

# Media Kit



wellspring  
Calgary

## Media Kit 2021

A cancer diagnosis can be devastating. It brings countless life-altering moments and events for the people who receive the diagnosis and for those who love them. People with cancer are compelled to find a 'new normal' as priorities shift and relationships change. Life is ... different. Wellspring Calgary exists to inform, support and empower cancer patients, families and caregivers by helping them to address the fear, isolation, disruption and practical problems which cancer brings to their lives.

Wellspring Calgary is a registered charity that offers programs and services that meet the emotional, social and practical needs of people living with cancer – those diagnosed, caregivers and kids. All Wellspring programs and services are free of charge and without referral to southern Alberta residents.



“Wellspring is a hard place to walk into, but it’s easy to stay.”  
– Wellspring Calgary Member

## ABOUT WELLSPRING

### **Mission**

Wellspring Calgary is a warm and welcoming community that provides a comprehensive range of support, resources and programs so anyone living with cancer and the people who care about them can improve the quality of their lives.

### **Vision**

No one has to face cancer alone.

### **Mandate**

Wellspring Calgary is a charitable organization that supports, informs and empowers those diagnosed with cancer by helping them address the fear, isolation, disruption and practical problems cancer can bring to their lives.

Wellspring Calgary provides a comprehensive range of programs, resources and supports for people living with cancer, their families and primary caregivers.

### **Who We Serve**

Individuals living with cancer – those diagnosed, caregivers and kids – throughout southern Alberta. We also welcome members from outside of southern Alberta.



## QUICK FACTS

Every day, over 60 Albertans hear the words “you have cancer.” One in two of us will hear these words in our lifetime.

- **Founders:** Wellspring Calgary was co-founded by John Stephure, Rita Egizii, and Barbara Cunnings, and began operation in 2007 in leased space in NW Calgary.
  - **Network:** Wellspring Calgary is modelled after and is an affiliate of the greater Wellspring Cancer Support Foundation ‘Wellspring Network’. Based in Toronto, this Canada-wide network of community-based centres provide emotional, social, spiritual and informational support to individuals and families living with cancer. The first Wellspring opened in Toronto in 1992.
- **Where we operate:** Wellspring Calgary supports southern Alberta, from Red Deer to the Canadian border. Here, only Wellspring Calgary devotes itself exclusively to the unique non-medical needs cancer presents. We do this through online and in-person programming and services.
- **Our Centres:** Carma House, the original centre for Wellspring, opened in June 2009. The house was built and donated by local business Carma Developers (now Brookfield Residential) which continues to be a major sponsor and donor. Our second (temporary) centre opened in October 2016 at Fountain Court SE. It closed with the opening of our second permanent centre, Randy O’Dell House, which opened in September 2019.
- **Members:** Any adult who has had a cancer diagnosis of any type, and their caregivers and family members, are welcome to become a Wellspring Calgary member free of charge, without referral, and at any point on their journey.
- **Programs:** Wellspring Calgary freely offers social, emotional, spiritual, and practical support through a variety of programs, resources and speakers. Wellspring Calgary offers over 90 evidence-informed programs.
- **Funding:** Wellspring Calgary receives no government or agency core funding but relies on events and the generosity of individuals, corporations and foundations.
- **Our Team:** Wellspring Calgary staff is supported by more than 200 volunteers. Our team of volunteers dedicate over 6,600 hours of support in 2020.
- **COVID-19:** COVID-19 has given people a sense of what fear and isolation feels like – something that those with cancer live with on a daily basis. Despite a global pandemic, Wellspring Calgary has continued to provide a community of support for those living with cancer and has supported more people than ever before:
  - Within three days of centre closures (on March 13, 2020), we moved our programs online and over the phone. Within six weeks, over 50 online programs were added.
  - In 2020, Wellspring Calgary supported more people than ever before. More than 2,000 people visited programs 24,000 times through 3,800 hours of programming. We’ve expanded our services beyond just Calgary to all of southern Alberta. In 2020 more new members joined from communities which are further than 100km from Calgary than **in the last six years combined**.

Additional facts and citations can be found at: <https://wellspringcalgary.ca/why-we-exist/> or <https://wellspringcalgary.ca/why-we-exist/our-solution/>

## WHAT WELLSPRING CALGARY OFFERS

Wellspring offers evidence informed programs that meet the emotional, social, practical and restorative needs of people living with cancer. Our programs are complementary to medical streams of treatment.

### Examples of Wellspring programs:

1. **Educational:** Receive information, strategies and tools to live well with cancer. Programs include: Brain Fog, Healing Journey, Returning to Work, and Money Matters.
2. **Expressive Arts:** Express yourself or escape cancer for a few hours through visual arts, writing, music and more. Programs include: Creative Journaling, Digital Storytelling, Drumming, Watercolour, and Gardening.
3. **Movement and Meditation:** Participate in programs featuring physical and mental activities to increase strength, build resilience, manage stress, and calm the mind. Programs include: Exercise, Hiking, Tai Chi, Yoga, Visualization and Relaxation.
4. **Self-Care:** Meet with others to share experiences and strategies, and benefit from learning and caring for yourself. Programs include: Meetups for adults living with an incurable cancer, Food and Nutrition, Transitions Support Coach, Caregiver and Men's Groups.

### How do programs help people living with cancer and caregivers?

80% of Canadian cancer patients reported having at least one emotional challenge after treatment ended. Anxiety, stress and worry about cancer returning were the most difficult concerns to get help for. **Wellspring Calgary has programming to help address all of these challenges.**

- 8 in 10 report having physical challenges after their treatment. Fatigue is the most difficult to get help for.
- 7 in 10 report having emotional challenges after treatment ends. Worry about cancer returning is the most difficult to get help for.
- 4 in 10 report having practical challenges after their treatment ends. Financial problems such as paying health care bills and getting life insurance are the most difficult to get help for.
- 1 in 3 who seek help for their most difficult post-treatment concerns report waiting too long or being unable to get help.
- Only 1 in 2 who have emotional or practical challenges receive useful information that addresses their needs.
- 8 in 10 cancer survivors reported having at least one emotional challenge one to three years after completion of treatment. Thirty-one percent of cancer survivors reported anxiety, stress and worrying about cancer returning as the most difficult emotional concern to get help for. Approximately 6 of 10 cancer survivors who sought help for their most difficult emotional concern reported waiting more than six months for help or were unable to get help.
- Over 1/3 of Canadian cancer patients who seek help for their emotional, physical or practical concerns report waiting too long or being unable to get help. Access to Wellspring Calgary programs is free and does not require referral.
- Data on Canadian patients receiving cancer treatment indicate that 68.1% experienced feelings of anxiety or fear when first told they had cancer, yet over half of those (55.8%) were not referred to an appropriate health care provider to manage and improve their experience.

**Source:** CPAC: *Experiences of cancer patients in transition study: Emotional challenges*. Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. (2018, March). Available at: <https://s22457.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Patient-experience-report-summary-EN.pdf>

Wellspring Calgary's programs inform and empower people to play a role in their wellness, help people feel connected to others so they do not feel isolated and alone in their cancer experience, and provides support with various transitions.

The Wellspring community, both physical and online, is distinctly safe, warm and welcoming; a place where people living with cancer, their caregivers and their family members can gather for support, compassion and vital information.

## KEY CONTACTS

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