



ELDERCARE  
FOUNDATION

# Annual Report

2023-2024



## **Our vision**

Seniors aging with dignity.

## **Our purpose**

To raise and steward donor funds dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for seniors in their communities.

## **Our mandate**

We provide resources, education and support to promote healthy aging for seniors.

On the front cover: Esme, a resident at Aberdeen care home, enjoys a music therapy session supported by Eldercare.



# A message from our Executive Director and Board President



This past year at Eldercare Foundation has been one marked by change. But it's also been one that feels like **an exciting turning point**. For many years now, the challenges of Canada's aging population have become more evident:

- Skyrocketing chronic illness rates
- Escalating pressure on long-term care beds
- Growing demand for community programs
- Increased caregiver burnout
- More local seniors slipping through the cracks in our social support system

Fortunately, **Eldercare is better positioned than ever to make a positive difference**. First, we've changed where Eldercare works. We are Island Health's only allied foundation that focuses exclusively on the needs of seniors. So after decades of focusing on the South Island, it felt like the right time to start thinking bigger.

**Eldercare is now expanding its scope throughout Island Health's geography.**

This change is already paying dividends. It's opened the door to new partnerships, and new opportunities, to support local seniors. In addition, we've increased Eldercare's focus on investing in systems-level change. Supporting research and education has always been core to Eldercare's work. Now, thanks to the incredible philanthropic support we've received, we have the leverage to do this on a much bigger scale.

**The key highlight from this past year was our \$1 million pledge to support The Views in Comox.** This project represents a new model for long-term care that, we believe, may change seniors care across Vancouver Island.

In a year of transformational change, Eldercare also had a change in leadership. After 23 years as Executive Director and a track record of success that underpins our current growth, Lori McLeod passed the reins to her successor, Tom Arnold, formerly the Director of Development. We extend our deep gratitude to Lori for her leadership and tireless optimism through the decades.



The one thing that hasn't changed is you. **Eldercare's success is only possible because of donors like you.** We're grateful for everything that you've helped us achieve this past year. And, with your continued support, we're excited at the prospect of giving more Island seniors the chance to age with dignity.

Thank you,

Jeanette Funke-Furber  
President, Board of Directors

Tom Arnold  
Executive Director

## Eldercare invests in new model of care in Comox

In 2024, Eldercare made a \$1M contribution in support Canada's first public, non-profit, long-term care facility based on the concepts of a dementia village. Providence Living at The Views opened in July and the immediate feedback is promising. Here is a quote from Providence Living at The Views Impact Report (September 2024):

*"The experiences of independence, comfort and joy were immediate. We have seen residents who previously almost never left their rooms coming out to enjoy the courtyard, community spaces and sun decks. We have also seen a resident, who staff had thought was no longer verbal, quietly tell staff that "they wanted to sit in the living room a little longer."*



# Our Three Pillars



## 1. Support Aging in Place

### Our why:

- 93% of BC seniors hope to live independently at home as long as possible
- Many will fall short of their goal due to safety, health, or financial concerns
- Gaps in community care programs can burden family caregivers too

### Our impact in 2023-24:

- **152 seniors** helped through **SAFE Lifeline**, free home medical alarms to at-risk, low-income seniors on southern Vancouver Island
- **439 seniors per month** served through **Adult Day Programs** in the West Shore, at the Summit and Mobile.
- We also support:
  - **Community Bathing Programs** in Victoria and the West Shore
  - The **Piercy Respite Hotel** for seniors with chronic illnesses
  - A new partnership to distribute **robotic pet companions** to isolated seniors in the community.



Program support made possible by donations in 2023-24:

**\$150,931**

## 2. Enhance Long-Term Care

### Our why:

- Long-term care costs 80% of a senior's after-tax income
- Many pensioners don't have enough leftover to cover personal care costs
- Many residents suffer from social isolation, a lack of personalized care, and feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and depression.

### Our impact in 2023-24:

- **856 long-term care residents supported by Eldercare** on Vancouver Island, an increase of 22% over last year. Our goal is to continue to work in partnership to support even more long-term care residents on Vancouver Island in the coming years.
- Some of the ways your donations help us enhance long-term care:
  - Entertainment, music, and art therapy sessions
  - Special equipment and technology such as OMI Interactive Projectors, wheelchairs, iPads and more
  - Enhancements such as ice cream days, gardening programs and BBQs
- We have seen an uptick in demand – and support for – our **Resident-in-Need Fund** to provide vital personal care items for low-income seniors. At right is Sasha Seguin, a social worker at Aberdeen care home.

*"We are so grateful to Eldercare donors for helping us restore dignity to some of our most vulnerable residents," says Sasha.*



Program support made possible by donations in 2023-24:

**\$583,071**



### 3. Advance Knowledge

#### Our why:

- Research and education can help improve care to meet the needs of seniors
- Life expectancy was 65 years when most current care residents were born
- As Canadians live longer, chronic illness rates are rising

#### Our impact in 2023-24:

- Each year we offer **11 awards and education funds** aimed at improving care available to seniors for:
  - Island Health staff seeking to advance their skills and knowledge
  - Research students at UVic and Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health
  - Nursing and Health Care Assistant students at Camosun College
  - \$19,500 in awards (including awards administered by partners)
  - \$20,240 for public education through Embrace Aging Month and free senior-focused programs and workshops at the Yakimovich Wellness Centre year-round, in partnership with Island Health

*“Your support not only eased my financial burden but encouraged me to pursue a career that brings joy and fulfillment to my life,” says Keiko Okubo, Camosun College graduate and recipient of our Health Care Assistant Award.*

Program support made possible by donations in 2023-24:

**\$219,740**



# Treasurer's report

Thanks to the generosity of donors, including the transformational bequest announced last year, the Foundation has never been in a stronger financial position to help local seniors. Buoyed by \$2.2 million in donations and investment income, Eldercare's unrestricted assets now total \$36,279,480.

On the strength of this financial success, Eldercare dramatically increased its investments to enhance care and quality of life programs. Grants to Island Health and other community initiatives totaled more than \$1.1 million, up from \$305,404 in the previous year. Two busses for local care homes, and the first \$200,000 installment of a 5-year pledge to create a new care home in Comox, were the most significant expenditures.

Otherwise, Eldercare's approach to the year was a cautious one. Administrative and fundraising expenses were in line with previous years, as the organization took time to explore emerging opportunities to support our aging population. The lone exceptions were some one-time salary charges related to the departure of Eldercare's long-time Executive Director, Lori McLeod.

In sum, thanks to your outstanding support, Eldercare is well-positioned to help ensure more seniors than ever before are given the chance to age with dignity.

Sincerely,

Annette Pardais  
Treasurer, Eldercare Foundation

## Improving quality of life for long-term care residents



Just in time for a January cold snap, donations to Eldercare enabled the purchase of brand new comforters to help keep residents at the Aberdeen and Priory care homes, as well as guests at the Piercy Respite Hotel, comfy and warm. Every gift you give to Eldercare really does improve quality of life for those in need!



## Eldercare donors set the wheels in motion



Thank you to the incredible donors, Eldercare purchased new accessible buses for long-term care residents at Aberdeen, Glengarry, Summit, and Summit Adult Day Program clients.

*"The ability to offer bus outings is so important to residents' overall quality of life," says Denese Alexander, a recreation therapist at Glengarry.*

*"It gives them something to look forward to and a chance to get off the unit and experience the community they live in."*



## Community spreads joy over the holidays



Thanks to generous community donors, Eldercare ran another successful **Stocking Stuffers for Seniors** program at several London Drugs locations in November and December 2023.

Christmas trees displayed in-store were covered with holiday wish lists created for local seniors living in long-term care who no longer have family to buy them presents.

Thank you for making the holiday season a little brighter for local seniors. Since it began five years ago, *Stocking Stuffers for Seniors* has spread joy to 943 seniors in long-term care!

*Thanks to all our volunteers for helping out, including Philip Friesen and Emily Pridham, both Long-Term Care Directors at Island Health.*

## A gift of companionship and connection

Research shows that robotic companion pets may be an effective solution for alleviating loneliness in older adults, especially among those who live alone and have fewer social connections.

Thanks to generous Eldercare donors, companion pets have brought comfort to seniors in long-term care across Victoria for several years. As part of our efforts to support aging in place and increase connections with local seniors, we recently expanded our reach into the community.

In 2024, we partnered with Oak Bay Volunteer Services (OBVS) to distribute pets to isolated seniors at home. To date, more than 50 cats and dogs have been adopted. Plans are underway for more community partnerships across Vancouver Island in the coming year.

Kari, a client from our OBVS partnership who lives in an assisted living facility in Oak Bay, shared this letter of thanks:



*Dear Eldercare Donors,*

*It is with gratitude and appreciation that I am writing to you this day!*

*A few weeks ago, I added a new member to my family. She is a beautiful Cocker Spaniel that I call Spirit. From the moment I took her out of her box, I felt like a little girl again and could not stop smiling!*

*Every day I turn her on and talk to her and she responds with barks and sighs. I give her massages and ask her to wag her tail. Sometimes she does wag her tail if I massage the right spot. Every day she brings a big smile to my heart and face!*

*Spirit is an absolute treasure, and she keeps me young.*

*Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts,*

*Kari & Spirit*



## Celebrating a milestone pledge

In May 2024, we marked our commitment of \$1M in support of Providence Living at The Views in Comox at an event at the Yakimovich Wellness Centre. It featured Mark Blandford, President and CEO of Providence Living, who spoke about the transformative social-relational model of care which includes a first-of-its-kind five-year research study.

The research study, led by the Centre for Advancing Health Outcomes, aims to provide insights to build more person-centred care villages across the province and beyond – as well as how the model could be implemented in existing homes. The study was a key motivator in Eldercare's contribution.

“When it comes to moving the needle towards positive change, in our 40 years of experience we’ve seen that research is vital,” says Tom Arnold, Eldercare’s Executive Director. “Good ideas come and go, but good ideas backed up by research create new paradigms of care. If the research shows improved quality of life for seniors and reduced or defrayed costs for the health care system, then there’s no way that this won’t get adopted elsewhere.”



L-R: Liz McCarter, Yakimovich Wellness Centre Coordinator; Phaethon Blackburn, Eldercare Board Director; Tom Arnold, Eldercare Executive Director; Mark Blandford, President and CEO, Providence Living; Jeanette Funke-Furber, Eldercare Board Director (President); Mary Ellen Purkis, Eldercare Board Director (Secretary); Annette Pardais, Eldercare Board Director (Treasurer)



## Get involved with Eldercare

To all those who are part of our charitable community, we extend our deep thanks and appreciation.

If you believe that ***every senior deserves a chance to age with dignity***, please consider supporting Eldercare. There are many ways to get involved: make a donation, host a fundraiser, or follow us on social and help us spread the word.

Please join us. Together, we can improve quality of life for seniors across Vancouver Island.

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