

Funding for Grief, Bereavement, Mental Health Supports



Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River MLA David Ritcey, centre, joined Chamber staff Chelsea Weatherbee, left, and Sherry Martell, as well as Betty Davis of Steps on Arthur and Stacy Harrison, of Colchester-East Hants Community Hospice Society, at the Chamber office on Oct. 7 to announce provincial funding to support several local projects. (Contributed)

Ten Colchester communities / organizations were awarded \$163,510.72 in funding under *The Healing Pathways Community Fund*. An additional four Cumberland County communities received \$102,211 in funding. The awarded grants to 14 community-based organizations offering grief, bereavement and mental health supports in Colchester, Cumberland and Hants counties.

The Healing Pathways Community Fund is providing one-time grants of up to \$50,000 to the organizations. Grief, bereavement and mental health supports will be available for all ages and could include: training in supportive grief and loss; development of digital and online information resources; individual and group programs; creation of indoor or outdoor designated spaces and outdoor activities designed to improve emotional health.

The Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association co-ordinates funding and works with the government, communities and Nova Scotia Health to co-ordinate the delivery of grief, be-

reavement and emotional wellness services.

Additional Resources: Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association news release and more information about grant recipients: <https://nshpca.ca/nova-scotia-hospice-palliative-care-association-awards-first-round-of-healing-pathways-community-fund-grants/>

Support for communities impacted by the April 2020 mass casualty: <https://novascotia.ca/community-support/>

New release - More Funding for Grief, Bereavement, Mental Health Supports: <https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2024/06/10/more-funding-grief-bereavement-mental-health-supports>

Mass Casualty Commission final report: <https://masscasualtycommission.ca/final-report/>

Healing Pathways Community Fund grant recipients:
Advocate & District Development Association (\$4,365.40) - operates a community hall in Advocate Harbour and hosts events for the community; the

organization will replace aging equipment to better support the community

Bass River Fire Brigade (\$12,344.30) - will fund specialized trauma-informed training from Dougy Center, a national grief centre for children and families based in Portland, Ore., as well as Wilfrid Laurier University's death, dying and bereavement certificate; after training, workshops will be provided to first responders and firefighters in the area.

Canadian Mental Health Association, Nova Scotia and Colchester East Hants divisions (\$6,654.42) - they have collaborated with artist and author Holly Carr and the Portapique Community Build Up on the Holly Carr Story Trails Project, which connects art, nature and mental wellness through an interactive experience that generates safe discussion around the topics of fear, anxiety and hope

Colchester East Hants Community Hospice Society (\$39,167) - working through its Hug Centre (Hope and Understanding for the Grieving), the society's project will support

children experiencing grief and bereavement

Cumberland County Hospice Palliative Care Society (\$45,246.00) - will create a grief support program that will be available to all residents of Cumberland County and support referrals from the palliative care team

Kemptown and Area Recreation Association (\$660.00) - support for hosting a free monthly open mic/music jam for older Nova Scotians

Lukeslegacyns Memorial Society (\$17,490.00) - will create an after-school program for students aged grade four and up, focusing on grief and loss related to the mass shooting events in Nova Scotia

Maggies Place Family Resource Centre in Cumberland County (\$3,100) - launching an outreach support program in Wentworth, which will include free recreational items like snowshoes for winter activities,

promoting physical wellness and community connection; also installing a tap at the Wentworth Learning Centre to provide clean drinking water

Millbrook First Nation/Millbrook Mental Health (\$46,350) - will provide a confidential and secure area where kids can process their emotions, build resilience and develop coping skills after experiencing trauma

Portapique Community Centre (\$45,000) - the Community Care & Connect initiative aims to foster community engagement and support in Five Islands and Londonderry through two dedicated outreach sites; the program will create regular, accessible spaces for residents to gather, connect with neighbours and access various programs and services

STEPS on Arthur (\$4,801) - the STEPs into Music program aims to establish a music therapy program for people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, serving 83 partici-

pants aged 20-70

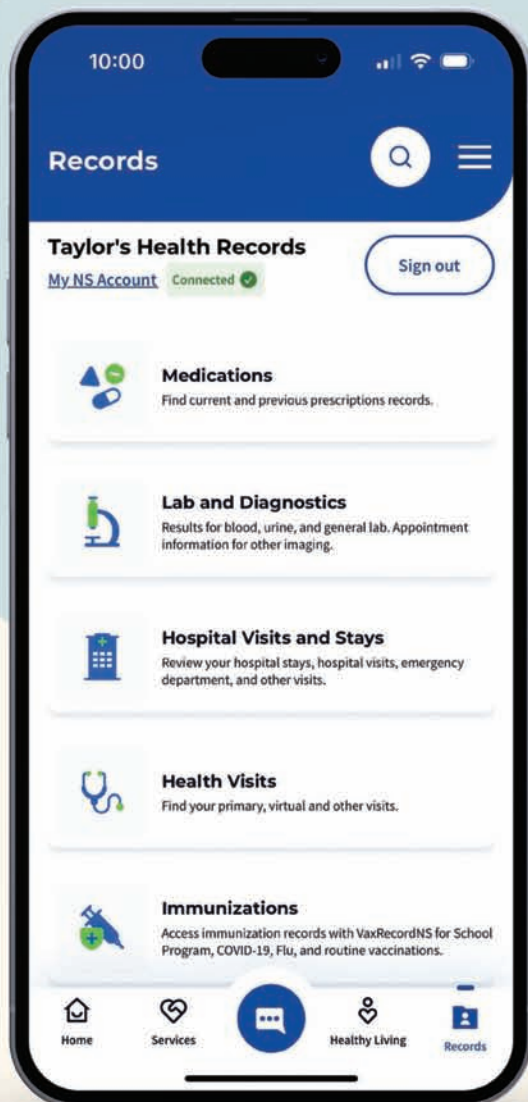
Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce (\$17,600) - will provide wellness resources for businesses designed to support entrepreneurs and their employees; plans include events to discuss mental health challenges entrepreneurs face, a social media campaign to promote mental health resources for entrepreneurs, a survey to understand members' needs, and discussions with business owners to create opportunities for meaningful connections

Wallace Area Development Association (\$48,000) - will fund Connecting Community Spaces, a shaded seating and garden area for peaceful reflection and an inclusion playground for children

West Colchester Medical Society (\$13,495) - will support grieving children at West Colchester Consolidated School through equine-assisted therapy, yoga for grief, access to therapy dogs, and a field trip to Ships Company Theatre (\$13,495).



Outgoing Chamber Executive Director Sherry Martell, left, moderated a panel discussion on World Mental Health Day discussing workplace wellness. Joining her on the panel were Susan Henderson, Executive Director of CMHA- Colchester East Hants branch; Irene Gunn owner and Clinical Social Worker, Transforming Tides Counselling; and Ruth Mitchell Registered Counselling Therapist and owner and of SoulSpace Counselling Therapy. The Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce has been putting forward national policy recommendations to improve support for and workplace mental health since 2017 and was the first chamber in the country to receive an endorsement of a national mental health policy at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce to spur on greater advocacy work in this area. The business organization recently received funding to activate a workplace wellness project that includes education, workplace wellness kits for business and networking events. (Contributed)



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