

News Release

For immediate release

THE BC HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE ASSOCIATION INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE

GRIEF, BEREAVEMENT & MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT -- OCT. 2ND, 4TH AND 6TH, 2021

VANCOUVER, BC -- July 14, 2021 | The BC Hospice Palliative Care Association (BCHPCA) is excited to formally announce its more than \$64,000 funding award from Infrastructure Canada and Community Foundations of Canada for its project submitted under the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative. BCHPCA was one of three cross hub applications approved to improve the quality of life of British Columbians now and following the pandemic.

“Grief and bereavement support is the second largest service category for BC hospice societies driven by community need and further fueled by COVID-19,” explains Donna Flood, President of the BCHPCA and Executive Director of the Prince George Hospice Society. “Grief is a response to any type of personal loss and is experienced by nearly every British Columbian at some point in their life.” COVID-19 has precipitated a multitude of losses to individuals, not only by way of death of loved ones, but also through isolation, income insecurity, cancelled milestone celebrations, and a lessened ability to obtain support and resources that were utilized prior to COVID restrictions. Society’s lack of comfort and ability in addressing and supporting those grieving or bereaved adds to the complexity.

Pablita Thomas, BCHPCA’s Executive Director, says “We recognized the grief and bereavement needs within communities and as impacted by COVID-19 and we will be using BCHPCA’s Canada’s Healthy Communities Initiative funding to provide enhanced grief and bereavement support to British Columbians as we continue through the pandemic and into the recovery phase.” The programming will include a public Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health Summit, virtual community outreach, and a dedicated webpage, all with the goals of:

- **Connecting:** Engaging and bringing together grief and bereavement stakeholders of diverse communities, local, national and international expertise, government organizations, and the public and providing a space to collaborate on best practices.

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- **Educating:** Sharing expert knowledge of varied perspectives between individuals and caregivers, interdisciplinary health care practitioners, and funders and policy makers on grief and bereavement.
- **Transforming & Integrating:** Collaborating to create action plans and programs that policy makers and care teams can take back to improve the grief and bereavement landscape across BC.

BCHPCA's **Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health Summit** will be held virtually on **October 2, 4 and 6**. The Summit will examine the *Metamorphosis of Grief and Bereavement* as it has transformed with the advent of COVID and as we move into an environment of integration during the recovery phase. Providing a public platform for interdisciplinary education, idea sharing, and awareness regarding grief, bereavement and mental health in light of COVID-19, the Summit will collaboratively analyze current gaps to better support the future mental health of British Columbians. The Summit will also act as a modality to educate funding organizations and policy makers on grief, bereavement and consequent mental health issues, the vital support role that hospices play, and value of integrating grief and bereavement into COVID recovery strategies.

The Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health Summit will be the first of its kind, actively collaborating for change in caring for those suffering from grief and bereavement throughout BC. **Visit the [Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health Summit events page](#) to express your interest in attending the 2021 Grief, Bereavement and Mental Health Summit on October 2, 4, and 6.**

BC Hospice Palliative Care Association (www.bchpca.org)

The BC Hospice Palliative Care Association is a not-for-profit, public membership organization, which has been representing individuals and organizations committed to promoting and delivering hospice palliative care to British Columbians and Yukoners for over 34 years. Our members provide a broad range of hospice palliative care programs and services to people in need across the provinces of BC and the Yukon with serious illnesses, their loved ones who are grieving, and their caregivers. The services hospice societies deliver are accessible to all, regardless of the type of illness, age, sex, sexual orientation, race, culture, and religious beliefs.

For more information, please contact:

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