



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2021-2022

There is a positive reality that no pandemic can change: NOVA will always take care of its community. Although much of the world came to a standstill over two years ago, our core mandate to provide care and services to our community could not be put on hold. We contributed to the welfare of 583 vulnerable individuals (6 to 102 years of age) in 20 municipalities.

We also learned that at NOVA West Island, status quo is not part of our vocabulary. Despite the worldwide pandemic, our front-line workers comprised of our nurses, Home Support and Adult Day Center Health Aides, bereavement specialists, as well as our administrative and coordination staff have demonstrated creativity, flexibility and resilience without ever losing our caring and professional touch. We all are spokes in the NOVA wheel and everyone's contribution makes the wheel go round. This past year, we continued to address our clients' bio-psycho-social needs, but the pandemic still added a layer of complexity to all we do. Despite having the experience and expertise to provide these programs and services, I would be remiss not to mention once again the impact of this work on our staff in terms of the physical demands, the emotional toll, and the increased workload.

Our yearly program evaluations confirmed that we are doing important work and have a positive impact on our clients, families, caregivers and community organizations. Please allow me to share with you the highlights of our different programs, supported by our fiscal statistics as well as client testimonials for each one of them:

NURSING CARE PROGRAM: Since December 2020, we expanded our admission criteria to include all palliative care patients, not just cancer and ALS clients, and this represented an extra 27 people that we cared for. We accompanied 67 patients and families in home deaths. *"Mum passed away peacefully in her sleep, three weeks ago, after a short but aggressive fight with cancer. Nova West Island was there with her, helping her physically and emotionally. You have all been a really important part of our lives, in tending to dad during his illness, helping us all heal after his passing, and tending to Mum during her illness as well. You've offered love, respect and treated us all with dignity, and that is something*

we are so thankful for. Thank you for your presence in our lives, and thank you for all the pure good that you do in helping those afflicted with illness, continue their journey, remain strong and in helping those left to pick up the pieces, deal with grief and learn to cope. I can't begin to express how thankful we really are.” (Mrs. G, daughter of palliative care patients - November 2021). “The nurses go way beyond the call of duty” (Mrs. C., daughter of palliative care patient).

BEREAVEMENT PROGRAMS: Reinvention of the Adult Bereavement Program from support group sessions to individualized phone counselling back to groups in physical presence. *“J’ai eu la chance et le bonheur d’avoir une intervenante en deuil. J’ai vraiment cheminé avec elle car elle m’a aidée comme aucune autre personne ne m’a aidée. Elle m’a donné de judicieux conseils sans jamais m’imposer quoi que ce soit. Une personne très chaleureuse, compatissante, empathique, d’une voix tellement douce. Elle était d’une écoute admirable me laissant parler et m’exprimer à ma guise. Je lui ai confié toutes mes peines, elle était tellement attentive. Elle m’a fait un grand bien. Je recommande le groupe de soutien pour adultes endeuillés de NOVA à toutes les personnes dans le deuil. Une professionnelle comme on a rarement vue. J’aurais aimé être en zoom avec elle puisque je ne l’ai jamais vue. Elle m’a donné une boîte à outils que je conserverai longtemps. Je la recommande fortement, une perle rare.” (Mme G., septembre 2021).*

The Carousel Program for children was less active this past year, what with the school closures and visiting restrictions, but it still impacted many youths as captured by this testimonial: *“It helps me deal with my grief for my grandpa. Even though I’ve tried to concentrate on happier things, sometimes I still all of a sudden really miss him, so the books helped me a lot. I’ll always miss him, but I have to move on. Thank you, Carol, for letting me read the books. Thank you. It’s hard losing someone you love, like in the “Rabbit that Listened” book, something you worked on is destroyed. I’ve learned quite a bit thanks to those books. Thank you, thank you, thank you.” (Phoenix, age 10). A total of 12 children were seen individually, tabulating 65 visits in 10 different schools in 9 municipalities. Nine adults were also seen, for a total of 60 visits. “What an amazing lifeline the facilitator provided to me during these past months, especially given the isolation. All activities & topics were very useful and she aligned to the themes that were most important to me. She is compassionate, understanding, non-judgmental yet has a great ability to encourage me to dive further into the grieving. This is truly an invaluable service to the community. She was an angel! Absolutely fantastic. Finally put my mother to rest. My heart is full of love.” (Mrs. H, 2021).*

ADULT DAY CENTER PROGRAM: We continued with our virtual activities and in-home stimulation programs; we had a record-breaking year in terms of students and organized an intergenerational project with a preschool. *“Thank you to the great folks at NOVA West Island for the support you have provided especially as the Day Center is no longer operational. The coordinator, along with the health aides and volunteers have been like family. Your concern, sincerity and good humour have lifted the spirits of Mrs. C. and I have no doubt that you have contributed to her mental and physical well-being. I am constantly amazed how her resistance to the upcoming telephone calls as well as the Zoom sessions are immediately changed to joy at the sound of your voices and the sight of your friendly faces. As her caregiver, I am sincerely grateful for all you do. You help make ours a joyful journey. Along with thanks, I would like to wish you many blessings, today and always.”* (Mr., C. caregiver of ADC member, October 2021). *“The NOVA team has been such a support! Their patience with the people they work with is such a value. Their attention to everyone’s needs – including caregivers is to be commended. I am so happy to be able to benefit from this wonderful organization.”* (Mrs. B., daughter of ADC member).

HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM: We are still in the process of recruiting new Home Health Aides and were successful in securing new clients during this past year. Again, our Home Health Aides only cared for one home support client per day. *“I am VERY very grateful for the HA’s visits to my father. Now that the rockiness of the autumn has settled where my father has gone to feeling his independence was compromised just because someone was checking on him, to looking forward to the visits and what they represent”.* (Mrs. G., November 2021). *“...the Health Aide is doing a fantastic job, as are the staff of NOVA. This is a very necessary service that provides families with a sense of reassurance with their compassion and empathy. We are very pleased with the work the HHA provides”.* (Anonymous, March 2022).

Our hard work of identifying new potential foundations and corporations paid off. This past fiscal year, we were able to secure donations from 1 new foundation and 1 new corporation, not to mention that many recurrent donors increased their contributions. In addition, the annual campaign was more successful than it has ever been, raising an unprecedented \$162,000! The community continues to rally around us and support our work. Over 65 community organizations, foundations, municipalities, elected officials and corporations feel that the work we do is worthy of their support. In terms of fundraising, we organized new fundraisers such as Les amis du village Beaufort (Holiday Market) with the support of community groups.

We also reinvented existing fundraisers, such as a virtual art exposition with members of the Lakeshore Artists Association, and new third-party fundraisers such as the Palos Wealth Management golf shoot-out, Provigo Baie D'Urfe, Zen chez-vous and the Chartwell Walkathon. Of note, the very successful Thrift Shops for NOVA, operated and managed by a different board of directors, succeeded in continuing to support us and adapted the stores accordingly. Despite the pandemic, we were able to do eight presentations on Zoom and in physical presence, staff two community booths and establish new networking relationships with four community organizations.

We went through many operational and organizational changes since our last AGM in June 2021. We hired a marketing and communications agent, which resulted in a marked increase in our social media presence, we implemented a new payroll system, one nurse retired and two more nurses are retiring this fiscal year, and we recruited new volunteers including board members, ADC volunteers and drivers. We initiated an Evergreening process in order to ensure all staff members are equipped with the proper technology and working tools. We met our main objectives for 2021-2022 in that we upgraded our website and worked on our strategic plan, but unfortunately, we were not able to organize a volunteer event in physical presence.

2022-2023 has already been a busy and cornerstone year for NOVA as we are implementing our Hybrid ADC Program, proceeding with salary adjustments, and integrating new ADC staff and nurses – not to mention the many fundraising activities, including 3rd party events, that are planned for this year.

Thank you to the staff and board members for all your hard work and support, to the volunteers for your dedication, to the many community partners for networking with us, to our ambassadors for your donations and to our many clients and families for trusting us with your care.

Respectfully submitted by Marie-France Juneau
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie-France Juneau', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.