United Way HPE supports CARE North Hastings

By Mike Riley

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CARE North Hastings, also known as Community Care North Hastings is an agency with a long history in Bancroft, offering all North Hastings residents care, companionship and community. For over 35 years, CARE North Hastings has helped seniors over the age of 55 years (and adults over 18 years of age with disabilities) remain independent by providing reliable transportation and a variety of outreach programs, as well as nutritious meals through Meals on Wheels and access to two volunteer run thrift shops.

United Way HPE supports 52 agencies and 74 programs in Hastings and Prince Edward counties and works with local organizations, the business community, the health sector and individuals to raise the community's capacity to respond to human needs. To support the United Way campaign, go to www.unitedwayhpe.ca/donate.

One of the pillars of United Way HPE's Community Impact Strategy is Building Strong Communities, and they support organizations like CARE North Hastings because they strengthen our community by assisting seniors so they can safely, independently and comfortably stay in their homes for as long as possible.

A program aimed at identifying and connecting with vulnerable seniors through at-home visits was funded by United Way HPE last year. A client care coordinator would create and foster a relationship with the senior and their family, offer dementia education and assist them as they navigated community resources. According to Jennifer Kauffeldt, the executive director of CARE North Hastings, United Way HPE has funded 40 per cent of this new position, which is currently held by Sarah Krieger.

Kauffeldt says that her organization is keenly aware of and advocates for aging, sometimes isolated seniors.

?As clients age, mobility decreases, access to food becomes harder. This program is unique as it addresses a need sooner and doesn't need a referral,? she says.

In addition, CARE North Hastings' volunteers, many of them seniors as well, benefit from the social interactions that come with the program.

Kauffeldt says that United Way HPE has helped them over the last couple of years, as they are kind of new to requesting support from them.

?So in the last two years, since the [COVID-19] pandemic, we've tapped into the United Way. And then, we will keep tapping into them in the future,? she says.

Kauffeldt notes that the United Way was also in charge of the dollars that the ministry put out for the pandemic for seniors, acting as a broker for said funds, which organizations like CARE North Hastings then applied for.

?And that helped immensely on the Meals on Wheels program, getting food to seniors. So that's important, United Way has helped a lot of agencies with that,? she says.

Kauffeldt says that the United Way funding they get also supports seniors getting home health, things like homemaking, hot meal preparation, laundry, grass cutting and snow removal. For people that can't afford that, or don't have the resources, or don't know the people to help them, Kauffeldt says they have a brokered worker service partially funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which pays them to administer the program but doesn't fund for the cost. However United Way HPE does help them fund for the cost of this service.

?It keeps seniors in their own homes, deterring them from long-term care. So, it's about quality of life as you age. It's much cheaper and healthier to keep the person at home. So that's what United Way has allowed us to do,? she says.

The most recent grant that CARE North Hastings got from United Way HPE to build up home supports for seniors in the community was $29,000, according to Kauffeldt, while the funding they received in 2021/2022 was $19,500.

?It's important to note that when people donate to United Way, they can ask what area. So, it could be Prince Edward, it could be Belleville, it could be North Hastings,? she says. ?It stays in that area, which is nice.?