



2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT



Megan Wright  
Executive Director

## REFLECTIONS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR

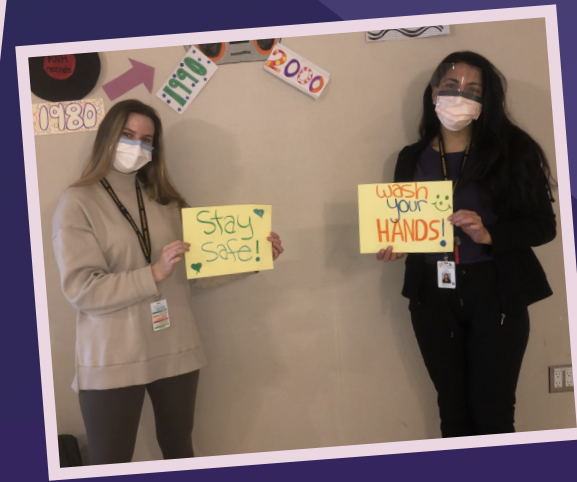
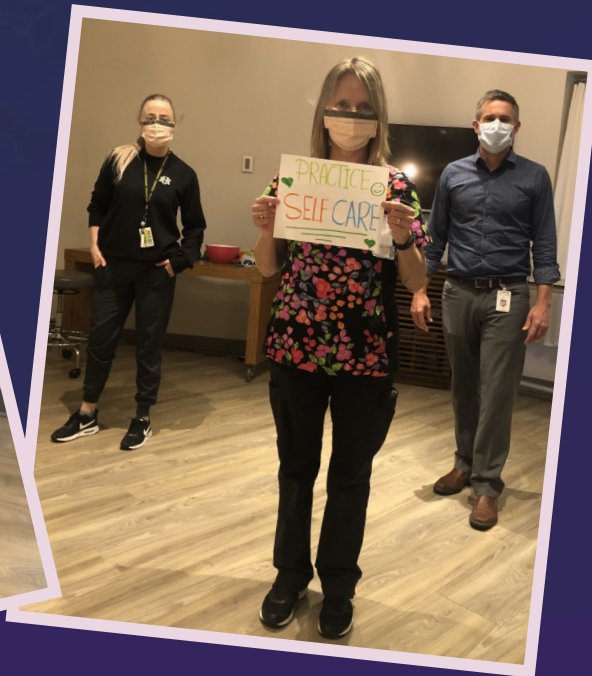
Reflecting on the past year, we are simply amazed at what we have overcome together as a team. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to look at how we can provide our programs and services in new and innovative ways. We are so grateful to have been involved in so many new initiatives to support the children and families we serve. Although we were required to suspend some activities in the House, we have remained open and available for our patients and their families in many other ways. We are honoured to share with you, in this annual report, many of the highlights from the past year that showcase the tremendous work we have accomplished.



Mike Lupiano  
Chair  
Board of Directors

Firstly, we must thank our talented team members who were swift to respond when the pandemic began, and who have remained so nimble as directives have changed. Our team pivoted very quickly to continue to meet the unique palliative care needs of our newborns, children, youth, and families in new and innovative ways. Every day they stepped up to provide exceptional care despite the major shift in how that was done. Their commitment to ensuring our kids live their best lives never wavered and for that we could not be more proud. Unfortunately, almost all of our volunteer activities have been suspended since the start of the pandemic, and the absence of our volunteers in the House is palpable. We miss our amazing volunteer team greatly and cannot wait for the day when we can welcome them back.

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As members of the Kids Come First Ontario Health Team, we worked alongside the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) and Bayshore HealthCare Solutions Ltd. to provide a temporary, In-Home Respite Program to families of children and youth with medically complex needs. Additionally, in response to the reduced availability of supports during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Emergency On-Site Respite program was designed and implemented by CHEO's Community Based Operations Team in collaboration with Roger Neilson House (RNH) and an active parent partner. Our goal for this program was to provide some immediate and temporary relief to the families of medically complex children by providing nursing care during a much needed respite visit. This service was available until usual respite supports in the community were gradually reintroduced.

In the summer of 2020, in lieu of offering RNH summer camp, which was canceled due to COVID-19 regulations and precautions, the RNH Recreation Therapy team developed and offered an extremely well-received weekly 'Picnic in the Park Series' for our families. These picnics provided an opportunity for everyone to enjoy the sunshine and company of their RNH friends while safely participating in some fun picnic activities.

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In November 2020, we were very proud to unveil the newly designed Louise Birkett Krapf and Rolf Krapf Playroom. Our deepest thanks go out to all of our parent partners and team members who provided their input, and to the Roger Neilson House Legacy Committee for their commitment to this very special and sensitive project. The end result is a beautiful and inviting playroom that is being enjoyed now by the children and youth who visit the House. A video featuring the new playroom is available on our website for everyone to enjoy!



In the spring of 2021 Roger Neilson House collaborated with CHEO to plan and deliver a series of Covid-19 vaccine clinics for high and highest-risk patients and caregivers. Due to the hard work of many staff and volunteers, the clinics were organized swiftly and efficiently, and we were able to immunize many patients and their caregivers. This important work has been extended to a partnership with the Kids Come First Ontario Health Team and Ottawa Public Health for the implementation of vaccine clinics for all youth aged 12-17 in Ottawa!



Looking ahead to 2021 we are very excited to proudly celebrate Roger Neilson House's fifteenth anniversary with our community. We are looking forward toward the future and all of the new challenges that will present themselves. Our commitment to our community is unwavering, as we continue to innovate and find new and exciting ways to provide them with much needed programs and services. The upcoming year will be full of hope as we look to the return of on-site programs, our beloved volunteer team, and to once again all be working on-site safely together. We are well positioned to be adaptable and flexible, while continuing to provide care for children, youth and families in need.

Our important work could not be done without the commitment and support of our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, community partners, and most importantly our families, and for that we are forever grateful. Finally, we must express our deep gratitude towards our donors. It is because of community support that we are able to continue to improve how we care for our kids and to support families dealing with the most devastating of situations. We remain committed to enriching the quality of lives, no matter how short.



## FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)

The Family Advisory Committee continued to meet virtually this past year, despite the ongoing pandemic. While our meetings were less frequent, they were productive and proved to be valuable touchpoints for the committee.

Follow up with the Safety Review Committee was an important agenda item for the FAC that was addressed early in the year. RNH continues to prepare for a revamp of the 'visitor processes' in response to suggestions from the Safety Review Board.

In February Dr. Vadeboncoeur joined the FAC meeting to provide a research update on both ongoing and completed studies.

The 2021-2022 Quality Improvement Plan was presented to the FAC for discussion in April. Nancy Graham provided an overview of the Plan and invited the committee to share with her and the leadership team what the substance of the Plan meant to them as families.



The FAC was also asked for feedback on a Respite Support presentation by Nahal Yazdani. The committee's familiarity with this particular service allowed them to provide constructive responses to questions around the need for respite support at RNH, in the wider community and the sustainability of existing services.

Cont'...



A positive highlight from this spring was the opening of the new playroom! The project lead, Cait Neil, pressed on to move the renovation forward in spite of numerous challenges. The result is outstanding. A significant element in the room is the 'new' legacy star wall. Each hand blown glass star beautifully represents the uniqueness, beauty and precious attributes of our children. The space incorporates this reflective element with an overall fun and whimsical design that kids and staff are now able to use and enjoy. If you would like to see the result of the transformation, the official online opening can be viewed on the RNH website!

A majority of this year's agenda items were inevitably related to the pandemic. The committee received and responded to regular updates on items such as COVID screening, vaccine process for staff, status of visiting home hospice and the pending return of volunteers.



A recurring issue for both committee members and the leadership team was ensuring that children and families continued to receive support during this incredibly stressful time. A notable item for discussion was the perspective of families concerning experiences and preferences regarding virtual care versus in-person care.

It is our hope that we will reach a point soon where the focus of our discussions will return to programming for the kids, and how we can safely meet again as a community!

Kimberley Waara  
Chairperson

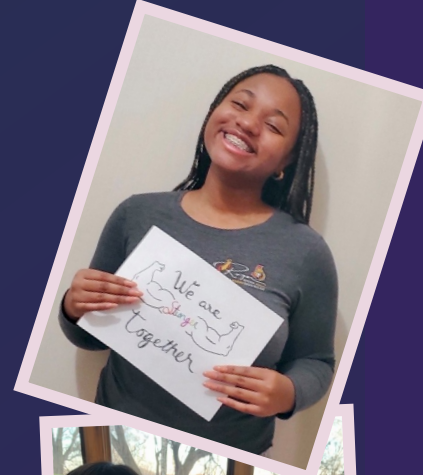


## VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (VAC)

Beginning in March 2020, given the COVID-19 pandemic, VAC in-person meetings, National Volunteer Week celebrations and a number of other programs and services offered by RNH were put on hold in order to help keep everyone safe and minimize the chance of transmission of infection during these unprecedented times. As such, the VAC continued to meet virtually on an 'as-needed' basis throughout the past year. There were ongoing conversations around what the gradual re-entry of the in-person volunteer program might look like including the introduction of new safety guidelines that may be necessary to continue to ensure the safety of our guests. Time was also dedicated to discussions and reviews of the 2020-21 Work Plan in terms of what could be realistically achieved and what needed to be put on hold for the time being. The key goal was to ensure that tabled VAC Work Plan items could move forward efficiently and effectively post-pandemic. Modified key objectives for 2020-2021 included:

- \* On-going professional development for volunteers
- \* Creation of a formal volunteer communication strategy
- \* Maintaining bereavement support as an objective for monitoring purposes
- \* Development of standardized tools for volunteer orientation, training and mentorship
- \* Fostering collaboration between the VAC and the Family Advisory Committee (FAC)
- \* Virtual volunteer engagement and eventual post-pandemic reintegration to in-person activities

Cont'...





One of the primary goals of the VAC was to develop ways to honour long time RNH volunteer and valued VAC member, Mac Hiltz who passed away on October 17th, 2020. A very special award, to be presented annually, was created to honor the legacy and memory of Mac. Recipients will be chosen via peer nomination to honour outstanding RNH volunteers who, just like Mac, demonstrate an undeniable purpose of making RNH a better place for kids, families and fellow team members. The first Mac Hiltz Outstanding Volunteer Award was presented to Aurora Riveros in recognition of her dedication, loving care of the children and families we serve, and her kind support to all those on the RNH team. A special reading nook and bookshelf will also be established in a cozy corner of RNH to further continue and celebrate Mac's incredible legacy.



Last, but definitely not least, we offer our most sincere gratitude to RNH's Administrative and Leadership teams who went above and beyond in keeping volunteers feeling engaged, respected, well-informed and valued - no small feat, especially as it has all had to be done virtually! As members of the VAC, and more broadly as part of the incredible *one strong team* of staff and volunteers at RNH, we sincerely look forward to the day when we can all be together again in person to continue our work to enrich the quality of lives of the children and families we are so honoured to serve.

Please stay safe and well everyone!

Carole Brulé  
Chair

Christine Grace  
Co-Chair



## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteers have been at the heart of RNH's life essentially from our very beginning. However, as a result of the pandemic, we had to put our in-house volunteer services on hold, which left an enormous void. Simply put, we missed our volunteer colleagues incredibly! We heard from so many staff and families just how much they are looking forward to having volunteers by their side again. We do greatly appreciate how volunteers are playing their part in keeping guests, families and staff safe by staying home.

The good news is that we absolutely continued to feel the volunteers' presence and support. Many of them shared beautiful messages of encouragement, while others treated staff with tasty baked goods. For a short time while the province was under a stay-at-home order, and with all the safety precautions in place, a few volunteers came to the House for maintenance work, meal preparation and decorating for the Holidays. It was absolutely lovely to see them. The volunteers consistently stayed connected by attending virtual check-ins where they could receive up-to-date information and they took that opportunity to express words of support to staff, kids and families. They also continued to engage and provide the volunteer perspective on various committees and working groups, such as the Wellness Team and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary planning committee.



Fortunately, volunteers who provide memory-making and legacy-building support were able to pursue their work from home. Volunteer artists continued to draw hand-made cards while others made beautiful memory boxes for families to keep cherished photos and other items. Still others continued to create incredible memory-quilts for families. One parent commented just how comforting it is for her to wrap herself in her quilt, made of her child's preferred clothing and blankets. Finally, when asked, one of our volunteer photographers continued to come to the House to take end-of life pictures, which are so precious to families. Cont'...



Over the past year, RNH social worker Sarah Allan-Wiseman and myself, co-leads for the Parent Matching Program, conducted a review of the program, to ensure that volunteer parents continue to be adequately screened, trained, supported and matched. This program matches parents who are further along on their bereavement path with newly bereaved parents. It has offered valuable support to parents and has been a great complement to our social work's counseling services. These parent volunteers provide the opportunity to talk with someone who's had a similar experience. After meeting with a volunteer parent, one newly bereaved mom commented how it gave her a good perspective on what she needed to do and that she felt less alone. We are incredibly grateful to our volunteer parents who donate their precious time to be a listening ear to other parents.

During the pandemic, we have continued to partner with the Volunteer Advisory

Committee and as always, we have been able to count on their valuable insight and perspective. Although we met virtually and less frequently, we were still able to get their timely advice on important matters, such as safety considerations and training needs in preparation for an eventual and gradual reintroduction of our volunteer services.

On a final note, sadly, one of our longstanding volunteers, Mac Hiltz, died in October 2020. He was an incredible person and a passionate volunteer who helped make RNH a better place in many ways for kids, families and colleagues. As a tribute to his many contributions, the Mac Hiltz Outstanding Volunteer Award was created, in close consultation with the VAC, staff, and a youth and parent who knew Mac particularly well. Each year, nominations will be accepted from kids, families, volunteers and staff and the award will be presented to the most deserving volunteer during volunteer appreciation week. This year, it was an immense pleasure to present the award to Aurora Riveros, an incredibly dedicated, caring and committed volunteer!



Bruno Perrier  
Manager  
Community Engagement and Volunteer Relations



## 2020-21 BY THE NUMBERS

77 CHILDREN SERVED

1,643 DAYS OF CARE PROVIDED

3,736 COUNSELLING VISITS

541 VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED

56% OCCUPANCY

13 DEATHS

293 TOTAL ADMISSIONS:

- \* 189 SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT
- \* 2 TRANSITION
- \* 87 RESPITE

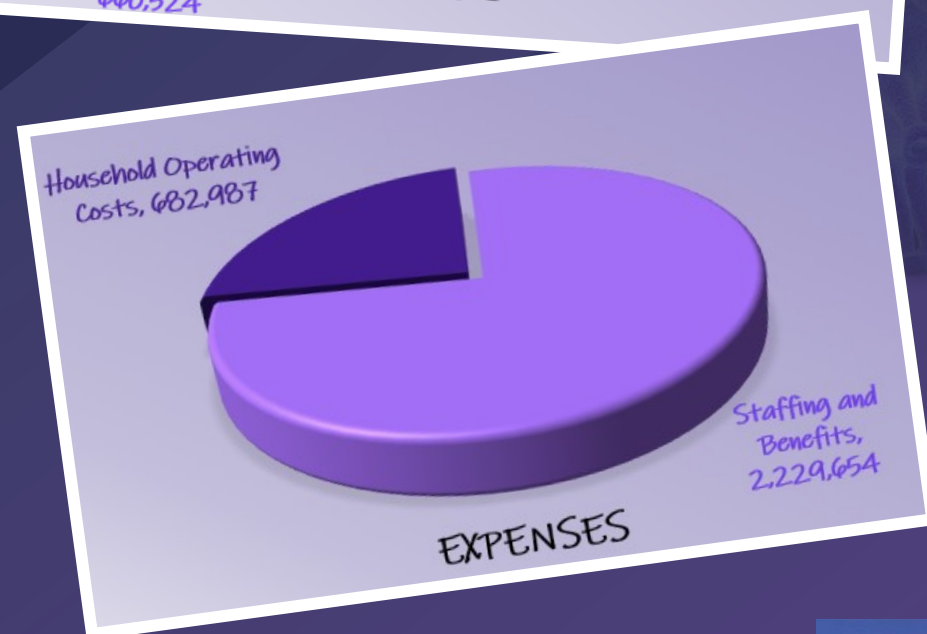
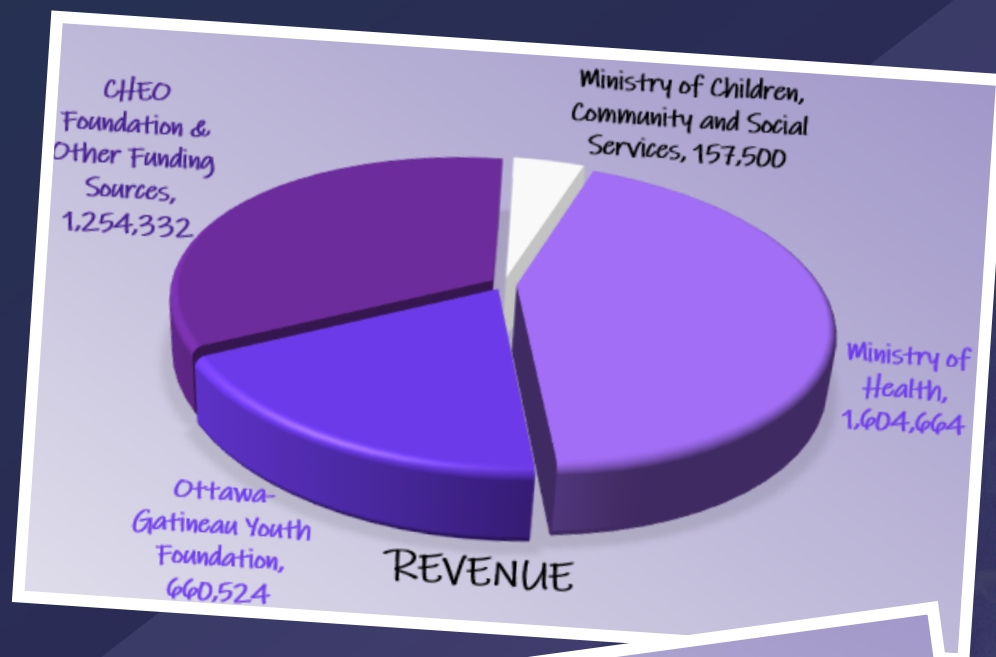
## SINCE OPENING IN 2006

532 CHILDREN CARED FOR

33,540 DAYS OF CARE PROVIDED

252 CHILDREN RECEIVED END-OF-LIFE CARE

216,115 VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED



## FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2020-21)

Kimberley Waara, Chair  
Ashlee Barbeau, Secretary  
Anne Jones, Admissions & Care Coordinator  
Beatriz Alvarez, Child & Family Support Volunteer  
Bertran Labonté, Parent  
Bruno Perrier, Manager  
Community Engagement & Volunteer Relations  
Caroline Signorini, Parent  
Chloe Benoit, Parent  
David Bell, Parent  
Emma Gofton, Parent  
Helen Yoxon, Manager  
Kristy Bedard, Parent  
Lillian Kitcher, Parent  
Megan Wright, Executive Director  
Nahal Yazdani, Manager  
Richard Ouimet, Parent  
Yara Saikaly, Parent



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2020-21)

Mike Lupiano, Chair  
Ian Hendry, Vice-Chair  
Les Bell, Past Chair  
Jeff Polowin, Secretary  
Michelle Bouchard, Treasurer  
Alexa Brewer, Director  
Monique Lugli, Director  
Caitlin Neil, Director  
Dr. David Creery, Director  
Janet Wilson, Director  
Paul Lalonde, Director  
Robert Houston, Director  
Brad Weir, Ex-officio Director  
Jacqueline Belsito, Ex-officio Director  
Megan Wright, Ex-officio Director

## VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2020-21)

Carole Brule, Chair, Child and Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Christine Grace, Vice Chair, Reception Volunteer  
Ann Gordon, Kitchen Volunteer  
Brenden Spano-Osborne, Child & Family Support Volunteer  
Bruno Perrier, Manager, Community Engagement & Volunteer Relations  
Carinna Moyes, Child & Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Clare Pearson, Child & Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Francine Boucher, Child & Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Jennie Wilson, Administrative Assistant, Community Engagement & Volunteer Relations  
Joann Zimmerling, Personal Support Worker  
Leah Bradley, Recreation Therapist  
Liz Kelly, Reception Volunteer  
Mac Hiltz, Child & Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Michael Baskey, Child & Family Support Volunteer  
Sarah Khadij, Child & Family Support Volunteer  
Terry Moxness, Child & Family Support / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer  
Villana Murray, Reception / Visiting Home Hospice Volunteer



## ADMINISTRATIVE / SUPPORT STAFF (Current)

Megan Wright, Executive Director  
Chris Vadeboncoeur MD, Medical Director  
Helen Yoxon, Manager  
Bruno Perrier, Manager,  
Community Engagement and Volunteer Relations  
Nahal Yazdani, Manager  
Sonja Marshall, Coordinator, Strategic Projects & Governance  
Jennie Wilson, Administrative Assistant,  
Community Engagement and Volunteer Relations  
Caitlin Neil, Legacy Project Coordinator  
Ashitta Chawla, Project Coordinator

Amy Cameron, Screener / Housekeeper / Receptionist  
Brandon Morgan, Screener  
Caleb Debruyn, Screener  
Harrison White, Bookkeeper  
Katherine Robotham, Screener  
Mattie Wright, Screener / Housekeeper / Receptionist  
Rebecca Hall, Screener  
Riley McKenzie, Screener / Housekeeper / Receptionist  
Shokufeh Modanloo, Research Assistant  
Sofie Marshall, Screener  
Vanessa Kissner, Housekeeper / Receptionist  
Xavia Goyette, Housekeeper / Receptionist

## CLINICAL STAFF (Current)

Addison Yeomans, PSW  
Anne Jones, Admissions and Care Coordinator  
Ashley Astle, Personal Support Worker  
Carinne Moreau, Personal Support Worker  
Carleigh Sanders, RPN  
Carol Openshaw, Social Worker  
Celine De Rubeis, RN  
Chris Vadeboncoeur, MD, Medical Director  
Courtney Potvin, RPN  
Danielle Hanley, RN  
Danielle Scarlett, Recreation Therapist  
David Ricciardelli, RN  
Dawn Davies, MD  
Emily Fullarton, RN  
Hassan Almahdi, RPN  
Jackie Davis, RPN  
Jaimie Ford, RPN  
Jen Tung, RPN  
Jennifer Quinn, RPN  
Joann Zimmerling, Personal Support Worker  
JoAnne MacNeil, RN  
Kaitlyn O'Connor, RPN  
Katt Brooks, Recreation Therapist  
Kelly Farrell, RPN  
Kirstin Neville, RN  
Krista Watters, RN

Laura Cardillo, RN  
Laura Roberts, RN  
Lauren Cavanagh, RN  
Leah Bradley, Recreation Therapist  
Lesley Sabourin, Educator / Perinatal Hospice Coordinator  
Lynn Grandmaison Dumond, Nurse Practitioner  
Mackenzie Torrey, PSW / Screener  
Madelena Arnone, Social Worker  
Mary Farnand, RN  
Maureen Merkley, RN  
Megan Doherty, MD  
Meghan Peirce, RN  
Monica Sevigny, RPN  
Nancy Graham, Quality Coordinator  
Nicole Buffam, RPN  
Olivia Lourenco, Recreation Therapy Assistant  
Sabrina Morin, RPN  
Sarah Allan-wiseman, Social Worker  
Stephanie Duffus, RN  
Stephanie Toll, RPN  
Stephanie Van Zanten, MD  
Virginia Meisner, RN  
Wendy Mihell, RN  
William (Bill) Splinter, MD  
Zandra Strnad, RN



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Canadian Pediatric Residential Hospice Network

Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO)

Volunteer Ottawa | Ontario Hospital Association