

**Olds & District Hospice Society
2018 Annual General Meeting
President's Report**

'Helping people live until they die.'

To provide quality, compassionate care in a home-like setting for those facing death by offering physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual and educational support to individuals, their families and community at the end of life and during bereavement.

The ten year anniversary of the formalized Olds & District Hospice Society is still several years away but it is time to celebrate our 'informal' eleventh year anniversary. In 2007, five ladies in the community started meeting to talk about palliative care and, specifically, a hospice facility for the community. Shelley Bennett and Marion Kasawal were part of that group as well as the Society founding Board and they will be stepping away from the formal Board responsibilities while continuing in various supportive roles. It is time to celebrate the visionary dedication of those five that has brought us to where we are today.

After conducting a survey of the community, they discovered that others shared their interest in enhancing palliative care services. A lot of time and effort has been volunteered to see that:

- A palliative care information and resource center was established.
- Partnerships were established with other health care agencies.
- Awareness of the availability and significant benefits of quality palliative care was initiated.
- Volunteers were trained in palliative care, supported and available to serve.
- A hospice facility was available as required.
- Bereavement support was provided.

And, that these services and benefits were financially sustainable to be available in the future.

Our positive financial position results from the hard work of our Funding Development Committee which is an ongoing necessity. The increased awareness has resulted in support from the total community for which we are very grateful. And those who have used our services, which are at no cost, also recognize the need for financial stability. Due to a significant donation this year, we more than achieved our 2017/18 budget of \$148,000. Actual expenses were \$15,000 less than the budget; therefore, the increased revenues and expenses less than budget resulted in \$77,000 in excess income. \$109,000 was placed into our Capital Reserve account according to policy which now totals \$236,000.

The 2017 President's Report stated that the Board would be reviewing the timing and requirements for an Executive Director position. The need is there and, if not implemented fairly soon, there will be Board and Committee member 'burnout'. The 2018/19 budget includes a part-time Executive Director resulting in a total budget of \$182,000. This is a significant decision which the Board will approach with cautious optimism.

	Fiscal Year August 1/17 – July 31/18	Total from start-up to July 31/18	Total from start-up to Oct 31/18
Total clients served	48	242	250
Suite admissions	5	30	33
Length of stay	138 days	1,034 days	1,109 days
Requested suite but not admitted	7	37	39
Trained volunteers	27		51
Total volunteers	52		89
Volunteer hours	2,965		

We served 48 clients this past year, 13 less than the previous year and we also had 5 clients use our suites compared to 13 in the previous year. This data supports a concern that we have had during this past year. Each year, the Board has a business planning day at which time we assess where we are and then establish immediate and long term objectives. The decision of our 2018 planning day was ‘increased awareness and advocacy’.

Clients and their families, by and large, have appreciated the services provided by the Society (volunteers, Services Coordinator, hospice suites) and they often wish they had accessed them sooner. So it raises the question; ‘How can we assist the community and the health care providers in helping more residents on their ‘end of life journey’ experience the quality, compassionate end of life care that is our mission?’ We are currently working with key health care stakeholders to ensure that all of our community is aware of and can access services that will enhance their ‘end of life’ experience.

In conclusion, I want to thank each of the Society Board members that I regularly connect with and, on behalf of the Olds & District Hospice Society Board, ‘Thank You’ to the members of our community for your ongoing support. Your support comes in many different ways, some of which are:

- Volunteers who spend time with our clients, represent the Society at community events, are members of the Society Committees and Society Board.
- Local businesses that provide goods and services to us and ‘forget’ to send us the bill and/or take it upon themselves to organize fund raisers for our benefit.
- Local organizations and governments that provide funding to us and
- The many individuals in our community who give financially.