

# Living Well

Spring/Summer 2026 Newsletter



## Expanding impact across Ottawa

### You're helping reach more people in the city's west end

Following a successful pilot, The Ottawa Cancer Foundation has launched a west-end location of our Community Cancer Hub at 3865 Old Richmond Road.

The Community Cancer Hub West operates out of Hollyer House, which is also home to a branch of the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre and FAMSAC Food Cupboard. "We thought that was a really great fit for our mission and the types of supports we want to provide," explains Jessica Plourde, Program Coordinator.

**Programming currently runs on Mondays, with 104 visits already to the new location in its first month of operations.**

The west-end hub is part of The Ottawa Cancer Foundation's efforts to break down barriers for people in need of supportive cancer care. "We were hearing that gas and time were both obstacles for people coming to our main location," recalls Jessica. "This way, people can pop in for a program then easily get back to the rest of their day."

Mondays typically begin with an informational workshop followed by a gentle yoga session and mindfulness meditation. Different kinds of programs like nutrition workshops or kids' support circles are offered in the evenings.

"Right away, we're seeing people developing connections with one another," Jessica shares excitedly. "That social support is very impactful. We're already hearing that people would like to see services expand across more days of the week."

### Supporters like you are growing community for people impacted by cancer – across every part of our city.

"It's so nice to see the smiles every week. Having this Hub close to home is really uplifting for people."



### We thought that

was a really great fit for our mission and the types of supports we want to provide."

~ Jessica, Program Coordinator



## Breaking down barriers, together

***You're connecting Black communities to supportive cancer care***

Anthonette Jacob has always considered herself an entrepreneur at heart. But after owning first a clothing store and then a spa, she realised it was community work that was her true passion. "I love bringing people together," she explains.

When Anthonette was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2021, she decided to make her dream of a community hub come true. While undergoing radiation treatment, Anthonette began work on what would become Ottawa's African, Caribbean & Black Wellness Resource Centre (ACB Wellness).



**This is fabulous,**

We couldn't have asked for a better partnership."

~ Anthonette Jacobs,  
Board Member

"I wanted it to be the kind of place I would have sought out when I was younger," Anthonette recalls. "A place where I felt at home and could go for resources."

Her own journey with breast cancer made Anthonette keenly aware of the need for more cancer supports tailored to the needs of Black communities. "We're often left out, not seen or invited to the table as decisionmakers," she explains.

Wanting to raise awareness, Anthonette developed a docuseries called Cancer While Black. She was surprised by how reluctant many people were to appear on camera. "There is a lot of silence around cancer in Black communities," she reflects. "But my instinct was to reach out for support. Including people in your journey is what gives you strength."

**Anthonette was particularly shocked by the lack of Canadian-specific data she found around race and cancer following her diagnosis. Now, with help from supporters like you, The Ottawa Cancer Foundation and ACB Wellness have partnered on a study exploring how cancer impacts Black women in our city.**

"We are ecstatic that this is happening, that we have the opportunity for a real partnership," Anthonette says. In addition to serving as President of ACB Wellness, she also sits on The Ottawa Cancer Foundation's Board.

Both organizations are now working together to fill gaps in supportive cancer care for Black community members. People who first reach out to ACB Wellness are given a warm handover to the Foundation's Community Cancer Hub, where they can access our full range of programs.

"It's a real collaboration between the two of us," Anthonette explains. "You need to reach people where they are, and for many Black community members that's here at ACB Wellness. We're able to explain The Ottawa Cancer Foundation's services and help them feel more comfortable seeking support."

**You're helping break down barriers for Black community members needing supportive cancer care.**



## Feeding wellness

### ***You're reaching more people with cancer-specific nutritional supports***

For people living with cancer, food can become complicated.

"Treatment may affect appetite, taste, digestion, and energy levels, making everyday meals more challenging," explains Jill Burns, Director of Community Partnerships and Programs.

The Ottawa Cancer Foundation's Nourish program supports people through these challenges. Originally created by Wellspring in Toronto, Nourish offers guidance from a registered dietitian along with hands-on cooking and shared meals. It focuses on clear, reliable nutrition guidance and realistic strategies to manage side effects and support wellbeing.

"The Nourish program creates a safe space for participants to come together and ask questions and to learn which foods and patterns of eating will support their wellbeing best," Jill says.

**Over time, it became clear there was a growing need for accessible, practical nutrition support. Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, The Ottawa Cancer Foundation was able to expand the Nourish program to run across two locations.**

Operating at both the Maplesoft-Jones Centre and our west-end hub, Nourish now runs for ten months of the year to help reach more people throughout their cancer journey. "The west-end expansion has reduced geographic barriers for participants who previously faced longer travel times to attend sessions," Jill shares.

**Nourish has seen a 65% increase in participation year over year. That number is a testament to how you're helping more people in our community impacted by cancer.**

Supporters like you have also helped grow partnerships to expand the Nourish program's reach. "Accessibility means recognizing the diverse communities we serve," Jill explains. "Through partnerships with community organizations such as Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Community Health and Resource Centres, the program continues to adapt its approach to reflect cultural food practices and community needs."

The Nourish program's reach is also strengthened through collaboration with three registered dietitians working in the community, allowing the program to reflect a diversity of expertise and perspectives.

**"Donor support makes this work possible," Jill says. Thank you for nourishing the wellbeing of people affected by cancer!**



### **Box Breathing**

Box Breathing is a simple, powerful relaxation technique that lowers blood pressure, enhances focus, and calms the mind.

#### **How to Practice Box Breathing:**

- **Sit Upright:** Sit in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor and your hands relaxed in your lap, encouraging a straight posture.
- **Exhale:** Slowly exhale through your mouth, releasing all the air from your lungs.
- **Inhale (4 seconds):** Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose to a slow count of four, filling your lungs.
- **Hold (4 seconds):** Hold your breath for a count of four.
- **Exhale (4 seconds):** Exhale slowly through your mouth (or nose) for a count of four.
- **Hold (4 seconds):** Hold your lungs empty for a count of four.
- **Repeat:** Repeat this cycle 3–5 times, or as needed for a sense of calm.

*It is recommended to practice this for 3-5 minutes, 1-2 times a day.*



### **The generosity of**

donors allows us to work with registered dietitians across the city, expanding access to evidence-based nutrition support for those facing cancer in the community."

~ Jill Burns





# Meeting people where they're at

**You're helping programs become more accessible for clients**

"I discovered the Community Cancer Hub's West End location in January, and I'm so glad that I did! It was right at a time in my life when I was ready to take the next steps on my path to post-treatment cancer recovery.

**Program participation has been key in achieving the small positive changes that I needed to begin regaining physical and mental strength and stamina.**

I have been participating in Monday yoga and meditation sessions. I have only

positive things to say about the instructor, Kathy and staff member, Jessica. Kathy's sessions are warm and welcoming. She has a real knack for creating and supporting a safe space for strengthening and healing both mind and body. Jessica, too, is perfectly suited for her role as host. She is warm, welcoming and an excellent resource, always with a smile."

**Supporters like you are expanding programming. The West Hub will offer a wider variety of support this fall.**



**I remain grateful**

for the service offered at the West Hub and look forward to hopefully, more offerings in the future."

~ **Doreen,**  
Cancer Community West Hub client

## TOCF Support Squad

We're lacing up for the Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend 5K and we'd love for you to walk or run with us.



**Register for the 5K at Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend**

Visit [justgiving.com/team/tocfsupportsquad](https://justgiving.com/team/tocfsupportsquad) or scan the QR code.

Hit **JOIN TEAM** and create your fundraising page.



## SIP, SHARE, & SUPPORT CANCER CARE!

Get ready for the sweetest fundraiser of the year! Host a lemonade stand and support local families facing cancer in our community.



Support or register a stand today!

→ squeeze the day ←

## Petals With Purpose

JOIN US TO SEE OUR **TULIP TRIBUTE GARDEN BLOOMING** IN HONOUR & IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

**WHEN:** 1-2 P.M. SATURDAY, MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> (RAIN OR SHINE)

**WHERE:** THE OTTAWA CANCER FOUNDATION (1500 ALTA VISTA DRIVE)

Reserve your tulip bulbs for fall planting with a donation today Visit [OttawaCancer.ca/PetalsWithPurpose](https://OttawaCancer.ca/PetalsWithPurpose) or scan the QR code

RESERVE YOUR TULIPS NOW:

