



Atlantic Cancer Support Fund

A look at last year's highlights and progress



Canadian
Cancer
Society

2022 Atlantic Impact Report
1-888-939-3333 | [CANCER.CA](https://cancer.ca)



A Message of Gratitude

Every day someone is diagnosed with cancer in the Atlantic region, and each day you are helping them. Whether that person needs financial aid from the Travel Treatment Fund, wants to know about diet and nutrition while undergoing cancer treatment, or needs a place to rest and heal while they are far from home, you are offering support to your neighbours.

We hope as you read through this report, you know the impact you have had on so many in the Atlantic region. It takes a strong community to make a difference and we are so appreciative of your commitment.

Together, we will continue to make lives better today and transform the future of cancer forever.

“There is nothing more important than our health. Giving to an organization such as the Canadian Cancer Society is one of the most important and impactful acts that citizens can undertake.”

– Diane Campbell, former Board Member and donor to CCS



Introducing Chef Adam

Adam has been the chef at The Lodge that Gives in Halifax for the last 8 years. As you might imagine, his favourite room in the Lodge is the kitchen, but it's also one of the guests' favourites as well.

He shares that guests are often scared, lonely and lost when they show up for their first meal.

"But then we see them pick up their tray and someone in the dining room will call over and say 'Hey, come sit with me!' Those little moments make a huge difference and it's something you just wouldn't get staying at a hotel. The dining room is the place to come and socialize with people who get it – they are all going through cancer together. Talk about a powerful support team!"

"It's not just cooking; it really feels like we are part of the healing process. When people are ill, they are not always in a good mood. They are going through tough treatments with some serious side effects. Around the fifth week of radiation, it can be easy to just push the food away and not eat," explains Adam.

Adam has built a unique skill set at the Lodge. When guests lose their taste buds after treatments like upper chest radiation, he can reassure them that it's okay, it's normal, and that it will come back in a week or so. But he's noticed that's also when appetites tend to decrease, so he puts a lot of energy into the colour and visual presentation of the meals to help guests get through those difficult times.

You are part of the caring community who helps Adam pay for nutritious ingredients.

On behalf of Adam and all the guests who use the Lodge, thank you for providing a piece – and the peace – of home, where everyone is cared for, supported and embraced on their cancer journey. Thank you for proving that they are never far from home.

Lodges

Individual Guests



Atlantic region – **2,047**

Halifax – **741**

St John's – **1,306***

*Estimated

Nights Stayed



Atlantic region – **19,992**

Halifax – **7,978**

St John's – **12,014**

We asked Lodge guests how their stay impacted their emotional well-being during treatment.

Felt supported



Agree **100%**

Able to cope better



Agree **92%**

Neutral **8%**

Felt less anxious



Agree **90%**

Neutral **10%**

Wheels of Hope: Travel Treatment Fund

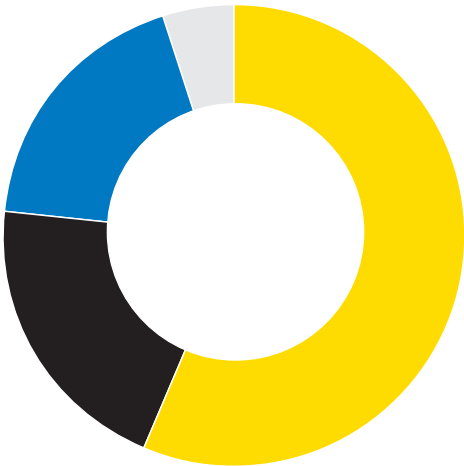
This financial assistance program provides funding to help offset travel costs such as public transit, fuel, accommodations and meals. Clients need to qualify for this fund and provide financial documentation. This grant is available once per year, and ranges from \$150 to \$750 depending on the distance travelled to treatment.



In 2022, 208 people living with cancer and their caregivers made use of travel assistance to offset the financial impact that cancer had on them.

● New Brunswick	119
● Newfoundland*	43
● Nova Scotia	39
● Prince Edward Island	10

*Air Daffodil – flights from Labrador to St. John's



“I don’t think people understand how much the Canadian Cancer Society does in terms of helping people with cancer day-to-day as well as funding research. Any donation will help someone, even if it’s something small like gas money, a wig or a voice on the other end of the line when you need it, any amount makes a huge difference in people’s lives.” – April

April’s daughter Bria was diagnosed with brain cancer at age 12.

Cancer Connection

All too often, people feel alone and isolated because of a cancer diagnosis. Sometimes, their close network of friends and family disappears when the situation gets heavy and intense, especially with advanced or terminal cancers.

But, when others lean out, we lean in – thanks to you.

Because of your support, the community at cancerconnection.ca can act as a lifeline for Canadians going through the emotional and physical challenges from a cancer diagnosis.

In 2022, 4,060 Atlantic Canadians accessed this critical support, but we know there are many others who are visiting but aren't ready to post and share. The public nature of the forum allows for people to find the answers they are looking for and gain a supportive network of people with similar lived experiences.

“It was helpful because a lot of people on there were very positive. They're offering and looking for support, which means so much more coming from people who have been through a cancer diagnosis and treatment.”

**– Dave Desautels,
colorectal cancer survivor**

CancerConnection.ca – English users

Atlantic total – 3,750 users

Nova Scotia – 1,886

New Brunswick – 813

Newfoundland and Labrador – 808

Prince Edward Island – 243

ParlonsCancer.ca – French users

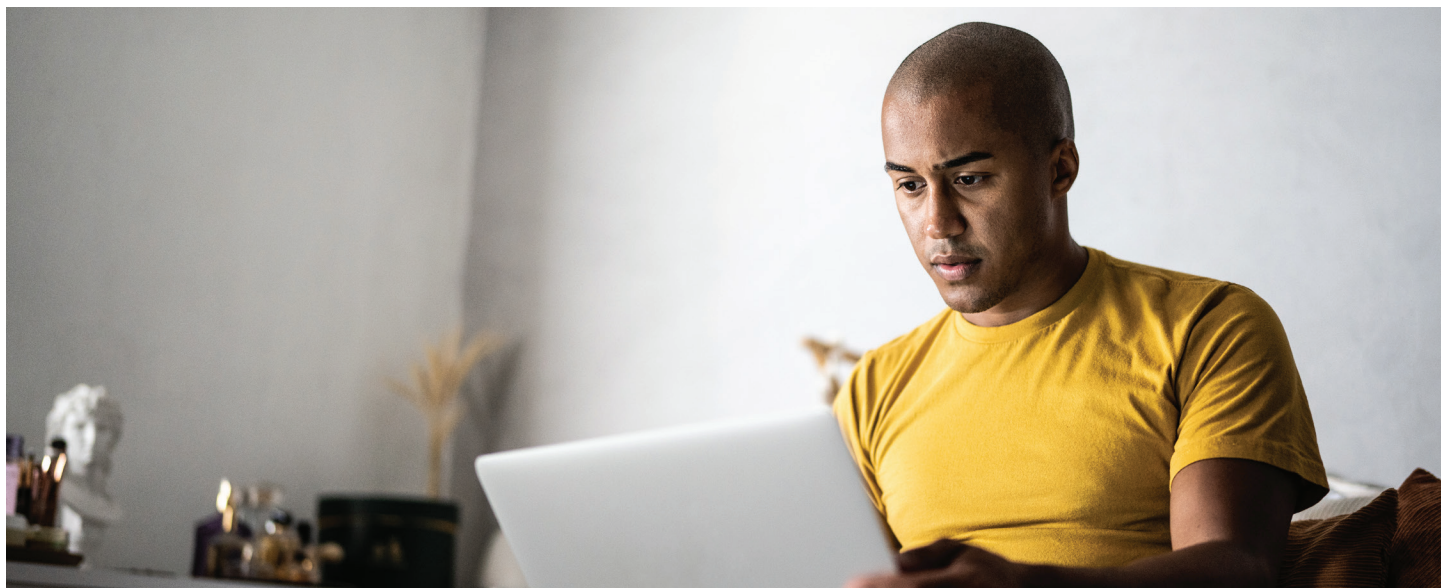
Atlantic total – 310 users

New Brunswick – 208

Nova Scotia – 88

Prince Edward Island – 9

Newfoundland and Labrador – 5



Camp Goodtimes

At the Canadian Cancer Society, we understand that cancer can change a lot of things. Donors like you help to bring some brightness and wonder into a traditionally difficult time.

Thanks to your gift, kids can still have fun, learn exciting things, reach for amazing goals and thrive among friends who understand.

Our summer camps are designed to foster independence, increase confidence and create a safe and caring environment.

Because we champion an inclusive and supportive community, we strive to tailor our programs for all abilities and have medical supervision on site.

Thanks to supporters like you, our camp is offered at no cost to participating families.



Atlantic total — 80 campers

Nova Scotia — 45

New Brunswick — 34

Newfoundland and Labrador*

Prince Edward Island — 1



*CCS provides financial support for travel. Campers in NFLD attend Camp Delight operated by the Candlelighter's Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.

“It felt good to finally be like, okay, I’m not the only one that went through this. It’s not weird, it’s a normal thing. It’s something to be proud of, not embarrassed of. If I didn’t go to camp, I would never have developed the confidence that I have now. I’d probably still be in my shell about it.”

Kayleigh Mackay, Camp Goodtimes guest

[Click here to watch: Back at Camp Goodtimes | Canadian Cancer Society](#)



Wendy Black was an incredibly dedicated Camp Goodtimes supporter and friend who passed away last year. She was a remarkable person who adored helping others. She believed whole-heartedly that children with a history of cancer should have the chance to experience camp. Her selflessness and compassion for others inspired the creation of an award to acknowledge camp staff or volunteers who went the extra mile to make Camp Goodtimes a special place. Her impact will live on for years to come.

Thanks to you, sickness benefits have drastically improved

50th birthday celebrations are usually a time of joy and celebration.

However, David's milestone birthday was the day he was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in 2013. The day after his birthday, David and his partner Kathy were wrapping their heads around how their lives would change. He was a self-employed carpenter and longtime resident of Westville, Nova Scotia.

While he was going through treatment, David worried about supporting his family financially. Before his diagnosis he was earning a good wage but the coverage he received through the federally provided Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefit was only a fraction of his pre-cancer earnings. His income decreased quickly from \$6,000 a month, to \$1,600 to \$852 in a matter of 4 months.

David was only provided with 15 weeks of coverage through the EI sickness benefit. That didn't seem fair to Kathy, who told David, "I'm going to change this, I'm going to advocate for this cause so that it doesn't affect other people." Kathy joined a team of advocates at CCS who were rallying behind this important issue.

Thanks to the advocacy work you support through this Fund and efforts by Kathy and so many others, the national EI sickness benefit was permanently extended from 15 to 26 weeks, marking the first time it has been increased since the 1970s.

Being able to access 6 months of financial assistance means more time to focus on getting well, getting through treatment and hopefully recovery. It means less time spent worrying about financial hardships. What an impact you have had!



Nova Scotia resident, Kathy McNaughton is passionate about improving EI benefits for everyone across the country.



Working together with the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development & Disability Inclusion, Kathy McNaughton & Andrea Seale, CEO, Canadian Cancer Society, to improve the EI sickness benefit.

Action you can take now!

How can you become an advocate for better cancer care like Kathy?

Visit cancer.ca to take action today: discover volunteer opportunities, find letter templates and contact government officials to make a difference.

Learn more about **The Get Better Campaign** and help make cancer care better.

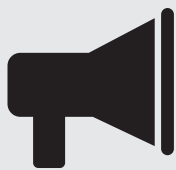
Bringing your voice to decision-makers

As a fellow passionate supporter of the cancer cause, we believe that advocating for better healthcare for people living with or beyond cancer is a top priority.

Over the last year, we have coordinated meetings, press conferences and tours with government officials through both Daffodil Place and The Lodge that Gives in Halifax showcasing the impact these facilities have for Atlantic residents.

With your support, we've seen positive progress in these areas:

- Increased partnerships with provincial government departments through additional funding and outreach projects
- Invitations to meet with government officials and opposition leaders to share expert insights from CCS staff and our team of dedicated patients, healthcare providers and researchers
- Media coverage that elevates topics like how to improve cancer screening rates and access to cancer care for residents in rural and remote communities



Advocacy Team and youth ambassadors collecting signatures for the Campaign to Stop Big Tobacco, calling on governments to hold Big Tobacco accountable while negotiations are underway to settle a \$500 billion lawsuit against the tobacco industry to ensure that any settlement will include effective health measures.



Donors like you have helped us take the information from 5 nationwide surveys, focus groups and roundtables with Canadians with cancer, their caregivers and healthcare providers to find out about their cancer experience. Last year, we compiled this feedback into [Living at the crossroads of COVID-19 and cancer](#), to identify changes that are needed and offer guidance on how to make cancer care better.

COVID-19 had an impact on the cancer screening process, with a significant drop over each of the Atlantic provinces. The data shows the decrease in cancer screening completed in March to December 2020, compared with the same time period in 2019.

Reduction in cancer screening

Cancer screening type	AB	BC	NB	NL	NS	ON	PE	QC
Breast cancer	▼68%	▼37%		▼39%	▼62%	▼53%	▼18%	▼37%
Colorectal cancer	▼35%	▼13%	▼29%	▼25%	▼65%	▼56%	▼31%	▼30%
Cervical cancer	▼26%	▼39%	▼28%	▼23%	▼35%	▼47%	▼76%	

Youth in Action – taking a stand

Over the last year, the CCS Advocacy Team has been working with high school students in New Brunswick to [increase the legal age to purchase tobacco and e-cigarettes to 21](#). We are so excited to see a group of enthusiastic young people use their creativity and passion for an important issue.

Through the creation of a campaign video, we are asking the New Brunswick government to follow the lead of Prince Edward Island and make the purchase of these products illegal to anyone under 21 years of age. Projects like this are a great example of how your support is giving young people in Atlantic Canada a voice in a way that will impact generations to come.

Continuing this work, CCS is leading a tobacco and e-cigarette coalition with other stakeholders including New Brunswick Medical Society, Heart & Stroke of New Brunswick and New Brunswick Lung Association.

[Click here to watch: Help to end youth vaping in New Brunswick](#)



You gave us a voice on the global stage

Representatives from CCS presented at the **World Cancer Congress** in Paris last year.



Topics discussed:

- Reducing barriers for people with advanced cancer
- Banning flavoured tobacco products
- Cancer prevention planning
- Printing health warnings on cigarettes
- New technologies in smoking cessation

Cancer Information Helpline

Thanks to you, people from all across the Atlantic provinces can access this toll-free service whether they live in Halifax or Port Rexton. For every call, there is a kind, informative voice on the other end of the line.

Here are just a few of the questions we hear from people who are looking for clarity and guidance:

- How do I deal with cancer fatigue while raising young kids?
- My mom wants to quit smoking, but I don't know how to help her.
- I'm looking for virtual options for caregiver support. Can you help me?
- Are there any programs that can help with financial assistance during treatment?
- I have some symptoms I'm worried about, but I don't have a doctor. What can I do?

Over the last 2 years, we have worked on an innovative pilot program with provincial 811 lines in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. When someone shares that they have cancer or are caring for a loved one with cancer, they are asked if they would like to be referred to the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Helpline. The feedback received from the 811 nursing team has been very positive. We received 36 referrals from the provincial 811 lines last year.

Thanks to donor generosity, we have also completed an in-depth discussion with people who have advanced cancer to find out how they can be better supported through their cancer journey. Many expressed their frustration because they couldn't find the help they needed. Armed with this knowledge, we have provided new training for staff at the Cancer Information Helpline to listen for and recognize these unique challenges and added new programs and services for people living with advanced cancer to our Community Services Locator.

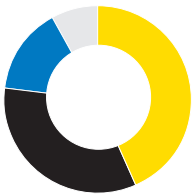


Thanks to you, there are trained professionals standing by to help ease their concerns and to point people in the right direction.

Cancer Information Helpline

Atlantic — 1,512 users

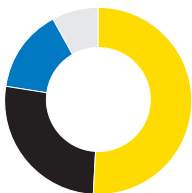
● Nova Scotia	788
● New Brunswick	611
● Newfoundland	272
● Prince Edward Island	141



Community Service Locator

Atlantic — 3,174 users

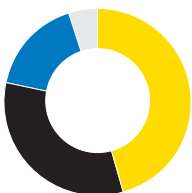
● Nova Scotia	1,620
● New Brunswick	842
● Newfoundland	463
● Prince Edward Island	249



Cancer.ca

Atlantic — 204,107 users

● Nova Scotia	93,336
● New Brunswick	66,581
● Newfoundland	34,006
● Prince Edward Island	10,184



Homework session leads to a life changing moment: Danielle's Story

One night at the beginning of the pandemic, 35-year-old mom of 5, Danielle Smith joined a virtual call with a classmate from her nursing program. The two had decided to practice respiratory assessments together, an essential skill for all nurses, and were performing physical examinations on their chests.

"I was trying to find this one space by my ribs, and instead, I found a lump on the side of my left breast," says Danielle from Wolfville, Nova Scotia. "There wasn't one on the other side. The first rule in nursing is that breasts should be the same on both sides – I knew something was wrong."

During Danielle's cancer treatment, one of her worries was how she would feel after losing her hair from the chemotherapy – and how to finance the cost of a wig, which can range anywhere from a few hundred to more than a thousand dollars. But a call to the Canadian Cancer Society Helpline helped alleviate some of her stress.

"I had a virtual consultation, and then I got to choose whether I wanted synthetic or real hair, the colour I want and the length. It arrived three days later," says Danielle. "I felt so relieved that it was free, and that it wasn't another expense I had to worry about. And the wig was very close to my actual hair colour, length and style."

"The wig bank also sent me a chemo cap, which helped a lot," says Danielle. "I wore it to bed pretty much every night when I started to lose my hair. My scalp was uncomfortable, but the cap kept my head a perfect temperature."



Danielle Smith and two of her children

"To those who donate to support programs like the Wig Bank, I just want to say a big thank you," says Danielle. "Thank you doesn't even really seem like enough. If I could, I would hug them all."

Breast prosthesis and wig services



Atlantic total
1,023 prostheses
distributed



Atlantic total
708 wigs
distributed

Your support is truly a gift.



Thank you for your compassion, and for caring about your friends and neighbours in Atlantic Canada. Your support goes further than you can imagine – helping Danielle find a wig, helping Kathy advocate for EI benefits, and helping Adam provide the best service for people staying at the Lodge.



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