the famed Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route through northern Spain.

"I spent the first half of my career carrying rocks up and down mountainsides," said the former geologist, whose doctor suggested he start walking more after developing heart problems in his 60s.

"It was a real epiphany," said the Tiny Township resident. "I'd forgotten how much my mental health relied on me being in the outdoors."

It was a natural fit, then, to turn his determination to walk the Camino into a fundraiser for Waypoint. For donations of \$100 or more (charitable tax receipts are available), supporters will receive a handmade zipper toggle that Parry will wear for a day along the Camino. He will personally match all donations up to \$1,000 in total.

His goal for the 35-day journey is the holy city of Santiago de Compostela. But that won't be the end; he'll walk another five days to Cape Finisterre on the Atlantic Ocean for good measure.

"My hope would be that others associated with Waypoint would say, 'That's a great idea,' and it becomes an annual event and part of our culture."





# Hiking the Camino for mental health

The origins of the Camino date back to the year 812, when a shepherd dreamed that a shower of stars had shown him the burial site of the apostle St. James.

The discovery attracted pilgrims from all over the world, who visited via an ancient Roman road. Today, it is one of the most popular pilgrimage routes in the world; last year, more than 446,000 people completed the journey.

Joining that group will come with adversity – whether it's shin splints, blistered feet or inclement weather – but Parry is determined to overcome whatever obstacles arise. The good news is he won't have to face them alone.

"I'm very much looking forward to that 'Camino family' experience," he said, adding many peregrinos, as they are called, form lifelong bonds.

A [Walking for Mental Health Facebook page](#) has been set up so supporters can make a donation or follow his progress through pictures and videos.

"Walking your own Camino wherever you are, for your own mental health, is a great idea," Parry concluded. "When I come back, I plan to keep walking here in Tiny Township, and I'm hoping to see some of the folks who followed us along the way."

“This is such an extraordinary organization; I think anyone would feel compelled to help an organization that is helping so many people in our community, so it was near and dear to my heart,”

- Steve Parry

To **show your support for Steve** on his journey, [donate](#) in support of mental health and addiction care.





# A Legacy Grows

## Waypoint Volunteer Association

The Waypoint Volunteer Association has dedicated decades to the advancement of mental health care, and to enhancing the lives of Waypoint patients. In addition to being one of the hospital's original donors, its members selflessly contribute their time, effort, and expertise to bolster the hospital's operations and uplift its community. Whether they are offering a comforting presence to patients, running the gift shop or organizing fundraising events, the tireless commitment of these volunteers is remarkable.

Since the launch of the fundraising program, the Volunteer Association has raised more than \$175,000 for mental health and addiction care. Adding to their past contributions, the Volunteer Association launched a new staff 50/50 draw that will provide an additional \$60,000+ annually to further support patients. It is an honour to have the support of such an inspiring group of people.

“The Waypoint Volunteer Association has a strong tradition of giving, not just with their time but financially as well. They are so pleased to be able to support the important work of the Hospital through their retail operations and other fundraising efforts like the staff 50/50 lottery. The success of these endeavours has allowed their giving to grow and has allowed them to commit to annual funding to patient programming and contribute to hospital equipment purchases such as ECT monitors and tread mills for patients.

The Volunteer Association promotes the greater understanding of mental illness through community awareness and they actively raise funds to be used to enhance the quality of life for patients/clients of Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care.

*-Diane Desroches , Volunteer Coordinator*



# Welcoming a new **Director of Philanthropy**



## GREETINGS FROM CINDY

I am honoured to be joining Waypoint as Director of Philanthropy at this exciting time for the organization. In this new role, I will be leading the fundraising strategy and play a pivotal role in spearheading endeavours to elevate philanthropic relationships and activities in support of Waypoint's exciting priorities.

It is a great privilege to have spent more than 30 years as a professional fundraiser with previous roles at Indspire (a national charity focused on Indigenous education), the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the Ontario Science Centre and OCAD University.

As a resident of Collingwood, I am thrilled to now be serving our region by building on existing relationships with our incredible supporters and forging new ones to connect donors to a cause they're passionate about that will make vital change happen in mental health and addictions care for those who need it most.

There is an amazing team of staff and volunteers here at Waypoint and I am grateful to be serving with them. I look forward to working with you as well to fulfill Waypoint's vision to change lives by leading the advancement and delivery of compassionate care. Waypoint is making extraordinary strides in improving the lives of those living with mental health issues and addictions. Your support for this important work will help transform care for our patients, families and communities.

If you any questions about giving to support mental health in our region or ideas and suggestions to share, please always feel free to reach out to me at [cball@waypointcentre.ca](mailto:cball@waypointcentre.ca) or 705-549-3181, ext. 2869.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy".

Cindy Ball, CFRE  
Director of Philanthropy



# Information & Resources

## For Your Mental Health

- [Support Friends and Family - The 5 Golden Rules](#)
- [Mental Health Support Services](#)

## Events

- Mental Health in Motion - May 10, 2024 @ 11:30 - 3:00 (Community Health Hub)
- Smilezone Grand Opening - May 21, 2024 @ 10:00 a.m. (Community Health Hub)
- Annual Report to the Community - June 7, 2024 @ 1:30 p.m. (Waypoint Auditorium)

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## WAYPOINT FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM

**Cindy Ball**, CFRE - Director of Philanthropy  
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**Holly Archer** - Senior Development Officer - Major Gifts  
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**Shelly Price** - Development Officer - Special Events and Administration  
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**Rebecca St. Amant** - Communications and Fund Development Assistant  
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Charitable Registration No. 838367027RR0001

