Message from the Chair of the Board

When I joined Dying With Dignity Canada’s Board of Directors two years ago, ours was an organization on the move. At the time, Canada’s assisted dying law was less than a year old, and people from across the country were calling on us for guidance on what legal medical assistance in dying (MAID) meant for their rights, their lives and ultimately, their deaths. With the vocal encouragement of our supporters, we committed ourselves to “answering the call” of Canadians whose choices were on the line. Fast forward to today, and DWDC is still an organization in transition. Our work to help Canadians understand, navigate and defend their legal end-of-life rights has transformed us into a leader in the field. We are now positioned to do more than just respond in times of crisis. We are currently laying the foundation for a future in which Canadians are better equipped than ever to plan for, and realize, their good death.

And years from now, when we look back on this era in our history, we may point to 2018 as the year when the building blocks started locking into place. Our experiences in 2018 threw into sharp relief what can happen when a small grassroots organization embraces a values-based framework that puts the person — their rights, interests and wishes — first. Adopting this approach was not only the ethical thing to do, but it also led to two of the most significant breakthroughs in DWDC’s history. It led Vancouver entrepreneur Dave Jackson to leave the organization a $7-million legacy gift, the largest donation we’ve ever received. It also led the Canada Revenue Agency to approve DWDC’s application for charitable status in November 2018. These developments alone won’t guarantee that real choice is available to every Canadian, but they do bring that lofty goal much closer to becoming a reality.

Our 2018 Annual Report is as much a look back on “the year that was” as it is a preview of what’s in store. This publication highlights events, accomplishments and the people that made last year so remarkable and, in the process, that set DWDC up for future success. As you’ll see, the investments made by our donors, volunteers and staff promise to yield more and bigger dividends for Canadians in 2019 and in the years ahead.

More importantly, a report like this one is an opportunity to express our gratitude. As we inch towards 2020 — when DWDC will mark its 40th anniversary — we reflect on the contributions of the people who birthed the organization, nurtured it into existence, sustained us during our leanest years, urged us to answer the call when Canadians needed us most, and who laid the groundwork for DWDC to emerge as the pillar of progress and justice we are today. Some of these movement-builders are no longer alive, some have supported the organization for decades, and others joined only recently. To every person who believed in DWDC and cared enough to lend their support: thank you for making the groundwork for DWDC to emerge as the pillar of progress and justice we are today.

The Honourable James Cowan, Chair of the Board

About This Annual Report

On behalf of all of us at Dying With Dignity Canada, I am elated to present our 2018 Annual Report. With every passing year, it’s getting more difficult to encapsulate in print the many ways in which your support is improving the lives, and the deaths, of Canadians. That’s why we decided to organize this year’s Annual Report in a way that better represents our goals as an organization.

How is this year’s edition different? Starting on the next page, you’ll find an eight-page special section covering our main areas of work. Each two-page spread is dedicated to one of the four program “pillars” laid out in DWDC’s new five-year Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2018 and approved by our Board of Directors in March 2019. Each spread features a timeline, fast facts and a compelling personal story highlighting how your support is helping DWDC uphold that particular strategic objective.

The four main pillars of our programs are:

**Eligibility**
- Ensuring that Canada’s assisted dying law complies with the Constitution, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**Access**
- Ensuring that Canadians have fair access to assisted dying in accordance with the Constitution, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**Support**
- Providing information and emotional support to people navigating their legal end-of-life options, and supporting their loved ones and clinicians.

**Education**
- Empowering people by informing them about advance care planning, patient rights and their legal end-of-life options.

Reflecting the breadth of ways DWDC is helping Canadians understand, navigate and defend their end-of-life rights, these four pillars were a major inspiration for the title and theme of our 2018 Annual Report. But they weren’t the only inspiration. “Pillars of Progress” is also a loving nod to the people who make DWDC’s work possible. The donors who fund our programs by giving what and how they can. The chapters and regional volunteers who serve as boots on the ground in local communities, educating residents and helping to break down untruth barriers to access. The members of DWDC’s Board of Directors, who govern and provide strategic leadership, and the advisory councils who inform our work and boost the public profile of the organization. The legions of supporters across the country who raise their voices in defense of our rights. These courageous people laid the foundation for new opportunities and new successes in 2018. They are the pillars lifting us up towards a future in which fair choice is within reach for all Canadians.

Sincerely,

Shanaaz Gokool
CEO, Dying With Dignity Canada
Ensuring that Canada’s assisted dying law complies with the Constitution, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Case Study:
Audrey Parker and the campaign for fair choice

Halifax’s Audrey Parker never dreamed that she would be an assisted-dying advocate, but that’s exactly what happened in the last weeks of her life. Before her death on November 1, 2018, the former TV makeup artist and image consultant drew the country’s attention to the impacts of a harmful requirement in the federal assisted dying law. In the process, Audrey helped Dying With Dignity Canada identify a new group of Canadians whose end-of-life choices are at risk and led us to redouble our efforts to advocate for assisted dying rules that fully respect Canadians’ right to a peaceful death.

In 2018, two years after she was diagnosed with an incurable breast cancer, Audrey was approved for medical assistance in dying (MAID). The cancer had spread into her bones and then to the lining of her brain. She had hoped to celebrate one more Christmas — but a flaw in Bill C-14, Canada’s assisted dying law, led her to end her life earlier than she’d wanted. The flaw?

After rigorous screening and approval for MAID, there is a requirement that the suffering person must confirm their wish for MAID moments before their clinician begins the procedure.

In the weeks before her death, Audrey spoke out in the media for fairer assisted dying rules. She did not want others to have to choose between their right to a peaceful death and spending a few more days or weeks with their loved ones. "Once someone goes through the rigorous legal and medical consent process, this should be enough," she said in a written statement announcing her death. "Double consent does not protect patients. It hurts us.”

DWDC supported Audrey and her loved ones in their mission to expose and repair this flaw in Canada’s assisted dying law. We facilitated a telephone meeting between Audrey and federal officials, where she called on the government to lift the late-stage consent requirement. These conversations elevated our understanding of the difficult choices facing a group of people whose rights are threatened under Bill C-14: those who have already been Assessed and Approved for assisted dying.

Three days before she died, DWDC arranged for a videographer to record Audrey’s final message to Canadians: a call for all of us to push for an amendment to the law. We would release the video in February 2019 as part of a new campaign in Audrey’s honour calling on the federal government to respect the rights of people in the Assessed and Approved category.

Audrey’s legacy will only continue to grow in the months and years following her death. Her urgent calls for change have informed DWDC’s advocacy work and deepened our understanding of the impacts of Bill C-14 upon different groups of vulnerable Canadians. We promised her that we would keep her plight in the headlines and on the radar of decision-makers in Ottawa.

“I am in awe of the contributions Audrey made during her last weeks of life.” DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool said the week Audrey died. “With bravery and humour, this incredible woman put a human face on a difficult issue and gave us vivid language to describe it. We are humbled that she would trust us to use her story in our work to defend Canadians’ end-of-life rights.”

Key Moments

FEB 1
A judge in Quebec accepts DWDC’s application to participate in a court case challenging a controversial restriction in the federal assisted dying law. We would later make arguments in support of the plaintiffs, two severely ill Montrealers who say that the assisted dying rules in place are keeping them alive against their will.

APR 2
The Globe and Mail publishes a front-page story about George and Shirley Brickenden, one of the first married couples in Canada to access assisted dying at the same time. Wanting to educate and empower other Canadians, George and Shirley gave DWDC their blessing to approach The Globe with their story.

JUN 1
Writing in The Globe and Mail, award-winning novelist Lawrence Hill details how restrictions in Canada’s assisted dying law led his mother to go overseas to exercise her right to a peaceful death. Hill consulted DWDC while preparing his essay.

OCT 24
DWDC launches an online petition on advance requests for medical assistance in dying (MAID). The petition allows users to send a message urging the federal government to restore the rights of Canadians whose choice has been curtailed by the ban on advance requests for assisted dying.

NOV 1
Halifax’s Audrey Parker dies with medical assistance, two years after being diagnosed with an incurable breast cancer. In the last weeks of her life, she captured the attention of the national media by speaking out about the cruel choices faced by people who have been Assessed and Approved for assisted dying.

DEC 10
DWDC applies to be an intervener in support of the plaintiffs in Lamb v. Canada. This B.C.-based court challenge against unfair restrictions in the federal assisted dying law will be heard in November 2019.

DEC 12
The Council of Canadian Academies’ reports on assisted dying are tabled in Parliament. The studies examine the possible impacts of allowing MAID access for three groups of Canadians who are currently discriminated against by the federal assisted dying law. DWDC responds by calling the studies a roadmap for restoring Canadians’ end-of-life rights.
Access

Ensuring that Canadians have fair access to assisted dying in accordance with the Constitution, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Key Moments

JAN 5
The Globe and Mail publishes the first in a series of exposés on the harmful impacts of allowing publicly funded healthcare facilities in B.C. to opt out of the provision of assisted dying. Journalist Kelly Grant reported the stories using documents and contacts she obtained through DWDC.

JAN 31
In a 3-0 decision, a panel of divisional-court judges rules in favour of upholding the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario’s (CPSO) policy on effective referral for assisted dying. DWDC had made arguments in court in support of the policy, which protects fair access to assisted dying in the province of Ontario. The decision is later appealed.

JUL 13
Bob Blackwood’s struggle to access his right to an assisted death is the subject of an exclusive report by CBC Montreal. His wife, Heather Ross, shared their story in the hopes of breaking down barriers facing other families in Quebec.

SEP 19
Bone density

OCT 1
DWDC receives permission to deliver arguments in the appeal case challenging the CPSO’s policy on effective referral. Working with our pro bono lawyers, Kelly Doctor and Mary-Elizabeth Dill of Goldblatt Partners LLP, we later prepare to go back to court to defend patients’ rights in Ontario.

OCT 23
CBC Edmonton releases the first in a series of reports on the harms of forced transfers for assisted dying in Alberta. In response, the Alberta government announces a review of its 2016 decision to allow Covenant Health to forbid assisted dying at its hospitals and other care facilities.

DEC 27
In an op-ed published in the Edmonton Journal, DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool and Friends of Medicare Executive Director Sandra Azocar call on the Alberta government to put an end to the practice of forced transfers for assisted dying.

CASE STUDY:
Empowering people to shine a light on injustice

Vancouver’s Lola Hyman knows firsthand just how difficult it can be for someone to access medical assistance in dying (MAID) in a public healthcare facility where it is strictly forbidden. In 2017, her father, Barry, was told he was not allowed to have an assisted death in the long-term care residence that he called home.

Though Barry was eventually able to access MAID at his residence, the ordeal was intensely stressful for his family. Lola’s struggle to defend her father’s wish to die in his own home led her to share her story with The Globe and Mail. Published in January 2018, the resulting article reignited interest in this issue and highlighted Dying With Dignity Canada’s ongoing efforts to expose and break down unfair barriers to end-of-life choice.

How did DWDC help Lola shine a light on the injustices her family faced? Starting in mid-2017, we had a series of conversations with Lola about the possibility of sharing her story. She explained to us the details of her father’s experience and her interest in speaking out. In turn, we made recommendations on which journalists or media outlets to approach.

“There was no question that I was going to go public with my story,” Lola says. “Dying With Dignity Canada made it safe. You had a calming effect. You had the academic knowledge to support what I was doing. You protected me from some outcomes that might have been unpleasant.”

With Lola’s blessing, we put her in touch with Globe and Mail health reporter Kelly Grant. Kelly’s editors’ interest was piqued, and she flew to Vancouver to interview Lola a few weeks later. Through the prism of Barry’s story, Kelly delved into the real-world harms of allowing public healthcare facilities to ban assisted dying on their premises. She interviewed MAID provider Dr. Ellen Wiebe — the Vancouver physician who helped Barry end his life — about cases in which suffering patients had to be transferred via ambulance to her office because the facility where they were living opposed assisted dying.

Through the Globe and Mail’s article, Lola Hyman with her father, Barry, and her son, Jackson, in 2014.

Kelly followed up her article with two more detailing the harms of forced transfers for assisted dying. Using documents obtained by DWDC through a Freedom of Information request, she revealed that representatives from Providence Health, which runs several facilities where MAID is not allowed, had sent a written apology to colleagues at Vancouver General for a botched transfer that originated at nearby St. Paul’s Hospital.

Barry’s wasn’t the first family to go public about their loved one’s struggle to access MAID. But by working with DWDC to draw national attention to the issue of forced transfers for assisted dying, Lola has deepened Canadians’ understanding of the problem — and brought the country at least one big step closer to solving it.

Lola Hyman with her father, Barry, and her son, Jackson, in 2014.

Supporter emails sent calling for an end to forced transfers for assisted dying

Pages of public documents obtained through Freedom of Information requests on forced transfers for assisted dying

750 +

10,000+

Parliament Hill
Support
Provisiong information and emotional support to people navigating their legal end-of-life options, and supporting their loved ones and clinicians.

Key Moments

**MAR 12**
Dying With Dignity Canada's Calgary Chapter's Grief Support Group holds its first meeting of the year. The group provides a space where people can open up about their experiences supporting a loved one on a journey with medical assistance in dying (MAID).

**MAR 18**
DWDC's Ottawa Chapter co-hosts a peer-support meeting for loved ones of people who had accessed MAID. The event was organized in partnership with the Ottawa-based support group Bridge C-14 and the local office of Bereaved Families of Ontario.

**MAR 27**
George and Shirley Brickenden die hand in hand, becoming one of the first married couples in Canada to access assisted dying together. Led by CEO Shanaaz Gokool, DWDC helped the Toronto couple navigate their request to, in their words, “fly away” at the same time.

**MAY 27**
At our 2018 Annual General Meeting, DWDC's Clinician Case-Sharing series receives the award for Volunteer Program of the Year. Co-founded by Vancouver’s Dr. Ellen Wiebe and presented in partnership with the Canadian Association of MAID Assessors and Providers, this monthly webinar program affords clinicians a safe space to compare notes on difficult cases and provide each other peer support.

**AUG 31**
DWDC launches new online resources on how to navigate a request for assisted dying. They include a listing of the provincial and territorial agencies that are responsible for coordinating residents’ requests for MAID.

**OCT - DEC**
DWDC's Personal Support Program receives calls and emails from 296 new contacts in the fourth quarter of 2018, making it the busiest three-month period in the program's history. The program provides information and emotional support to people who are navigating difficult end-of-life decisions, as well as their loved ones and clinicians.

CASE STUDY
Making the impossible, possible

For decades, George and Shirley Brickenden spoke of their desire to “fly away” together at the end of their lives. For most of that time, the Toronto couple’s dream ending to their storybook romance appeared all but out of reach.

Even after Parliament legalized medical assistance in dying (MAID) in 2016, the chances of the Brickendens realizing their wish to die peacefully in each other’s arms remained slim. But with support from Dying With Dying Canada, George and Shirley became one of the first married couples in Canada to access assisted dying at the same time.

It was the fall of 2016 when George and Shirley approached DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool asking about their options. Both were in their 90s, and both were grappling with serious medical conditions that were eating away at their quality of life.

At the time, very few married couples had requested MAID together. Even fewer – possibly none – had been allowed to end their lives at the same time. We weren’t certain whether George and Shirley would qualify for MAID, let alone whether two clinicians would be comfortable providing it to two spouses in the same room. But we told the Brickendens we would do what we could to help them understand what their options were.

“We can’t always promise that we will succeed at helping people overcome the barriers they are facing,” Shanaaz said. “But we can, and do, promise to try.”

And try we did. Starting in late 2016, Shanaaz contacted experienced MAID providers in DWDC’s network about the Brickendens’ wishes. In addition, DWDC Personal Support Program Manager Nino Sekopet gave George and Shirley information about applying to access assisted dying at a clinic in Switzerland – a possible backup plan for the Brickendens in the event they were denied MAID at home.

Assessing George’s and Shirley’s eligibility for MAID would prove complicated. In order to assess a person as eligible for assisted dying, two clinicians must independently determine that the applicant fulfills all the eligibility criteria laid out in the law. They must also conclude that the person requesting MAID is doing so freely, without undue influence from others. In the Brickendens’ case, it meant that George and Shirley had to be assessed separately, by two different sets of clinicians. All the while, George and Shirley looked to DWDC for support in navigating the uncertainty they felt while the question of their eligibility for MAID still hung in the air.

It took the Brickendens’ clinicians more than a year, and another set of assessments, to arrive at the conclusion that both George and Shirley qualified for MAID. The couple selected March 27, 2018 as the day they would finally fly away. They died hand in hand, their children comforting them in their final moments. In the couple’s obituary, their family wrote that they “are all forever grateful for the compassionate assistance” DWDC provided.

For myriad reasons, the Brickendens’ case, like the couple themselves, was extraordinary – truly unlike any other that we at DWDC have encountered. That said, we approached it as we do every request we receive for information, emotional support or for help in navigating an application for MAID. We always strive to do the best we can using the resources we have, guided by an ethical framework that puts the person – their rights and wishes – first.

This normally isn't enough to make the impossible, possible. But on rare occasions, that's exactly what happens.
Empowering people by informing them about advance care planning, patient rights and their legal end-of-life options.

Key Moments

**FEB 21**
DWDC publishes the first in a series of blog posts by Don Kent, of Kemptville, Ont., about his experience exploring a request for medical assistance in dying (MAID). Stricken with cancer, Don worked with Digital Communications Coordinator Rachel Phan to document his journey from terminal prognosis to ending his life on his own terms on April 20, 2018. Don’s Journey was the first series of its kind in Canada.

**APR 17**
Right on the heels of National Advance Care Planning Day, DWDC hosts a public webinar on what to think about when you’re planning for end of life.

**MAY 4/5**
The second Medical Assistance in Dying Conference takes place in Ottawa. Co-sponsored by DWDC and organized by the Canadian Association of MAID Assessors and Providers (CAMAP), the annual event is designed to inform and empower healthcare practitioners and other professionals who are affected by the legalization of assisted dying.

**JUNE**
DWDC’s Calgary and Vancouver chapters hold public events commemorating the second anniversary of Bill C-14, Canada’s federal assisted dying law. Speakers include expert professionals in the field and people with real-world experience supporting a loved one on a journey with MAID.

**SEP 7**
DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool addresses attendees at the biennial conference of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies in Cape Town, South Africa. CAMAP President Dr. Stefanie Green, Dr. Tanja Daws and Dr. Ellen Wiebe are among the other Canadians presenting at the conference.

**NOV 27**

**NOV 27**
Don’s Journey ending his life on his own terms on April 20, 2018. Don's Journey was the first of its kind in Canada.

**CASE STUDY:**

**Empowering the voices of personal storytellers**

It would be impossible to look at what DWDC does to educate Canadians about their end-of-life options without placing a mirror in front of our supporters.

It’s thanks to the powerful personal storytelling of Canadians that more and more people are now comfortable with sharing what they’ve learned about end of life. And we’ve been there for these inspiring people, giving them a safe space to reflect upon their lived expertise and a platform to share it with Canadians.

Take, for instance, our relationship with Kempville, Ont.’s Don Kent, who invited readers to follow along with him on his journey with medical assistance in dying (MAID). His series on the DWDC blog, Don's Journey, gave people intimate insights into what it’s like to be diagnosed with terminal cancer, to request and plan for an assisted death, and to die on one’s own terms. Don was joined by about 20 other Canadians who shared their stories and vulnerability on DWDC’s blog in 2018.

Leading our education efforts on the ground are our regional chapters, who host seminars on advance care planning and end-of-life rights. In total, our staff, chapters and volunteers presented at or hosted 40 in-person events in 2018, with overall attendance exceeding 2,500 people.

On a national level, the speakers who participated in DWDC’s End in Mind webinar series have empowered Canadians across the country to think about death, dying and preparing for end of life. In 2018, DWDC hosted webinars on a variety of topics, including a session on advance care planning and a Q&A with two MAID providers. A total of 1,650 people watched our End in Mind webinars live, and hundreds more accessed recordings of these presentations after the fact.

Liana Brittain, an Ontario woman whose husband, Paul, was the first person on Prince Edward Island to access MAID, has become an integral part of DWDC’s education program. She has written a number of blogs, joined our Disability Advisory Council, been an End in Mind webinar speaker, and supported others on their own end-of-life journeys.

“Through the generous support and caring staff at Dying With Dignity Canada, I have been empowered to become an advocate for dying with dignity and MAID as an end-of-life choice,” she wrote in her book, MAID Musings. “I’m so grateful to DWDC for giving me a second family — a new home. They have given my life purpose and a reason to go on without Paul.”

We remain indebted to the pioneers like Liana who have courageously come forward with their stories so that others may find understanding, strength and comfort in their words. For our part, we will continue to do everything we can to amplify their voices and to provide safe, non-judgemental spaces for people to share, learn and engage.
Honouring Our Volunteers and Councils

Pillars of the community
By giving their time and talent, DWDC’s volunteers and regional chapters are changing people’s lives — and improving their deaths — across the country.

Wisdom of the collective
Whether they bring professional expertise or rare personal insights, the members of DWDC’s advisory councils strengthen our ability to defend your end-of-life rights.

Dying With Dignity Canada may be expanding in reach and influence, but we remain a grassroots organization at heart. We have our volunteers and regional chapters to thank for deepening DWDC’s ties with local communities, and for changing lives all across the country.

In 2018, DWDC supporters tallied more than 13,000 volunteer hours. The efforts of DWDC’s volunteers reinforced all four pillars — Eligibility, Access, Support and Education — laid out in the organization’s new Strategic Plan.

More than ever before, DWDC volunteers played an integral role in breaking down barriers to access, including an obstacle posed by a provision in the federal assisted dying law. Bill C-14 requires people who request assisted dying to get their application form signed by two people who request assisted dying to assisted dying law. In 2018, DWDC volunteers provided signatures for a total of 600 requests for MAID, up a whopping 85 per cent over the previous year.

On top of empowering people who are exploring a request for MAID, some DWDC volunteers are now supporting the loved ones of people who died with medical assistance. Our Calgary and Ottawa chapters, in partnership with stakeholders in their respective communities, have started peer-support groups for families with experience with assisted dying.

DWDC’s volunteers are also at the forefront of our efforts to empower Canadians through education. Last year saw DWDC volunteers present at or host more than 30 events, including workshops on advance care planning and information sessions about MAID. In addition, several DWDC volunteers participated as speakers in one of the webinars presented as part of our End in Mind Online Education Series. In total, more than 4,000 people attended events, both online and in person, that featured DWDC speakers.

Speaking of outreach in the digital sphere, in 2018, DWDC published more than 30 original blog posts contributed by volunteers, including many with firsthand experience with MAID. By reading and sharing their insights, they provided comfort and hope to Canadians and helped break down the stigma associated with MAID and other end-of-life choices.

These courageous storytellers, like everyone who has donated time and expertise to DWDC, do more than just raise public awareness about the issues at the core of our mandate. Our volunteers provide us with invaluable insights that guide every aspect of our work. We thank them for serving as the heart and soul of our movement, the pillars upon which our progress in 2018 was based.

“Years before MAID was legalized, my cousin endured a lingering, painful death from ALS. My Dad suffered for over a year with COPD. This energized me to help ease the suffering of others, and I decided to volunteer.” — Tammy Pham, DWDC blog contributor

“Volunteering for DWDC has shaped the way I develop my clinical practice as a physician assistant student. My experience has prepared me to discuss end-of-life issues with my patients. It has also helped me create spaces for other people of colour whose discussions about end of life may be influenced by different cultural and social barriers.” — Tammy Pham, DWDC blog contributor and former Chair of DWDC’s University of Ottawa Chapter

“I joined DWDC in 2011. As a physician, I had witnessed great suffering that could not be relieved by even the best palliative care. DWDC’s advocacy in the Carter case and others has given me and all Canadians alternatives in the face of unbearable suffering.” — Dr. Gerald Ashe, Member, DWDC’s Clinicians Advisory Council

“Volunteering for DWDC has given my life purpose since my husband’s death. He chose MAID when faced with terminal cancer and asked that I use his name and medical history to educate others. The staff at DWDC have become a second family to me, providing support in countless ways as I create this legacy in his loving memory.” — Lana Brittan, Executive Member, DWDC’s Disability Advisory Council and Chair, DWDC’s First-Person Witness Council

“Being alive is wonderful and a good life of Canadians’ end-of-life rights. Because Dying With Dignity Canada would not be a pillar of justice, support and education it is today were it not for the contributions of the knowledgeable, talented people on our advisory councils. These volunteers afford us invaluable insights related to all aspects of DWDC’s mandate, while raising the credibility and public profile of the organization. Over the last half-decade, DWDC has made significant inroads with members of the medical community. When it was founded, the Physicians Advisory Council featured only a handful of doctors. Now, the group — renamed the Clinicians Advisory Council (CAC) to reflect the integral role nurse practitioners play in the provision of assisted dying in Canada — boasts about 45 health professionals. By helping to inform our policy positions, supporting our legal advocacy and tipping us off about barriers to access in the healthcare system, members of this council continue to make DWDC a more effective defender of Canadians’ end-of-life rights.” — Dr. Gerald Ashe, Member, DWDC’s Clinicians Advisory Council

“Years before MAID was legalized, my cousin endured a lingering, painful death from ALS. My Dad suffered for over a year with COPD. This energized me to help ease the suffering of others, and I decided to volunteer.” — Tammy Pham, DWDC blog contributor

“The importance of our work is constantly reinforced by the gratitude we see in people’s eyes. This is why I am a passionate advocate for the right to advance requests. Having a good life is wonderful and a good life merits a good death. Thank you, DWDC.” — Gabriela Luchinger, Co-Chair of DWDC’s Hamilton Chapter

“As a long-time supporter of Dying With Dignity Canada, we were delighted to learn of the reinstatement of the organization’s charitable status. DWDC is vital to preserving Canadians’ right to end their lives on their own terms. Investing in the future of this organization is one of the most important steps you can take to ensure the choice of a peaceful death is available if and when you need it.” — Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson, Members, DWDC’s Patrons Council

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A Growing Culture of Giving

Laying a foundation for the future

2018 was a year of breakthroughs for DWDC’s fundraising — breakthroughs that will make the organization a stronger, more effective force for compassion.

An unprecedented gift

In July, DWDC received the largest donation in our history. The bequest of approximately $7 million by friend and longtime supporter David Jackson was an emotional, landmark development for our work. Dave made the choice to access medical assistance in dying in 2017 after a severe illness and left behind a legacy of support for human rights.

DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool remembers Dave: “The last time I spoke with him, he was in awe of what we have been able to accomplish with an annual budget of less than one million dollars. But he was aware of the enormous gaps in access to support that suffering Canadians continue to face.”

We are tremendously grateful for this extraordinary gift, which will help ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization and expand the impact of our work. Dave’s memory will remain with us as we continue to protect your end-of-life rights and help Canadians avoid unwanted suffering.

The return of charitable status

In November, DWDC revealed that we had secured charitable status after more than three years as a not-for-profit. That means we can now issue tax receipts for donations made in support of DWDC’s work.

Upon the announcement, DWDC CEO Shanaaz Gokool stated, “For decades, you believed that Canadians had a right to choice in the face of intolerable suffering. Because you believed, medical assistance in dying is now a right in Canada, and defending your Charter rights is a charitable purpose according to the laws of our country.”

The restoration of DWDC’s charitable status not only represents the growing recognition of end-of-life choice as a human right, but it is also a game-changer for the movement to defend your rights. Charitable status empowers DWDC’s donors to have an even greater impact, and will allow us to apply for grants that were out of reach for us before. All of this is possible because of our supporters’ belief in the rights and choices of Canadians!

These milestones will energize our work in 2019 and beyond. With our 40th anniversary approaching next year, we will continue to empower sick and suffering people across the country, motivated by the drive and dedication of our vast community of supporters.

Carrying on a tradition of generosity

By giving in memory of their mother, the daughters of a longtime DWDC supporter are building upon her legacy.

From the left: Helen Levine with her elder daughter, Tamara, in 2016; Helen with her younger daughter, Karen.

For most of their lives, Karen and Tamara Levine had been aware of their mother’s wish to die in the same manner she lived her life: on her own terms. A lifelong activist, retired social worker and women’s studies prof, Helen Levine joined DWDC as a member in 1990 and believed unconditionally in the right to choose a peaceful, assisted death. “We always knew that this was what Mom would want,” said Tamara, Helen’s elder daughter.

Helen’s quest for choice in how she died culminated in October 2018, when she ended her life peacefully at 95 with a doctor’s help and with her two daughters by her side. However, her legacy of supporting DWDC’s work and mission continues to grow. Inspired by their mother’s commitment to social justice, Karen and Tamara are sharing the story of Helen’s principled life and peaceful death to motivate others to support and contribute to the cause.

Following the passage of Bill C-14 in June 2016, Helen began to have conversations with her family and her doctor. She was overjoyed by the news and by the fact that she’d lived to see it happen. But she was also angry at what she saw as deficiencies in the law, which could end up leaving her out if, for example, her assessors deemed that her natural death was not “reasonably foreseeable.” She was also disappointed that she and others would not be allowed to make an advance request for medical assistance in dying (MAID).

By the summer of 2018, Helen felt that her diminished mobility, her pain from osteoarthritis, and her debilitating tremors had reached a tipping point. She decided to take steps to explore the MAID process. As Helen’s family helped her navigate her request, they spoke to Kelsey Goforth, DWDC’s support and care navigator. Kelsey helped the Levines understand Helen’s options, what the approval process entailed and the resources that were available to her.

Helen received approval for MAID by the end of the summer and died at Tamara’s home on October 24. “All of the people who may have been sad or upset, the important people in her life — and there were lots of them — had the chance to talk it through with her, and she ‘social-worked’ it,” Tamara said of the conversations that preceded Helen’s death. “She helped everybody through it, my sister and me included. In the end, while it was heartbreaking to lose her, we were glad Mom had the death she wanted, peaceful and surrounded by love.”

Following Helen’s death, Karen and Tamara decided to make generous gifts to DWDC in their mother’s memory. In addition, Helen’s obituary invited mourners to donate to the organization in her honour. Their decision to give in her memory is both a moving tribute and of critical help to people whose end-of-life rights are at stake, said DWDC Fund Development Officer Laura Satin Levin. “Helen is being remembered in the same way she lived: standing up for justice.”

The Levines’ story exemplifies an intergenerational commitment to having open conversations about choices in dying and to making the right to MAID accessible to all Canadians. DWDC is extremely grateful for Helen’s lifelong tradition of advocacy and giving, which, because of her family, shows no signs of fading away.

The Growth of Our Defenders of Dignity Program, 2016-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Monthly Donors</th>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
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Making the Commitment

If you would like more information about giving in tribute of a loved one, please contact Laura Satin Levin, DWDC’s fund development officer, at 1-800-495-6156 ext. 26 or at laura@dyingwithdignity.ca.
Recognizing Our Donors

2018 DWDC Major Donors

Dying With Dignity Canada could not be a pillar of justice, support and education for Canadians without the contributions of our donors. We are enormously grateful for their generosity and their commitment to upholding Canadians' end-of-life rights.

$25,000 or greater

David B. Jackson
David B. Jackson Alter Ego Trust
Estate of Penelope Reed Doob
Sheilagh and David Wilson Fund at Toronto Foundation
Estate of George Sec

Anonymous

Carey Diamond and Tina Urman
Moses Znaimer
Marian Thomson and Family, In Memory of Dr. John A. Thomson
William Swire
Dr. Derryck Smith
Garnet and Lisa Rich
Karen McNair

$10,000 - $24,999

Anonymous (2)
Verani and Marc Ducommun
Robert Holub
Richard and Donna Ivey

$5,000 - $9,999

Anonymous (2)
Judy Broadbent
Rosamond Ivey
Suzanne Ivey Cook
Kenair Apartments Limited
Valerie Ketter
Karen Levine, In Memory of Helen Levine
Tamara Levine, In Memory of Helen Levine
Karen McNair
Garnet and Lisa Rich
Dr. Derrick Smith
William Swire
Marian Thomson and Family, In Memory of Dr. John A. Thomson
Moses Znaimer

Cindy Findlay
Eva Kniecic and Paul Migus
David and Joan Moore
Jack Paski and Penny Bell
John and Barbara Warren
Tamara Zielony

$1,000 - $2,499

Anonymous (11)
Orville Actor
Jenn Alfonso
Patricia Anderson
Cindy and Robert Blyakley
Walter M. and Lisa Balfour Bowen
Barbara and David Brewer and Family
Christine Brophy, In Memory of Dorothy Allen
Mark Childs
Pat Clay
J. Rob Collins
Daphne Cross
Yvonne Cunnington
Dianne Davis
Dr. Laurence Day
Mama Dishaw
Brenda Eaton
Jeri Elliott, In Memory of Tom Elliott
Harold and Marjie Fast
Bette Gallander
Ian and Jan E. Gibson
Shanaz Gokool
Shirley Beatrice Grant
Megan Greenberg
Marco Guarnaschelli
Nancy and Richard Hammon
Margaret Hawthorn
Susan Hemmings
Mary Hetherington
Patricia Hill
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Dr. Susan Hughson
James Huaiak and Diane Hudson
Richard M. Ivey
Dr. George Iwanchychyn and Dr. Wilma de Groot
Lewis and Dale Jackson
W. Edwin Jarmain
Rowly Johnson
Dennis Jones and Herta Ziemann
Maya Joosten
Alex and Anna Kremer
Legal Education Society of Alberta
The Levine and Robins Families
Ron MacKinnon
Sandra Martin
Colin and Isobel McGregor
Anne Morawetz and Don Bocking
Joy Morrow
Dr. Patricia Morton and David Morton
NA Taylor Foundation
Charles (Buzz) Nixon
Allan Oas
Teresa O’Donovan
Desmond and Pam O’Ronke
James Oxton
Howard Pain
Chris Pallare and Eva Marszewska
Dr. Chantal Perrot
Gordon and Mary Peterson
Elizabeth Phibbs
Gordon Pommern
Dr. Jonathan Reggler
Trish Remmers
Sheri Richardson
Anne and Brian Ross
Lionel and Carol Schipper
Stuart and Jayne Schipper
Cathy Schweers
John Sehring
Heather Sheehan
Barbara Shields
Margaret Smith
Jon Snipper
Ross Stewart
Geoff Thompson
Les Thompson
Throw the Switch Igor! Foundation
Penelope Tilby and Ron Peterson
Uplands Foundation
Kent Vachon
Ron Van Meenen
Nancy J. Vivian
Stuart Wardrop
David Williams
Janet and Bill Young

$500 - $999

Anonymous (21)
David Williams
Stuart Wardrop
Nancy J. Vivian
Ron Van Meenen
Kent Vachon
Uplands Foundation
Penelope Tilby and Ron Peterson
Throw the Switch Igor! Foundation
From the Estate of Dorothy Allen
C.R. Charlton
Alixandra Capozzi
Deborah Cantin
Elizabeth Campbell
Clifford Campbell
Bernard Campbell
Cheryl Campbell
Cheryl Bradley and Lorne Fitch
Bernard Campbell
Clifford Campbell
Elizabeth Campbell
Deborah Cantin
Alicia Capozzi
C.R. Charlton
Feve Chinn
Senta Chisholm
Choices in Dying Victoria
Cheryl Clark
Stephen and Wendy Cole
Roger Cotton and Marcia Matsui
Jean R. Cuddy
Jane Davidson
Onyisia Dwayne
Susan Desjardins
Heinz Dickfeld
Veronica Dolenc
Richard Duffin
Deborah M. Duffy
Louise Dulude
Peter Dundas and Pamela Cross
Donald Eastmure
Ann Estill
Carol Fathers
Paul and Joan Feth
Mary-Martha Flood
Bruce Folkard
Clint Forster
Georgina Geldert
Ruth Gilbert
Janie Half
Elizabeth Half-Findlay
Larry Hallatt
Allan and Elaine Hammond
Georgean Harper
Susan C. M. Harper
Nancy and James Harries
Françoise Hebert
Jim Heppell
Donna Mae Hill
Hélène Narayana
Stephen and Josephine Ng
Pat O’Brien
Lynne O’Brien
Reginald Olsen
Ontario Council of Hospital Unions
William and Lorelaine Patterson
Arlene Peggs
Bradley Peters
Helen Peters

Don and Jean Hutcheson
Alison Jeffrey
Andrew and Ruth Johnson
Grace Johnson
Brian Jones
Francis Jones
Philip F. and Elaine V. Jones
Robert Jones
Mary F. Keith
Kent Kirkland, In Memory of Cheryl Chopy
Sharon Knapp, In Memory of Albert Knapp
William Knight
Dr. Robert and Dr. Barbara Langford
Micheline Laplante
Gae Lawrence
Helen Levine
Chris Levy
David Lint
Sheena MacIntyre
Sherrill MacLaren
Gopal Makan
Dean Manning
Jack and Lynn Marineau
Linda Marshall
Pamela Marshall
Margaret Meeker
Andrew McEwan
Mike McElhone
James Duncan McNiel
Gavin and Kathryn MuOuat
Mary Ellen and Evan Meyers
Regine Moore
Sherry Moran
Hélène Narayana
Stephen and Josephine Ng
Pat O’Brien
Lynne O’Brien
Reginald Olsen
Ontario Council of Hospital Unions
William and Loraine Patterson
Arlene Peggs
Bradley Peters
Helen Peters

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Continued from Page 17

Margaret Phenix*
Judy Phillips*
Jeanette Piry
Lou Probst
Randolph Prout
Harold and Marilyn Quinn
Angus Rae*
Chin Jong Reed*
Dr. Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon
Melvin and Mary-Dawn Rippel
Teresa Rutten
Andrew and Mary Sare
Beverlee Sault
Francesca Scalzo
Bill and Sharon Siebens

Evie Wallace*
Penelope Waller Ulmer
Derry Walsh
Dune Watson
Emme Whitaker and Stephen Corber
Marion Yates*
Carol Zavititz

Pro Bono Legal Services
Anonymous
Eyford Partners LLP
Goldblatt Partners LLP
Langlois Lawyers
McLeod Law LLP

Christie Bentham
Legacy Society

We would like to recognize the members of the Christie Bentham Legacy Society, who have pledged a future legacy gift to DWDC. We thank this wonderful group of donors for their commitment to protecting the rights and choices of future generations of Canadians.

Anonymous (9)
Susan Bamabe
Sylvia Bews-Wight
Susan Bracken
Scott and Mary Brown
Doug and Ellen Campbell*

Financial information at a glance

2018 was a groundbreaking year for Dying With Dignity Canada’s fundraising. Last year, DWDC received the largest donation in the organization’s history. Longtime supporter Dave Jackson, who died in July 2017, left DWDC a bequest of more than $7 million.

This extraordinary gift is the main reason why DWDC’s revenues shot up so dramatically in 2018, to $5,787,280 for the year. In June, we received the first, $4.7-million instalment of his bequest. The remainder is due to be transferred over in 2019.

Another historic breakthrough arrived near the end of the year. In November, DWDC learned that our application for charitable status had been approved by the Canada Revenue Agency. That meant that, for the first time since 2015, we were able to issue tax receipts for donations made in support of our work.

Dave’s gift and the restoration of DWDC’s charitable status give us cause to celebrate, but also a sense of solemn responsibility. Our Board of Directors understands that Canadians are counting on us not only to make strategic investments that expand the impact and reach of our programs, but also to ensure the sustainability of the organization.

Our commitment to responsible growth was reflected in our spending in 2018. To ensure we have stable funding when we need it, we invested in the expansion of our Defenders of Dignity monthly giving program. The legal fees associated with our application for charitable status also contributed to higher-than-normal administration costs.

While we invested in the future, we didn’t do so at the expense of Canadians who needed us in the present. We devoted a total of $834,000 to our programs, an increase of roughly $100,000 over the previous year. DWDC’s total expenditures for 2018 totaled $1,283,477.

Though 2018 presented DWDC with unprecedented opportunities, our approach to our work and how we fund it remains unchanged. By adopting a human-rights framework that puts the person first, we are taking thoughtful steps to grow our base of support and meet the demands of the future.

Breakdown of DWDC’s 2018 Expenses

Programs 65%
Fundraising 18%
Administration 17%

Program Spending By Type

Eligibility 28%
Access 23%
Support 23%
Education 26%