

## A Message from NSHPCA

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to share with you the strategic growth of Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association (NSHPCA) and how it translates into community.

By virtue of the tremendous dedication of volunteers, for over 30 years NSHPCA has remained a trusted name in hospice and palliative education for all Nova Scotians. As an organization, proud of its accomplishments, we continue to move strategically forward, equally dedicated in serving the needs of Nova Scotians by providing resources in healthcare planning as age advances and end of life approaches and in supporting those who are left in the wake of grief.

NSHPCA is proud of its talented staff who have undertaken the responsibility of serving as the operational arm of NSHPCA. We are so very pleased to introduce you to our complement of professionals-Tim Guest, Executive Director, Beth Lynch, Program Director, Kristian Suen, Researcher, Michael Kydd, Communications Director and Zoe Zhang, Administrative Assistant. With talent and dedication, they are implementing innovative programming on a regular basis and continuing the great strides made through our existing programs such as our Wall of Memory, our Annual Spring Conference etc.

In partnership with NS Health, innovative programming is under development and will include the NS Grief Alliance, providing a forum for exchanging grief information, sharing knowledge and resources, building awareness, identifying needs and gaps, and identifying appropriate and adequate supports at a community level as well as providing the mechanism that will allow for co-ordination and communication of supports and services at both the community and health system levels.

Through the initiative of our researcher and his analysis of community, we will have a better understanding of where there may be gaps in service and resources so that we may better serve all Nova Scotians no matter their location.

Soon to be completed, will be a web-based database that will serve as a central information and resource hub allowing Nova Scotians to remain connected and supported through the sharing of resources across communities, organizations and other health system partners.

As many of you are aware, we are also in the midst of our second round of community funding. Congratulations to all successful applicants in Phase 1. It is heartwarming and enlightening to witness the vision, understanding and compassion of communities.

These are just a few examples of the ongoing work happening at NSHPCA. As we advance our goals, we are cognizant of the value our members bring to the organization. If you are attending the Spring Conference, your annual membership is included in your conference fee. If you are not planning to attend, we invite you to become a member of NSHPCA.

Please remember, we need your voice and your support to continue the important work we have just begun.

With much gratitude,

Ann

Ann V Cosgrove, President

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## NSHPCA MEMBERSHIP

Join the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association (NSHPCA) and add your voice to a community dedicated to improving end-of-life care across the province. As a member, you'll receive e-newsletters and updates, gain priority access to hospice palliative care news and events, and benefit from access to grief education and resources. Also, be the first to know about educational and networking opportunities.



Enjoy exclusive benefits such as reduced rates for conferences and workshops, voting privileges at the NSHPCA Annual General Meeting, and an associate membership with the [Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association](#). Together, we can advocate for compassionate, high-quality hospice palliative care for all Nova Scotians.

For membership prices and benefits, please click on the button below.

[Membership Benefits](#)

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## Upcoming Events



## The Cultural Implications of Death, Dying, and Grief

The NSHPCA 2025 Conference brings together professionals, researchers, and community leaders over one-day to explore the profound impact of culture on death, dying, and grief. This year's theme, ***Cultural Implications of Death, Dying, and Grief***, focuses on fostering understanding and dialogue about the diverse ways cultures navigate end-of-life experiences.

Held on **May 8, 2025**, at the **Halifax Tower Hotel & Conference Centre**, this hybrid conference will address topics such as cultural diversity in grief, cross-cultural dialogue in palliative care, and the intersection of culture, beliefs, and identity in mourning practices.

### Sessions

- Equity at the Heart of Care: Integrating Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism in Seniors and Palliative Care while supporting Grief and Bereavement. (Dr. Amit Arya)
- Grieving While "Ungrievable": 2SLGBTQIA+ Grief in a hostile world. (Mal Rose)
- Intercultural Competence and How Best to Support Newcomer Immigrants through Grief and Bereavement. (Colleen Belle)
- Are there Health disparities in End of Life? Consider African NS Lens. (Lana MacLean)
- When the Owl Calls Your Name- Exploring Mi'kmaw spirituality, life and death. (Alan Syliboy)



Keynote Speaker  
Dr. Amit Arya



Presenter  
Colleen Belle



Presenter  
Lana MacLean



Presenter  
Mal Rose

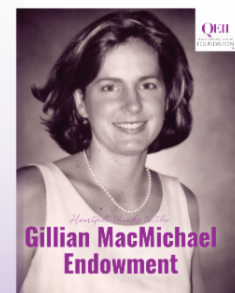


Presenter  
Alan Syliboy



**REGISTER AT:**  
[www.nshpcaconference.com](http://www.nshpcaconference.com)

### Lead Sponsor



8:30AM – 5:00PM

MAY 8, 2025

HALIFAX TOWER HOTEL  
& CONFERENCE CENTRE

NSHPCA Conference 2025: The Cultural Implications of Death, Dying, and Grief is a little more than two months away! Have you registered?

Join us at the Halifax Tower Hotel & Conference Centre for a day filled with engaging speakers, informative workshops, and networking opportunities. Whether you're a seasoned professional or new to the field, this event is perfect for professionals involved in compassionate care.

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to learn, connect, and grow.

**Date: May 8, 2025**

**Time: 8:30 - 5:00pm**

**Location: Halifax Tower Hotel & Conference Centre**



## KING CHARLES III CORONATION MEDAL



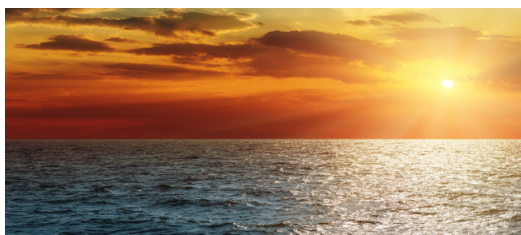
Congratulations to Ann Cosgrove, President of the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association, and the Honourable Diana Whalen, Chair of the NSHPCA Community Funding Subcommittee, on receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medals in recognition of their outstanding contributions to communities across Nova Scotia.

Their dedication, advocacy, and leadership have made a lasting impact on individuals, families, and communities across the province. A heartfelt thank you to the Honourable Lena Metlege Diab and the Honourable Iain Rankin for attending the ceremony and celebrating this special occasion. We also extend our gratitude to the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association for nominating Ann Cosgrove for this well-deserved honour.

Click [here](#) to access pictures from Ann and Diana's special day.

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## Community & Partner Highlights



Société Alzheimer Society  
NOVA SCOTIA

## Grief Support Program

Tuesdays from 1:30 - 3:30 PM  
Beginning February 25 to April 1, 2025  
All Meetings Held Virtually

The program is open to anyone who has personally supported a person with dementia who has died and is feeling challenges navigating their grief.

Call 1-800-611-6345 to Register

Caring for a loved one with dementia comes with unique challenges, including complex feelings of loss that can shape the grieving process. This 6-week virtual grief support program is designed specifically for those who have supported someone with dementia who has passed away. Participants will receive both emotional support and grief education with a dementia focus.

More information, or to register, please click [here](#).



## Hospice Halifax Lecture Series | Hospice Halifax

Hospice Halifax's free Lecture Series aims to open conversation and promote learning about death, grief, and all the emotions surrounding it.

[Learn More](#)

Advance Care Planning Day | April 16 | #ACPDday



If not you, **who?**  
If not now, **when?**

Learn more at [advancecareplanning.ca/acpday](https://advancecareplanning.ca/acpday)



There is less than two months until ACP Day on April 16th. Here are some of the things our colleagues at the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association are sharing to kick off the celebration.

Check it off Challenge: Join us for our 30-day “**Check it off Challenge**” leading up to ACP Day 2025. Each day, you'll spend 5 minutes tackling a simple yet meaningful to-do, checking off items that truly matter while experiencing the relief and reward of getting things done. Campaign Kit: Our campaign kits are ready to go, if you haven't received one yet send an email to [info@advancecareplanning.ca](mailto:info@advancecareplanning.ca) and we'll send you the link.

Submit your **ACP** Day Event: Are you planning an event for ACP Day? Submit your event and we'll add it to our calendar.

Letter Writing Campaign: Would your company or community organization like to help us spread the word about advance care planning? We've prepared email and regular letter templates that you can easily customize and send out to your networks.

Email [info@advancecareplanning.ca](mailto:info@advancecareplanning.ca) for more information.

New **ACP** Stories: We have two new stories showcasing advance care planning in action. Both highlight how ACP isn't just about end-of-life. Read:

- **The Choice to Walk: John's Advance Care Planning Story**
- **Family and Faith: Jan's Advance Care Planning Story**



## Coming Soon: The NSHPCA Compassion Podcast!

We're excited to announce the upcoming launch of the NSHPCA Compassion Podcast—a space for meaningful conversations on grief, caregiving, end-of-life experiences, and the power of human connection.

Through insightful discussions with experts, caregivers, and those with lived experiences, our goal is to bring awareness, support, and understanding to the journey of palliative care.

Stay tuned for more details on our first episode and how you can listen.



## Thank You for Your Submissions to the Healing Pathways Program!

We sincerely appreciate everyone who took the time to submit applications for the Healing Pathways Program.

The funding subcommittee is now carefully reviewing all applications, and we look forward to supporting impactful projects that make a difference. We will provide updates as the process moves forward.

Thank you for your commitment to healing and hope.



## Feature Story: Interview with a Death Doula: What to Expect When You're Expecting – Death in the Home

*NSHPCA Director of Communications, Michael Kydd, sat down with Death Doula, Jessica Richardson, to learn more about the vital role she plays in supporting individuals and families through the end-of-life journey. From preparing for a death at home to navigating grief and bereavement, Jessica shares insights on how a Death Doula provides emotional, practical, and spiritual support during one of life's most profound transitions.*

**Michael:** Facing death at home can be overwhelming for both the person dying and their loved ones. Can you explain how community palliative care helps families through this process?

**Jessica:** Absolutely. Community palliative care is all about enhancing the quality of life for individuals with life-limiting illnesses while ensuring comfort, dignity, and emotional well-being. The home environment can provide a sense of familiarity and peace, but it also

comes with challenges—both emotional and practical. My role as a Death Doula is to complement the clinical care provided by the medical team, offering emotional and logistical support to help families navigate these complexities.

**Michael:** Many people don't realize that grief can begin long before a loved one passes. What are some of the key things families need to prepare for in the weeks or months leading up to death?

**Jessica:** You're absolutely right—grief often begins as soon as a terminal diagnosis is received. Beyond the emotional impact, there are many practical matters to consider, such as arranging home and nursing care, managing medications, organizing meals, and even making sure pets are cared for. Families also need to handle legal matters like Wills, Power of Attorney, and the Expected Death in the Home Form. It can be an exhausting process, which is why I help identify resources, guide families through necessary preparations, and offer emotional support to both the dying person and their loved ones.

**Michael:** One of the things I found most striking about your work is the advice: "When death occurs, pick up the kettle, not the phone." Can you explain what you mean by that?

**Jessica:** When a loved one dies at home, the instinct is often to call 911 immediately. But if the death was expected, you don't need to rush. Instead, take a deep breath, make a cup of tea, and allow yourself to be present in that moment. Sit with your loved one, speak to them, hold their hand, and take the time you need to say goodbye. Hearing is the last sense to go, so your final words may still reach them. Having the Expected Death in the Home Form in place ensures that everything is prepared so families can focus on honoring their loved one rather than worrying about logistics.

**Michael:** After death, the grieving process is deeply personal. How do you support families in their bereavement journey?

**Jessica:** Grief has no timeline and no "right" way to unfold—it's different for everyone. My role is to offer resources, emotional support, and guidance as loved ones navigate the complexities of loss. Sometimes, that means simply being present and listening, while other times, it involves connecting people with grief support groups or professional counseling. The most important thing is ensuring that those left behind feel seen, heard, and supported.

**Michael:** It sounds like Death Doulas provide a holistic approach to end-of-life care. What is the biggest takeaway you'd like people to have from this conversation?

**Jessica:** Death doesn't have to be something we fear or avoid discussing. With the right support, families can create a peaceful, meaningful experience that honors their loved one's wishes. Community palliative care, paired with the work of a Death Doula, ensures that both the dying person and their loved ones are cared for emotionally, practically, and spiritually—before, during, and after death. It's about bringing dignity, comfort, and connection to one of life's most challenging transitions.

**Michael:** Thank you for sharing this important perspective. It's clear that community palliative care and Death Doulas play a vital role in supporting families through the end-of-life journey.

*Jessica is a practicing Licensed Practical Nurse and Death Doula in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She started her career in palliative care in 2016 when she worked as a community nurse. She then transitioned into Home Support Supervisor and Hospice nurse roles within her nursing career and decided to further her passion and took courses to become a certified Death Doula. Jessica has worked with numerous organizations to provide palliative education to the community and other nurses within her short time as a Death Doula and owns her registered business Elegant Grace End Of Life Doulas.*

**Submit your story to [mkydd@nshpca.ca](mailto:mkydd@nshpca.ca)**



## Honour a Loved One on the NSHPCA Wall of Memory

The **Wall of Memory** is a special space dedicated to honouring and remembering those we have lost. By sharing a memory, story, or tribute, you can celebrate the life and legacy of a loved one in a meaningful way.

Submissions are open to anyone who wishes to contribute, creating a collective space of remembrance and connection. Your tribute will become part of a growing community of shared memories, providing support and healing.

As part of our ongoing commitment to honouring loved ones, NSHPCA will be introducing new features to the Wall of Memory, enhancing the ways you can share, reflect, and connect with others through remembrance.

With every purchase or donation to the Wall of Memory, the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association can expand and strengthen its support for individuals and families during some of the most challenging times in their lives.

We are grateful for the support of Leo Glavine, whose dedication played a vital role in establishing the Wall of Memory, ensuring a lasting space for remembrance and reflection.

[Share a Memory](#)

[Locate a Loved One](#)



Your donation to NSHPCA ensures that individuals and families facing serious illness, end-of-life care, and grief receive the support they need. With your generosity, we can enhance palliative care services, provide essential grief support, and advocate for compassionate, dignified care across the province. Every

contribution makes a difference in bringing comfort, education, and resources to those navigating life's most difficult moments.

[Donate](#)

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## Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Societies

Find and Support Your Local Hospice – Explore Our Support Directory on the NSHPCA Website.

[NSHPCA Support Directory](#)

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### ABOUT NOVA SCOTIA HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE ASSOCIATION

The NSHPCA, founded in 1994, was created to advance the philosophy and principles of palliative care. Over the years, it has evolved to collaborate closely with healthcare partners, supporting the delivery of grief and emotional wellness programs while remaining dedicated to its core mission of providing comfort and peace to Nova Scotians facing life-threatening illnesses.

In January 2024, the organization was selected by the Nova Scotia Office of Addictions and Mental Health to partner with communities and Nova Scotia Health to assist with the implementation of grief, bereavement, and emotional wellness services across the province.

Responding to the Mass Casualty Commission's call for enhanced support, NSHPCA will distribute funding to groups and organizations to develop community-based initiatives that align with the Nova Scotia Community Grief and Emotional Wellness Hub Model.



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