

The Promise of Progress

Transforming Cancer
Support in Muskoka





Our Story

Enliven Cancer Care is more than a community organization—it’s a haven of hope and connection. We offer support for individuals navigating the tumultuous journey of a cancer diagnosis, providing free access to activities, support, and social connections. But we’re not just for those with a diagnosis—we also extend our warm embrace to their families and caregivers.

Our inception is rooted in a tale of resilience and determination. When Joanne McLean was diagnosed with breast cancer that had metastasized to her liver, she was unwilling to let her life become a reflection of her illness. Cancer may have been a part of her story, but it wasn’t all she was. Joanne was funny, articulate, intelligent, curious and creative. She wanted to live meaningfully, engaged with her community, not confined to the identity of a patient.

One day, in the comforting warmth of her sunroom, she turned to her dear friend Allie Chisholm-Smith. Joanne’s proposal was simple yet transformative: “Would you be interested in forming an organization to help people in Muskoka dealing with cancer?” Allie did not hesitate, inspired by Joanne’s strength, her vulnerability, and her fearless honesty about her journey.

Together, they founded Enliven Cancer Care, guiding and rallying a team with the promise of reducing the social isolation that so often shadows a cancer diagnosis. Community and shared experiences nourish the soul, even when the body is weary.

About Enliven Muskoka

Enliven programs and events are available free of charge and without referral to those living with a diagnosis, and their families and caregivers.

We’re working to ensure that everyone affected by cancer has access to compassionate programming and a community of peers, close to home. With multiple locations throughout Muskoka and virtual options available online, we strive to give people access to information and a supportive community in ways that work for them.

At Enliven, we embrace diversity in more ways than one. Our programs are as unique and varied as the individuals we serve. From journaling to yoga, from Nia dance to birdwatching, we cater to a multitude of interests. Whether exploring the beauty of nature on our guided walks, honing creativity in art classes, or seeking solace in our peer-facilitated support groups, there’s a place for everyone in our community.

Our purpose isn’t just about combating isolation; it’s about fostering integration. Enliven programs empower those living with a cancer diagnosis to re-engage with their community and live fuller lives, all while respecting their physical limitations. We’re relentless in our endeavor to eliminate any and all barriers to engagement.

At the heart of our work is a simple, yet profound belief: those living with a diagnosis, and their loved ones are whole people first – with dreams and plans and fears. Our programs are thoughtfully designed to empower them to live well at any age and any stage of cancer. Together, we can normalize their journey, celebrate their resilience, and foster a sense of belonging.

Our Vision

Everyone affected by cancer in Muskoka has access to services to enhance their quality of life.

Our Mission

Supporting everyone in Muskoka affected by cancer to live well with, and beyond, a diagnosis.



Message from the Board

In 2016, we laid the foundation for Enliven Muskoka, and it has expanded to an energetic community that actively explores opportunities to create vibrant and joyful experiences for those who need us. Now, we're poised to embrace our next chapter, building on our legacy of success, leveraging our unique strengths, and validating our tireless efforts.

As we confront the rising demand for our services and the outpouring of support in Muskoka, we're charting a sustainable course for the future. This includes actively pursuing funding to maintain programming and to ensure our small team is fairly compensated for the heart they pour into their roles. We're setting our sights on not just evolving, but thriving, as we mature as a board, strategize fundraising efforts, boost awareness in Muskoka, and attract volunteers.

Developing strategic plans can take three to four days in a large organization. Yet, when our team gathered, we were astounded by our unity and synergy. It turns

out that when hearts are bound by a shared mission to improve lives, the work is not just easy—it's inspirational.

Together, we look forward to embarking on this exciting journey, confident in our united purpose and the transformative power of our shared vision. We invite you to join us as we step into the future, a future where we continue to Enliven our community, one heart at a time.

Sincerely,

Carrie Campbell *David McLean*

Carrie Campbell & David McLean
Board of Directors
Enliven Cancer Care

Growing Enliven

Our strategic goals are designed not only to continue, but to enhance the Enliven legacy. Together, we can foster emotional and social wellbeing within our community.

Strategic Priority #1:

Grow organizational capacity

Our first order of business is to establish a robust administrative infrastructure, laying the groundwork for the organization's operations.

We plan to restructure our team, transforming part-time casual roles into full-time positions, and bringing on board an executive director to steer our course. We also plan to secure an office and meeting space to conduct our operations more effectively.

We recognize that our volunteers are our lifeline. We will bolster our committees with fresh volunteers for fund development and establish an advisory group for programming. To improve volunteer engagement, we're developing a comprehensive guidebook and training programs.

With a reinforced base and individuals who feel secure and valued in their roles, we can then focus on consistent business and fund development.

The next milestone involves formalizing our operational procedures. This includes establishing HR manuals, setting out clear budget and planning procedures, and refining bylaws and terms of reference.

With a solid governance structure in place, we can then implement a professional donation system to streamline donations, pledges and relationship management.

We aim to establish a regular reporting cadence with our stakeholders. Through our website and public communications, we'll keep our community updated on our progress and express our gratitude for their support.

This strategy will ensure a seamless onboarding process for volunteers, improve the continuity and stability for our team, and maintain our credibility within our community.





Strategic Priority #2:

Increase and stabilize programming

We are immensely proud of the diverse range of free programs we offer, from tailored exercise classes that respect physical limitations, to support groups that provide a pillar of strength. We believe that our facilitators and these groups deserve stability to continue delivering consistent value and support.

In our pursuit of continuous improvement, we will establish clear program goals and plans one year in advance. This will involve identifying priority program areas such as expressive writing, art, movement, mindfulness, youth engagement, and education—always with community input at the forefront. Through tracking and evaluating these programs using client feedback, we aim to drive ongoing enhancements to better serve our community.

Accessibility is key. We are committed to securing spaces—both permanent and temporary—across a wide range of Muskoka neighborhoods. This will ensure our programs can reach as many individuals as possible, no matter where they reside.

As part of our commitment to inclusivity, we're committing to research and developing culturally inclusive programs and elements. We seek to create an environment where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued.

Lastly, to equip our staff and volunteers with the tools they need to navigate challenging situations, we will provide training on crisis management and conducting difficult conversations.

With these strategic initiatives, we aspire to enhance our program offerings, uphold stability, and foster an environment that resonates with acceptance, understanding, and growth.

Strategic Priority #3:

Cultivate relationships and forge synergistic partnerships

Building meaningful partnerships is pivotal to expanding awareness and engagement across Muskoka. We will nurture our existing relationships while forging new connections with a diverse array of groups, including:

- » Service clubs
- » Health-care providers, social workers, and hospitals
- » Indigenous communities
- » Organizations serving disadvantaged individuals
- » Schools, teachers, and guidance counselors
- » Churches
- » Diverse Muskoka communities
- » Other community foundations

Our approach will involve conducting research to identify potential partners, allowing us to initiate dialogues, present our mission, and exchange ideas that spark mutual growth.

In recognition of the invaluable contributions made by our partners, volunteers, and friends of Enliven, we plan to host events that celebrate their dedication and commitment. Through these celebrations, we aim to express our deepest gratitude and reinforce the spirit of collaboration that fuels our collective success.

Together, we will cultivate strong relationships, forge synergistic partnerships, and create a network that fortifies our shared vision for a supportive and compassionate community.





Strategic Priority #4: Grow fund development capacity

As Enliven Muskoka continues to flourish, securing stable funding becomes increasingly crucial to maintain and enhance our programming. Our strategy will revolve around developing a diverse funding pipeline that includes endowments, monthly and annual giving programs, versatile donation opportunities, third-party fundraising, and corporate giving initiatives.

To boost these opportunities, we've crafted a compelling presentation to spotlight our cause and foster awareness. This presentation will serve as a powerful tool to draw attention and support to our mission.

We'll also continue our tradition of hosting four core annual events that play a pivotal role in our fundraising endeavors:

- » Wellness Fair
- » Art Auction
- » World Cancer Day
- » Funders Recognition event

By integrating more complex donation avenues alongside accessible point-of-sale giving options like QR codes, we aim to secure greater financial stability. This will not only strengthen our administrative operations but also ensure the continuity and consistency of our life-enhancing programming.

Strategic Priority #5: Increase diversity within the organization

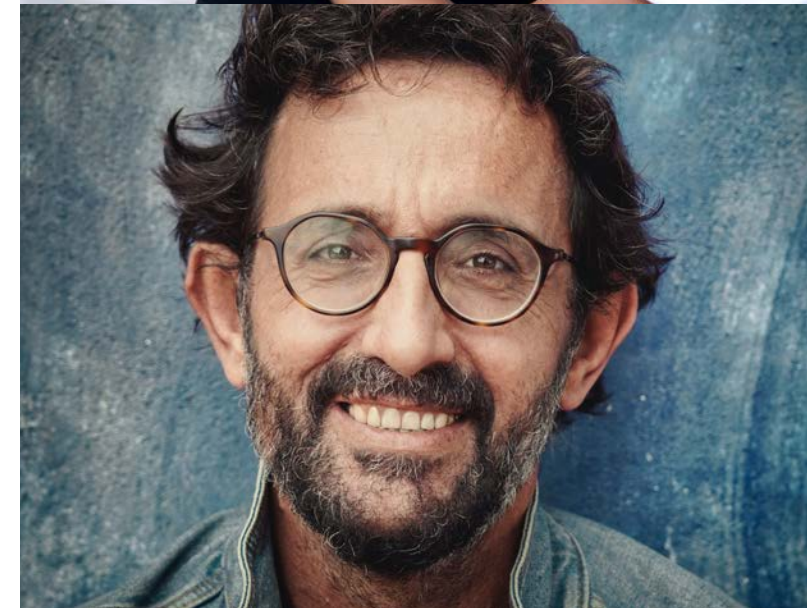
We recognize the transformative power of diversity—diversity of thought, experiences, and cultures. It not only enriches our organization but also fosters a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

To nurture this diversity, we are committed to being mindful in all aspects of our operations.

This includes reviewing our photos, language, our training procedures, policies, partnerships, onboarding, and hiring practices to ensure they reflect our dedication to inclusion.

Taking a proactive stance, we aim to enrich the diversity of our board and staff, understanding that a variety of perspectives foster innovation and empathy. We are also dedicated to forging connections with Indigenous leaders, and exploring traditional medicine and wisdom to enhance our programming.

By embracing diversity, we aim to create an environment where all voices are heard, all experiences are valued, and where every individual feels a sense of belonging. This strategic priority underscores our commitment to inclusivity, enriching our organization, and our ability to serve our community effectively.





A Rallying Call to our Community

Enliven Cancer Care relies entirely on the support of generous individuals, foundations, sponsors and corporations. With your support, we can continue to develop and deliver responsive and supportive programming to help our community experience life, connect with others who share their experience, and reduce social isolation.

We invite you to join our mission in one of three impactful ways:

Volunteer.

Our volunteers are board members, event coordinators, fundraisers, support providers and more. Participate by offering your compassion and help people navigate and normalize the tough stuff.

Give.

Help build on our success and bring cancer support programs and events to every corner of Muskoka. There are a number of ways you can donate to our cause.

Participate.

Join us in our various events throughout the year to meet people, build partnerships, and contribute to fundraising efforts. Stay connected with our activities through our social media channels.

Your support empowers us to continue providing these invaluable resources to those touched by cancer and those who care for them. By supporting Enliven Muskoka, you become an integral part of our story, our community, and our mission to empower those living with cancer to not just survive, but to thrive.

A Heartfelt Salute to Our Incredible Team

Our work is guided by an advisory committee and board, a small group of staff, and exceptional volunteers who are driven by a common goal to give people in need access to the cancer support they deserve. Thank you to our smart, passionate, strong and compassionate team.

Board of Directors

Carrie Campbell, Board Chair
Bryan Knappett, Board Member
Deanna Lavigne, Board Member
Alison Madeley, Board Member
David McLean, Board Member
Angela Paulsen, Board Member
Suzanne Riverin, Board Member

Advisory Committee

Allie Chisholm-Smith
Rebecca Ellerson
Lindsay MacMillan
Lindsay Rothwell
Brandy Strelec

*at time of printing.





Together, we can Enliven
the spirit of those who
need it most.

We respectfully acknowledge that Huntsville is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, specifically the Chippewa, Ojibwa, and Potawatomi peoples, under the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and the Williams Treaties of 1923.

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