



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2022-2023

There is a positive reality that cannot be changed: NOVA will always take care of its community. Pandemic or not, healthcare cuts or gaps, our core mandate to provide care and services to our community is never put on hold. In fact, last year alone, we contributed to the welfare of 663 vulnerable individuals (6 to 105 years of age) in 20 municipalities which represents an overall increase of 14% since last year and does not include the impact we have on the caregivers and the community in general.

The cornerstone of Nova's work is our client and family centered care. In all our programs and services, we strive to meet our clients where they are at in order to meet their needs and those of their caregivers. For example, our nurses accompany palliative care patients in home deaths, our Senior Activity Program staff provide clients with activities and programming based on their skills and interests, our children bereavement program is respectful of the children's chronological and developmental age, our Adult Bereavement Support Group is adapting its hours and increasing the number of sessions, our Home Support staff offers around the clock care, and our volunteers support us in all our programs. The impact of our services was publicly recognized as we were the proud Recipient of the Community Service Award - Accolades 2022 – La Chambre de commerce de l'Ouest-de-l'Île de Montréal.

Our front-line workers comprised of nurses, Home Support and Senior Activity Program health aides, bereavement specialists, as well as our administrative and coordination staff continue to demonstrate 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.

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: In December 2020, we expanded our admission criteria to include all palliative care patients, not just cancer and ALS clients, and this represented an extra 60 people that we cared for compared to 27 last year. We accompanied 82 patients and families in home deaths compared to 67 last year representing a 22% increase.

“Dear NOVA nurses, you function as a team, like the fingers of a hand. My husband and I are grateful for each and everyone of you. You answered the phone; you came no matter the day, willing to share your expertise, knowledge and advice. Together, and only with your tireless help, we supported my husband in his wish to stay home to the end. I pray you will find the strength and stamina to continue to provide your invaluable service. I will never forget your generous spirit and kindness towards us. Much love & gratitude, Nancy” (February 2023).

"Vous avoir l'équipe de NOVA West Island a été un cadeau pour toute la famille. Votre gentillesse, votre patience, votre écoute, vos appels téléphoniques, vos visites à domicile, nous reconfortaient. Nous nous sentions épaulés pour traverser cette épreuve dans la sérénité. " (Famille de patient de soins palliatifs, mai 2023).

« During the slow decline of my wife as a result of cancer, NOVA people were of great assistance as nurses, counsellors, and suppliers of useful equipment...These services are most valuable to people in need, and having them so available locally is a bonus. At a time when health care in Quebec is so challenged, the existence of NOVA is a positive benefit to the community" (Robert, May 2023).

BEREAVEMENT PROGRAMS: The 8-week free closed support group sessions of our Adult Bereavement Program continued to help vulnerable people who must deal with the loss of a loved one. In fact, we supported 18 adults in bereavement groups last year and here are some testimonials of the level of satisfaction of participants: "I felt lonely and misunderstood by friends. I felt I could share here." "You can relate to others. You're not alone. Non judgemental space. Safe space." (Spring 2022). "The acceptance and nonjudgment of people who understand what you are going through". "This group was very important and special to me. I hope they can continue this group and help those who need it" (Fall 2022).

As we continuously evaluate the community's needs, we even started this fiscal year by adding a session to respond to the needs of more people.

The Carousel Program for children was less active this past year, but it still impacted many youths as captured by this testimonial: "On behalf of the school, I would like to thank you for the sessions you provided X with. It was very helpful for him to address his bereavement and the sessions were an appropriate context to do it. It allowed him to have a safe space to talk about his feelings. At school, we noticed that he stopped mentioning the loss of his mother during class hours since he started to meet with you. Considering his difficulties to express his thoughts and feelings, X was able to overcome those obstacles when you showed him a creative way to talk about his pain. Best regards, Idriss, School Psychologist" (June 2022).

Of note, the Founder and Coordinator of Carousel, Carol Jonas, retired after 20 years with NOVA and we have a new colleague Psychologist Cynthia Stephan-Rayes who started with us in May. We are currently working on expanding our community outreach and our next weekend bereavement camp is scheduled for September.

SENIOR ACTIVITY PROGRAM: We revamped our senior program and renamed it SAP to better reflect its three components namely in-person activity centers, individualized in-home stimulation, and virtual programming. This way we meet the needs of more vulnerable seniors in our community. We are the only organization that offers such a hybrid senior Program in the West Island.

"I just wanted to send a quick note thanking NOVA for their incredible day centre work. My father who is touched by frontotemporal dementia loves going and looks forward to it every week. I find it incredible how the creative and talented workers find different passions of his and bring them out. For example, we never would have thought that he'd like painting but now it's something he enjoys at home" (Brian, May 2023).

“The NOVA team has been such a support! The 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 benefit from this wonderful organization” (Niru, March 2021).”

“...My time at NOVA really helped me correct many stereotypes I didn’t even know I had about people with dementia or Alzheimer’s. I mostly thought that the seniors I would interact with wouldn’t know much, or remember much, but I quickly learned that that was not true via my interactions with them... I will be going into medicine...I thought I might be more interested in working with kids, but now I think seniors might be a more interesting field for me “(Martina, JAC student, May 2023).

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.

FUNDRAISING: Our hard work of identifying new potential sources of funding once again paid off. This past fiscal year, we were able to secure donations from one new foundation and 2 provincial government sources, not to mention the sustained support of many recurrent donors. 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. We were able to secure recurrent government funding through the NHSP and new funding from PAAQ in support of our Senior Activity Program as well as a generous grant from the CIUSSSODI for our support to caregivers. In addition, the very successful Thrift Shops for NOVA, operated and managed by a different board of directors, succeeded in continuing to support us. In terms of community outreach, we did eight presentations in physical presence and on Zoom, staffed two community booths and established new networking relationships with four community organizations. Of note, we are now member of the Monterey West Community Network group.

We went through many operational and organizational changes since our last AGM in June 2022. We had staff retire, onboarded new staff, as well as welcomed and trained new volunteers. We offered multiple continuing education and professional development activities namely: CPR certification, attendance at conferences, Alzheimer virtual training and journal clubs to name a few. We met our objectives for 2022-2023 in that we increased our visibility and followers on social media and we implemented our new Senior Activity Program.

2023-2024 has already been a busy year for NOVA as we are integrating new staff members, organizing and participating in many fundraising activities, including 3rd party events, and revamping our publicity materials including our Planned Giving pamphlet.

For the upcoming year, we will be:

- Increasing our nursing bereavement visits
- Expanding our Senior Activity Program to care for more seniors
- Hiring more health aides for our Home Support Program
- Increasing our community presence through booths, presentations and other community initiatives
- Working on Succession Planning process to account for upcoming retirements

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, families and caregivers for trusting us with your care.

Respectfully submitted by

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

Marie-France Juneau
Executive Director