

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

# Enhancing Care and Enriching Lives






OUR VISION AND MISSION

# We enrich the quality of lives, no matter how short.


We meet the unique palliative care needs of infants, children, youth and their families. We lead by advocating, advancing clinical care and family support, and learning through research and knowledge sharing.




# Land Acknowledgment



Ottawa is located on the traditional, unceded territory of the Anishinàbe Algonquin Nation whose presence on Turtle Island reaches back to time immemorial. We are guests on this land and honour the past and ongoing contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis across Canada. Their culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land.



Roger Neilson Children's Hospice acknowledges ongoing injuries caused by colonialism and racism and their pervasive impact on Indigenous peoples and communities. We are a diverse community that values cultural humility, safety, and pluralism. We are committed to working towards repair and restoration. We recognize that healing happens through continuous learning. We respect our connections with others and the land upon which we live, work, and play.



## We continue to strengthen our programs and impact.

Over the year, we witnessed countless moments of connection, joy, and excellence in care. From kids going strawberry picking on our patio and decorating cookies with the Ottawa Senators, to our summer camps and memorial events – we help create lasting memories and sense of community alongside expert clinical care.

Every day, Roger Neilson Children's Hospice provides compassionate care, meaningful memories, and unwavering support to children with life-limiting illnesses and their families. In all the small and big moments, we honour each child and are grateful to families for entrusting us with their care.

This year has been one of exciting progress, building on our successes and focusing on enhancing our work.

Families are at the heart of everything we do at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice. Working closely with our Family Advisory Committee (FAC), we continue to enhance our programs and services based on their insights.



**Megan Wright**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Michelle Bouchard**  
Chair, Board of Directors



## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

To enhance the experience of children and their families, we have planned upgrades to our guest rooms to improve comfort and functionality, which will be completed in 2026. We also incorporated the feedback from our FAC to improve our family page on our website. The updated page offers clear, accessible information about our programs, services, and what to expect, helping families feel informed and supported from the start.

We are also exploring and piloting new approaches to strengthen our respite care program, ensuring it remains responsive, efficient, and aligned with family needs. This valued service provides families with the opportunity to rest and recharge, knowing their child is receiving compassionate, expert care.



Supporting families as their children transition from pediatric to adult care is an important and growing focus for us. For families reaching this milestone, it often involves navigating new systems and decisions that can feel overwhelming. Through conversations with our FAC, we have expanded our work to provide practical support and guidance. We have developed a curated collection of resources addressing key priorities along with new support groups.

We were so proud to have launched our first-ever young griever's weekend camp in June 2025, as part of our expanded grief services – now available to any young person who has experienced the loss of someone significant to them. The success of this new program, and the increase in referrals to our expanded grief services, reflects our impact and ability to meet this important community need.



We also strengthened our commitment to advancing pediatric palliative care through the development of a new research strategy, as well as our on-going support of Canada's Pediatric Palliative Care Alliance. Research, collaboration and knowledge-sharing have long been part of our work. Our new research strategy will help guide our efforts to improve care while also contributing to innovation and best practices in pediatric palliative care and grief services. By investing in research and greater collaboration, we are helping



## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

shape a future where children and families across Canada can access high-quality, compassionate care.

As we celebrate our accomplishments, we also recognize the extraordinary people who make them possible.

To our one strong team of staff and volunteers, thank you for your compassion and dedication. Every day, they provide exceptional care while bringing comfort, dignity, and joy to children and families navigating a life-limiting illness and the loss



of a loved one. Our team's individual and collective contributions enrich every aspect of our hospice and help create a supportive circle of care for families.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Christina Vadeboncoeur, as she marks 20 years of dedicated service to Roger Neilson Children's Hospice. Her leadership, expertise, and commitment have helped shape our organization and continue to influence the care we provide today. As she will retire from her medical director position at RNCH in 2026, we are incredibly grateful for her impact on our hospice and the field of pediatric palliative care.

To our donors, community partners, and supporters, thank you for believing in our mission. This generosity ensures that our services can be sustained and developed

further so we can continue to meet the needs of children and families in our community.

We are so grateful to mark 20 years of partnership with the Ottawa Senators. In January 2026, we celebrated the official naming of our kitchen to the Senators Foundation Kitchen, honouring this foundational partnership along with our community members and CHEO Foundation. These organizations are an integral part of our story, enabling us to provide specialized care during some of life's most challenging moments.



## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Looking ahead, we were thrilled to have launched our 20th anniversary campaign, celebrating two decades of care and community. Leading up to our anniversary and our community appreciation event on the Sens home rink, we are honouring the families, staff, volunteers, donors, community partners, and all those who helped build and sustain our work.

Their stories remind us that Roger Neilson Children's Hospice is truly a place built by community, for community.

As always, we remain focused on ensuring the long-term strength and sustainability of RNCH. Thanks to the thoughtful stewardship by our Board of Directors, clear strategic directions and meaningful community partnerships, we are able to meet today's needs while preparing for the future.

In the year ahead, we will continue to build on this momentum – expanding access, enhancing programs, and deepening partnerships. While the need for our services continues to grow, so too does our commitment to providing compassionate, high-quality care for every child and family we serve.

Thank you for joining us and supporting this important work.



# We are inspired by the remarkable generosity of our volunteers and their willingness to always go above and beyond.

**Their compassion, dedication, and generosity continue to have a profound impact on the children, youth, and families we support every day.**

Our volunteer program and the deeply meaningful contribution volunteers make at Roger Neilson Children's Hospice truly make a lasting difference for children and their families.

As the needs of RNCH continue to grow and evolve, so too does our volunteer program.

This year, we introduced a new volunteer role: the Connections and Circles Groups Volunteer. In collaboration with the psychosocial care team, these volunteers help prepare and support a variety of play-based and therapeutic group activities, including games, arts and crafts, music, storytelling, special guests, and more. Their presence helps create safe, welcoming, and joyful spaces where children, youth, and families can connect, express themselves, and simply enjoy meaningful moments together.

Volunteers also participated in our very first Young Grievors Camp, which was an incredible success.



**Bruno Perrier**  
Manager, Partnerships  
and Volunteer Services



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

Just as campers and staff described the experience as deeply meaningful and memorable, volunteers returned expressing overwhelming feelings of joy, pride, gratitude, and privilege for having been part of such a special experience.

Our Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) has remained engaged throughout the year, continuing to provide valuable insight and guidance on ways to maintain a strong, meaningful, and rewarding volunteer

experience. Discussions focused on the implementation of Better Impact, our new interactive volunteer management platform, as well as timely and accessible feedback mechanisms, wellness and support initiatives, recognition opportunities, and ongoing training needs.

**Their kindness, energy, and empathy helped create an environment where grieving children and youth could feel supported, understood, and free to be themselves.**



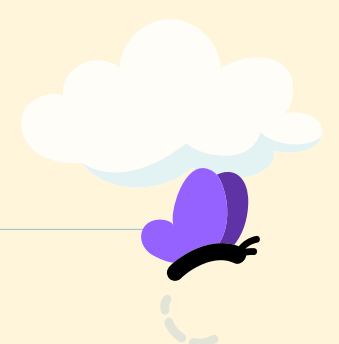
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER RELATIONS



We remain deeply grateful to our VAC members for their commitment, thoughtful perspectives, and dedication to continuously improving the volunteer experience and the support volunteers provide to the organization, guests, families, and the entire RNCH team.

Whether supporting special events, helping with unique projects, or simply offering their time wherever needed most, volunteers consistently show up with kindness, flexibility, and heart.

**Thank you to each and every volunteer for the extraordinary difference you make. Roger Neilson Children's Hospice would not be the same without you.**





## We are especially grateful for the meaningful contributions of our Family Advisory Committee members.

Over the past year, the Family Advisory Committee (FAC) played an important role in sharing valuable input to better support children and their caregivers at RNCH and in the community.

This year, our Family Advisory Committee (FAC) had an engaging and meaningful term under the leadership of our new Chair, Glorianne Pelletier. We were pleased to welcome a couple of new members to the committee, while also seeing a rewarding number of returning members continue to share their valuable perspectives and experiences. We also remained fortunate to have the ongoing support of our volunteer representatives.

In addition to FAC's ongoing role in providing input, insight, and feedback on various hospice initiatives and practices, this year we introduced educational opportunities for FAC members. These sessions helped provide greater understanding of behind-the-scenes functions of the hospice, as well as how different programs and initiatives work together to support the continued growth and advancement of hospice care.



FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

# Goal 1:

Provide input and advice on aspects of RNCH services and programs



Pediatric Hospice  
Palliative Care Programs



Family & Caregiver  
Programs



Memory Making & Legacy  
Building Programs



Perinatal Programs



Grief Support Programs



Committee members discussed the transition to adult care supports at RNCH. Members provided feedback on educational materials and identified opportunities to strengthen communication and connections between families.

The FAC also provided feedback on advocacy and system-level improvement efforts. Together with CHEO Home and Community Care, the FAC shared ideas and recommendations to help inform education materials and improve home-based care practices. Members also learned about and provided input on the work of the Kids Come First Home Care Working Group, helping to improve access to respite care.

The committee also shared feedback on the Canada's Pediatric Palliative Care Alliance website and resource hub, ensuring information is accessible, practical, and meaningful for families.





## Goal 2:

### Engage and participate in RNCH quality improvement initiatives

Family perspectives and feedback are vital to our quality improvement initiatives. The FAC received updates and provided input into the admissions process, identifying challenges and opportunities for greater efficiencies that were piloted and reviewed.

The committee also received an overview of the accreditation process for RNCH in 2025 and reviewed the results and recommendations. To close out this term, we are also excited to discuss how RNCH communicates and provide updates to families, with a focus on optimizing our communication methods.



## Goal 3:

### Education and Awareness for Committee Members

This year, members learned about the new research strategy at RNCH designed to strengthen a culture of research and improve services and the experiences of families. The Committee also received updates on an ongoing research study, including early themes emerging from family interviews. The FAC was able to ask questions and provide their feedback.

In addition, the committee learned about the diverse roles RNCH volunteers play both within the hospice and in the community. To further broaden the committee's understanding of pediatric palliative care, an overview programs offered in Ontario and Quebec were shared.

## Goal 4:

### Provide input on opportunities for family engagement at RNCH

Our social work team facilitated a collaborative discussion with the FAC to explore ideas for enhancing parent support groups. The committee shared valuable feedback and thoughtful suggestions on what would encourage attendance and participation.

The committee also provided helpful feedback for our website's dedicated family page, to ensure it meets the needs of families navigating our palliative care and grief services. Looking ahead, the committee will provide input on the family engagement framework and continue to look at ways to strengthen participation with families to ensure their voices remain central to the care and support we provide.



## Meeting children and families where they are in their grief journey.

Over the past year, Roger Neilson Children’s Hospice continued to expand and strengthen grief services to better support children, youth, caregivers and families navigating the death of someone important in their lives.

As community referrals continued to grow, RNCH grief services continued to expand programming for children, youth and caregivers grieving the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, peer or other significant person. As part of RNCH’s expanded grief services mandate, the spring of 2025 marked the launch of RNCH’s first-ever concurrent child and caregiver grief groups, allowing children and caregivers to receive support

alongside one another while participating in age-appropriate programming. Building on the success of the initial groups, participation and referrals continued to grow throughout the fall, reflecting the increasing need for accessible, family-centered grief support within the community.

This year also marked the continued growth of RNCH’s role in supporting communities following the death of a child.



**Carol Manseau**  
Psychosocial Care Leader



## GRIEF SERVICES

**“I really enjoyed this group and it made me feel better about grief.”**

- Young griever

Throughout the year, RNCH also continued offering a range of grief-focused programming for caregivers, grandparents and perinatal loss designed to meet families where they are in their grief journey.



A significant milestone this year was the launch of RNCH's first-ever Young Grievers Camp. The camp provided grieving children and youth with the opportunity to connect with peers who shared similar experiences through therapeutic recreation, memory-making, and grief-focused programming in a supportive and welcoming environment.

**“My child expresses her feelings more and feels more comfortable with others. Thank you.”**

-Caregiver of a grieving child



## GRIEF SERVICES



Grief services collaborated with schools and community partners to provide guidance, consultation and direct support following traumatic and unexpected child deaths. This included supporting children, caregivers, educators and communities impacted by loss, while helping to foster compassionate and trauma-informed responses during times of crisis.

In addition to direct clinical support, grief services increased community outreach and grief literacy education for healthcare providers, schools, and community organizations to help build confidence in supporting grieving children, youth, and families.

**“I cannot say enough good things about the grief services we have received. We feel that our time spent at RNCH is greatly impactful to our overall well-being.”**

-Family member



# By the numbers

Category	All Time	2024-2025	2025-2026
Number of days of care provided to children	45,171		
Number of individual children cared for	706		
Number of children cared for during end of life in hospice	316		
Number of volunteer hours		4,168	14,376
Number of days of care		2,611	2,801
Number of counselling visits		2,200	2,068
Total number of admissions		466	466
Number of symptom management admissions		165	148
Number of children served		112	112



# Building a future where every child with a serious illness and their family can access high-quality, family-centred pediatric palliative care in the location of their choice.

Canada's Pediatric Palliative Care Alliance was created to address the gaps in how care is delivered to Canadian children with serious illness and their families. By strengthening national coordination and collaboration, supporting the providers of pediatric palliative care (PPC), and fostering sustainable, system-level change, more children and families will be able to access the care they need.

October 2025 marked two major milestones for the Alliance with the launch of Canada's first bilingual Resource Hub and the inaugural Canadian Core Care Pathway for Pediatric Palliative Care.

The Hub contains more than 500 tools and resources designed to support the delivery of PPC across all phases of care. Since launching, the Hub has garnered the attention of over 11,000 users. In collaboration with partners across Canada, the Alliance launched the Core Care Pathway, a national roadmap for PPC. The pathway guides care from diagnosis through to bereavement, helping ensure all children and their families, receive equitable, consistent, and family-centred care.



**Kira Goodman**  
Project Director



## CANADA'S PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE ALLIANCE



Over the past year, the Alliance also strengthened collaboration within Canada's PPC community. Through communities of practice, online forums, and a national map of services and referral pathways, we are helping to improve knowledge sharing, coordination, and access to care.

To support the delivery of culturally safe and equitable care, the Alliance has focused on listening, collaborating, and amplifying the voices of equity-deserving groups.

The Alliance also worked in collaboration with our partners to raise awareness, influence policy, and advance equity through webinars, conference presentations, social media campaigns, and national standards work.

Our partnerships with Our Kids Health, Two Worlds Cancer Collaboration, CERAH, and others are helping to create a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system for seriously ill children and their families across Canada.

We are so grateful to the RNCH team members and families who have contributed to this work. Their insights, expertise, and experience have helped inform the Alliance's approach, research, and resource development. We deeply appreciate the ongoing support of Roger Neilson Children's Hospice in helping us build a future where every child with a serious illness and their family has access to high-quality, family-centred care, wherever they live.



## Together we celebrated the official naming of our Senators Foundation Kitchen

For more than two decades, the Ottawa Senators and the Senators Community Foundation have been steadfast partners of Roger Neilson Children's Hospice (RNCH), united by a shared commitment to ensuring that children with life-limiting illnesses – and their families – receive compassionate, high-quality care.

That enduring partnership was celebrated in a meaningful way with the official naming of the Senators Foundation Kitchen. At the hospice, the kitchen is far more than just a functional space – it is the heart of the house. It is where families gather to share meals, where siblings bake together, and where moments of connection and normalcy are nurtured during some of life's most difficult times. With future upgrades focused on accessibility and functionality, the newly named kitchen will continue to support families for years to come, creating an environment that is both welcoming and comforting.



## The Senators' impact on RNCH stretches back to the hospice's earliest days, helping to bring its vision to life and sustain its growth over 20 years.



This long-standing relationship reflects a deep-rooted belief in the importance of community and in ensuring that no family faces the challenges of navigating a child's life-limiting illness and grief alone.

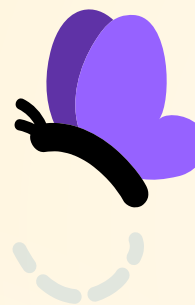
Today, that commitment continues to be felt in tangible ways – through enhanced spaces, expanded programs, and the ability to deliver both expert care and a home-like environment for children and families.

For 20 years, the Senators organization – players, staff and alumni – has embraced giving back as part of its culture, recognizing the power of sport to make a difference beyond the game. Through this partnership, that spirit of generosity has helped to ensure RNCH is a place where compassion, dignity, and care are at the forefront.

Together, the Ottawa Senators and Roger Neilson Children's Hospice continue to demonstrate what is possible when community and purpose come together – building not just spaces, but a lasting legacy of support for children and families across our region.



# Board and committees



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Michelle Bouchard** (Chair)  
**Mike Lupiano** (Vice Chair)  
**Celine Fu** (Treasurer)  
**Robert Houston** (Secretary)  
**Ian Hendry** (Past Chair)  
**Alexa Brewer** (Director)  
**Geneviève Chabot** (Director)  
**Dr. David Creery** (Director)  
**Patrick Goodhue** (Director)  
**Paul Lalonde** (Director)  
**Brian Morris** (Director)  
**Chris Packman** (Director)  
**Megan Wallace** (Director)  
**Janet Wilson** (Director)  
**Megan Wright**  
(Ex-officio Director)  
**Tammy DeGiovanni**  
(Ex-officio Director)  
**Steve Read** (Ex-officio Director)  
**Caitlin Neil** (Community Liaison)

## FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

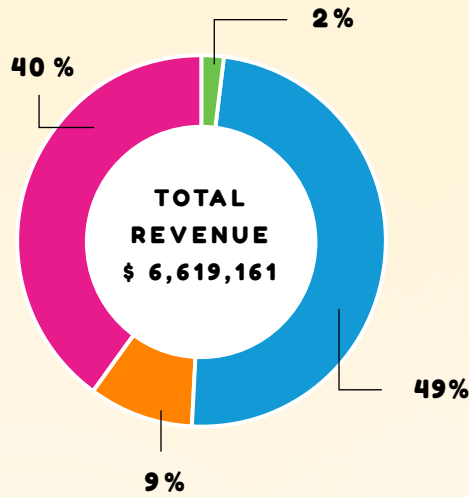
**Glorianne Pelletier** (Chair)  
**Christian Araujo** (Family Member)  
**Chloe Benoit** (Family Member)  
**Pamela Emery** (Family Member)  
**Andrea Gumpert** (Family Member)  
**Lillian Kitcher** (Family Member)  
**Maureen Rogerson** (Family Member)  
**Caroline Signorini** (Family Member)  
**Christine Wing** (Volunteer FAC Liaison)  
**Doogie Dick** (Volunteer - Recorder)  
**Aileen Blakeney** (Staff FAC Liaison)  
**Stephani Poirier** (Leadership Representative)

## VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Ann Gordon** (Chair)  
**Ali Abdalbari**  
**Faiz Ahmed**  
**Julia Caswell**  
**Doogie Dick**  
**Greg Forman**  
**Giselle Joseph**  
**Villana Murray**  
**Rachel Parent**  
**Cathy Parker**  
**Kim Rogers**  
**Kathy Tang**



## FINANCIAL REPORT

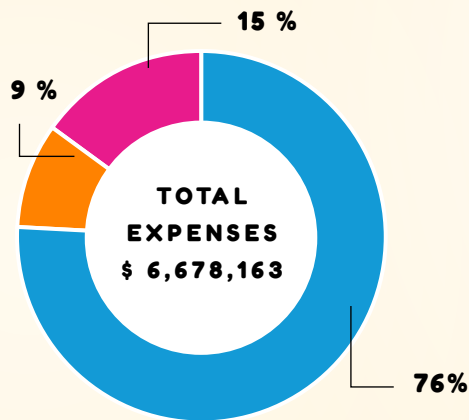


CHEO Foundation and Other Funding Sources  
\$ 3,241,027

Ministry of Health  
\$ 2,622,372

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services  
\$ 161,210

Health Canada  
\$ 594,552



Staffing and Benefits  
\$ 5,098,669

Operating Costs  
\$ 984,942

Health Canada  
\$ 594,552



## FAMILY, STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

### Survey Highlights

We are pleased to share some highlights from our annual family, staff, and volunteer survey. As part of our ongoing quality improvement initiatives, these insights reflect the voices of those who are at the heart of our care – families, dedicated staff, and compassionate volunteers. Their feedback helps us celebrate what we're doing well and guides us in making meaningful improvements so we can best serve children and their families.

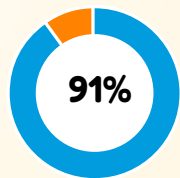
Family Satisfaction Rate	Staff Satisfaction Rate	Volunteer Satisfaction Rate
92%	74%	91%



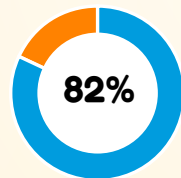
**“We are grateful to be heard as parents, and the expertise of the team has given us the gift of time and our child the gift of comfort.”** - Family response

**“I never dreamt of the level of commitment and care we received. Their continued support is so cherished in our home.”** - Family response

### Satisfaction with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



RNCH is welcoming and inclusive



See a commitment to EDI at RNCH





## Help us enrich young lives, no matter how short.

When you donate to Roger Neilson Children's Hospice, your generosity and impact are felt in many ways, from purchasing equipment and technology to funding programs and services not covered by government funding. Without donor support, many of the things we do for children and families would not be possible. With your help, we can deliver the highest pediatric hospice palliative care and family support possible.

[RogerNeilsonChildrensHospice.ca /ways-to-give](https://RogerNeilsonChildrensHospice.ca/ways-to-give)

### Contact Information:

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