

Media Kit 2024

A cancer diagnosis can be devastating. It brings countless life-altering moments and events for those diagnosed and for those who love them. At Wellspring Alberta, those facing cancer are offered a range of free programs designed to provide connection and belonging; ease pain, anxiety, fatigue and distress; build strength and mobility; and support financial and workplace challenges.

Wellspring Alberta is a registered charity created to meet the needs of those diagnosed with cancer, as well as caregivers and their kids. Programs are evidence informed, and available online, in various local communities, over the phone, and in-person at centres in Calgary and Edmonton.

“Wellspring helped me turn my life around. Right away I got the sense that I’m not alone. After cancer, your life is changed forever, but now I was around other who knew what it felt like and that helped.”

— Andrew Del Frari, Wellspring Member

QUICK FACTS ABOUT WELLSPRING ALBERTA

- **Network:** Wellspring Alberta is an affiliate of the Wellspring Cancer Support Foundation based in Toronto. The first Wellspring opened in Toronto in 1992.
- **History:** Wellspring Alberta was founded in 2022 when Wellspring Calgary (founded 2006) and Wellspring Edmonton (founded 2010) [joined together](#) to form one province-wide charitable organization.
- **Our centres:**
 - Carma House | opened 2009 | 1404 Home Road NW, Calgary, AB T3B 1G7
 - Randy O’Dell House | opened 2019 | 3910 Seton Drive SE, Calgary, AB T3M 2N9
 - Edmonton House | opened 2018 | 11306 65 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB T6H 2Z8
- **Rural and regional Alberta outreach:** Since expanding services throughout Alberta in 2020 with help from the Alberta Cancer Foundation, Wellspring has supported people from more than 137 communities throughout the province.
- **Members:** Any adult who has had a cancer diagnosis of any type, caregivers and family members, are welcome to become a Wellspring Alberta member free of charge, without referral, and at any point on their journey.
- **Programs:** With over 70 evidence-informed programs, Wellspring’s offerings are designed to meet the diverse needs of cancer patients and their families, and programs are proven to improve well-being and reduce isolation.

- **Funding:** Wellspring Alberta receives no government or agency core funding but relies on events and the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- **Volunteers:** In 2022, Wellspring Alberta had 189 volunteers provide over 7,300 hours of support.

HOW WELLSPRING ALBERTA HELPS

Wellspring Alberta's programs inform and empower people to play a role in their wellness, help people feel connected to others so they do not feel isolated and alone in their cancer experience, and provides support with important life transitions. Wellspring's programs are complementary to what is offered by the health care system.

Wellspring Alberta program categories:

1. **Self Development and Educational:** Information, strategies and tools to navigate and live well with cancer. Programs include Healing Journey, Living Well with Cancer, Kids in the Kitchen, speaker events, and more.
2. **Therapeutic Arts:** Programs designed to foster creative expression, improve mental well-being, reduce stress, and support social development. Programs include Creative Journaling, Digital Storytelling, Ukelele, Needle Felting, Gardening, and more.
3. **Exercise and Movement:** Programs featuring physical and mental activities to increase strength, build resilience, manage stress, and calm the mind. Programs include Exercise, Tai Chi, golf, Yoga, Bird Strolls, Mindfulness, and more.
4. **Individual and Group Support:** Opportunities to meet one-on-one, or to join group sessions with others to share experiences and strategies, and benefit from learning and self care. Programs include Peer Support, Indigenous Cancer Sharing Circle, Meetups for adults living with cancer, COMPASS for Caregiver, Men's Groups, and more.
5. **Finance and Workplace Strategies:** Programs with a real-life context to address the practical work and financial challenges that cancer often brings. , such as financial struggles, or returning to work following an extended leave of absence. Programs include Legal and Employment Matters; Money Matters; Resumes and Interviews; Returning to Work; and more.
6. **Symptom Management:** Programs designed to help manage symptoms related to cancer and treatment. Programs include: Brain Fog, Meditative Breathwork, Food and Nutrition, Relaxation and Visualization, and more.

How does cancer impact the lives of those diagnosed and their families?

Every day, over 60 Albertans hear the words "you have cancer." One in two of us will hear these words in our lifetime.^[1]

In addition to dealing with pain, nausea and fatigue, many people living with cancer are worried about their families, finances, jobs and future. For many, significant physical, emotional, and financial challenges persist for years after diagnosis, and for some, the situation seems unrecoverable.

- More than one in two patients with cancer report having distressing symptoms including anxiety and depression during and after treatment.^[2]

- More than 80% of Canadian cancer patients reported having at least one emotional challenge after treatment ended. Anxiety, stress and worry about cancer returning were identified as the most difficult concerns to get help for.^[3]

The health system is overburdened - Wellspring addresses cancer care disparities in Alberta

Since the COVID pandemic, Alberta cancer patients who received virtual oncology appointments reported less emotional support, fewer supportive care resources and fewer referrals to community support.^[4]

Wellspring acts as a pressure-release valve for Alberta's healthcare system by providing robust mental health, wellness, and community supports that cannot be found in conventional hospital services. By providing accessible, tailored support and building strong community partnerships, Wellspring ensures that every Albertan, regardless of their location, has the support and resources they need to navigate their cancer journey with dignity and strength.

What impact does Wellspring have in the lives of people diagnosed with cancer and caregivers?

Programming such that is offered at Wellspring Alberta has been shown to improve wellbeing and quality of life as well as meet other unmet needs of those diagnosed with cancer.^[5] It has long been recognized that member driven programming is required to adequately meet the individual and diverse needs of people living with cancer.^[6]

In 2022, Wellspring provided support to 2,500 people living with cancer in 90 Alberta communities.
In a 2023 Mission Survey* conducted by Wellspring:

- 97% of respondents reported their quality of life has improved with Wellspring
- 97% of respondents said they can manage stressful situations better
- 98% of respondents said Wellspring helps them feel less isolated, and has increased their emotional well-being

**No response/not applicable are not included in the calculation. Based on 728 respondents.*

Additional facts and citations can be found at:

<https://wellspring.ca/alberta/how-we-help/the-need/>
<https://wellspring.ca/alberta/how-we-help/our-solutions/>
<https://wellspring.ca/alberta/how-we-help/our-impact/>

MEDIA CONTACT

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