

Innovative
Thinking

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Resident, Staff and
Volunteer Profiles

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 **Carewest**
INNOVATIVE HEALTH CARE

Carewest. Today.

Growing our future

**Carewest's
residents and clients take an
active role in wellness**

See Victor McWhan's story: Pg. 13





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“At Carewest, we believe as strongly in our responsiveness, evolution and growth as we do in our more than 50 years of history, foundation and experience.”

photos

top

Therapy happens in many ways at Carewest Glenmore Park, where Occupational Therapist Steve Lee oversees some of the rehabilitation activities undertaken by Carewest Musculoskeletal Program clients.

Photo by Samara Sinclair

across

Artist and EQual resident Kelly McDonald adds a touch of colour to the windows of Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning’s front lounge. His art creates a colourful and festive atmosphere to help celebrate St. Patrick’s Day.

Photo by Kourtney Tateson

value

At Carewest, we strive to be forward thinking and approach things creatively in the goal of bringing innovation and value to our residents, clients, families, volunteers, staff, Alberta Health Services and the community.

Leading the way in innovative health care has been our vision, helping guide us from where we were half a century ago to the progressive health care organization we are today. We believe as strongly in our responsiveness, evolution and growth as we do in our more than 50 years of history, foundation and experience.

Carewest operates from multiple locations throughout Calgary aimed at helping people live more independent lives. Our spectrum of care is available to adults of all ages and includes complex continuing care, rehabilitation and recovery services, and community programs. We pride ourselves on our ability to change with the community's needs and we do our best to anticipate what those needs may be in the future.

**Innovative thinking brought us here –
imagine where it can take us.**

Fast Facts



Year founded	1961
Locations	12
Service area	Calgary and area
Number of residents & clients	More than 1,000 continuing care residents of all ages, more than 350 rehabilitation and recovery beds and thousands of clients in community programs cared for annually
Number of staff	2, 600



care

What we do

Carewest programs and services cover a range of care including complex continuing care, rehabilitation and recovery services, and community programs. Our goal is to meet the needs of the community through quality compassionate care and support while effectively and efficiently responding to a health care system that is continuously evolving to meet the needs of Albertans.

- **Chronic Complex Care** – for the resident living with a complex disease or life-threatening illness. The prime populations are individuals on hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, as well as people who need specialized respiratory support.
- **EQual** – for adults aged 18 to 64 who have disabilities related to a disease or condition, such as multiple sclerosis or a brain injury, currently requiring the full-time support of a continuing care centre.
- **Hospice** – a residential unit in a homelike environment providing 24-hour care by an interdisciplinary team of health care professionals and volunteers. The team strives to meet the needs of people who are in their last days to months of life and who can no longer manage at home but do not require the resources of acute care.
- **Medically Complex Care** – for frail, medically complex residents whose care needs cannot be met in a Supportive Living environment and who require professional nursing care on a regularly scheduled and unscheduled basis. Their primary diagnosis is medical and may have a secondary diagnosis of cognitive impairment, providing there are no elopement risks

or behaviours that are unable to be managed safely within the environment.

- **Cognitively Complex Care** – for frail, cognitively complex residents, whose primary diagnosis is dementia and whose care needs cannot be met in a supportive living environment and who require professional nursing care on a regularly scheduled and unscheduled basis in a secure environment.

Rehabilitation and Recovery Services


- **Geriatric Mental Health Program** – a short-stay program for clients who have psychiatric disorders and require assessment and rehabilitation, but who do not need to be in acute care.
- **Musculoskeletal (MSK) Program** – for clients following an acute phase of musculoskeletal illness or who have had a bone or joint surgical procedure and require care and rehabilitation before returning home or to another care setting.

..... *photo*

Horticulture therapy is one of the many activities clients and staff engage in at Carewest Glenmore Park, in the Day Hospital program.
Photo by Samara Sinclair

- **Neuro-Rehabilitation Program** – for clients who have had a neurological injury, such as a stroke, and require rehabilitation once they are past the acute phase of their illness before they return home or move to another care setting.
- **Regional Community Transition Program (RCTP)** – a short-stay program that supports medically stable clients who do not need acute care level of service, but may require additional assessment, recuperation, and therapy before returning home or moving into another care setting.

Community Programs

- **Adult Day Support Program** – available to adults who are living in the community and who would benefit from a social, leisure and health promotion program and whose families would benefit from respite services.
- **Comprehensive Community Care (C3) Program** – a unique, long-term maintenance and support program for seniors who live in Calgary. It provides coordinated case management and primary care to frail, elderly clients and allows them to remain at home as long as possible with a higher quality of life. Integrated care is provided by a 24-hour health care team through a medical health clinic, day program, home support, transportation, access to designated continuing care beds and emergency-response telephone system.
- **Day Hospital** – a short-term day program for seniors who are living at home and experiencing physical, mental, emotional or social concerns. The focus is to promote their well-being, functional abilities and quality of life through comprehensive assessment and treatment by an interdisciplinary team with geriatric expertise
- **Dementia Day Support Program** – available to older adults who live in the community and have Alzheimer's disease or other dementias affecting their ability to socialize and interact in community activities.
- **Dementia Respite Services** – this service offers short-term, continuing-care stays to provide supportive care for people with dementia and respite services for families so they may have a much-needed break from care giving.
- **Designated Assisted Living (DAL)** – offers assisted living for people who may need extra support such as health monitoring and personal care, along with meals, bathing and laundry.
- **Non-dementia Respite Services** – this service offers short-term, continuing-care stays to provide supportive care for people with chronic illness and respite services for families so they may have a much-needed break from care giving.
- **Operational Stress Injury (OSI) Clinic** – a clinic funded by Veterans Affairs Canada that helps veterans, current and former Canadian Forces members, and members of the RCMP suffering from an Operational Stress Injury who require specialized, intensive assessment and treatment.
- **Regional Seating Services** – a specialized community service where individual needs of clients are assessed and special equipment prescribed and fabricated to make clients safer, more comfortable and independent in their wheelchairs.
- **Younger Adult Day Support (YADS) Program** – for adults with chronic illnesses or physical disabilities, who would benefit from a social, leisure and health promotion program and whose families would benefit from respite care. 



comfort Carewest Sites – At a Glance

At Carewest, we have committed to making our care centres as comfortable as possible by including features such as family dining rooms, award-winning gardens, fireplaces and artwork. Whether a resident or client comes to Carewest for short-stay rehabilitation and recovery or for complex continuing care, we think it's important they feel comfortable and safe. Where our residents and clients spend their time is just as important as with whom they spend it. Our skilled and compassionate staff do their best to make Carewest sites safe and caring environments.

..... *photo*

Tweety the budgie is loved by all who meet him, including Terena Denham, resident at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning. Tweety belongs to Lorie Schults, Nursing Attendant, who brings him to visit the residents.
Photo by Samara Sinclair



Carewest Colonel Belcher

1939 Veterans Way N.W.
403-944-7800

Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre

722 16th Avenue N.E.
403-230-6900

Carewest Garrison Green

3108 Don Ethell Boulevard S.W.
403-944-0100

Carewest George Boyack

1203 Centre Avenue East
403-267-2750

Carewest Glenmore Park

6909 14th Street S.W.
403-258-7650

Carewest Nickle House

950 Robert Road N.E.
403-520-6735

Carewest Operational Stress Injury Clinic

Suite 203, 3625 Shaganappi Trail N.W.
403-216-9860

Carewest Royal Park

4222 Sarcee Road S.W.
403-240-7475

Carewest Sarcee

3504 Sarcee Road S.W.
403-686-8100

Carewest Signal Pointe

6363 Simcoe Road S.W.
403-240-7950

Carewest Beddington

8120 Beddington Boulevard N.W.
403-520-3350

photo

across A client in the Carewest Neuro Rehabilitation program at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning tests a new sit-to-stand trainer. This equipment is only one piece of a series of machines funded by the Provincial Stroke Strategy.

Photo by Samara Sinclair





Leading Innovative Thinking

At Carewest, our vision statement is, “**Leading the way in innovative health care**”, but what does that actually mean? It means we are committed to providing excellent care that promotes a “**whole person**” approach. It also means that we strive to be leaders in our field, offering special programs and services that other continuing care providers do not. To remain leaders in our field, we have to be innovative in our thinking. As such, we’re always searching for creative ways to provide care, programs and services.

photos

top Food Services Assistant Samantha Masse peels apples in the Commissary at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning in preparation for the morning baking.

bottom Nursing staff at Carewest George Boyack join Clinical Educator Moe Abazinab for a skills lab to brush up on assessment skills, oxygen handling and medication delivery.

Photos by Samara Sinclair

Our business model enables us to set goals and reach tangible outcomes that demonstrate our commitment not only to quality care, but also to creating a safe and healthy workplace. We pride ourselves in our ability to move in a consistent, well-planned and thoughtful direction – all with the goal of helping the people of our community experience the best possible quality of life.

Fifty+ Years Serving the Calgary Community

In 2011, we celebrated our 50th anniversary. We're proud of our history - but even more proud of our people and our ability to continuously embrace change to meet the needs of the community - leading the way as we go.

Previously known as Calgary Auxiliary Hospital and Nursing Home District No. 7, we officially became Carewest in August 1986. Since opening our first site in 1961, we have continued to grow and expand in response to the changing health needs of our community.

- 1961 – Carewest Cross Bow (closed in 2004)
- 1962 – Carewest Sarcee
- 1963 – Carewest Glenmore Park
- 1969 – Carewest George Boyack
- 1978 – Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning
- 1998 – Carewest Royal Park
- 2000 – Carewest Signal Pointe
- 2000 – Carewest Nickle House
- 2003 – Carewest Colonel Belcher
- 2006 – Carewest Operational Stress Injury Clinic
- 2010 – Carewest Garrison Green
- 2011 – Carewest Rouleau Manor (closed in 2013)
- 2013 – Carewest C3 Beddington

Diversity of Services

Since 1961, Carewest has grown from a provider of long-term care to a diverse organization offering complex continuing care, rehabilitation and recovery services, and community programs. Our experience and skills cover a wide range of areas, including an Operational Stress Injury

Clinic funded by Veterans Affairs Canada, specialized dementia care, renal dialysis, neuro rehabilitation, geriatric mental health, and day programs for adults of all ages. In fact, Carewest offers more than 20 distinct specialized programs and services to residents and clients.

Values and Principles

Carewest's values and principles speak to how we approach our work. They define who we are and help us stay focused on what's really important to us.

They include:

- "Whole person" approach to care
- Client choice and independence
- Team-based service delivery
- Ongoing quality improvement
- Client, staff, volunteer and visitor safety
- Continuous learning
- A healthy, productive and collaborative work environment
- Family and community partnerships
- Optimum use of resources

Resident/Client Grouping

At Carewest, our philosophy doesn't only describe how we provide care, but also where we provide it. All of our care centres are built and structured in a way that best accommodates the residents. Our residents are grouped in environments according to their needs and ability. This means every staff member caring for residents does so in a focused, appropriate way and is educated to meet the needs of a specific resident group. At Carewest, our philosophy of care represents a substantial shift away from what long-term care looked like in the past. We believe strongly in promoting resident independence and choice. That means we honour our residents' desire to move freely within our care centres – their homes. Residents wake up when they want to, choose how they want to spend their day and take part in the activities of their choice. When we say we are a resident-focused organization, we mean it. It's the essence of what we do.

Food Services

Carewest Food Services strives to create and serve healthy, nutritious meals, with friendly service in a relaxed atmosphere for our residents and clients to enjoy. Our focus is to consistently enhance the dining experience, by highlighting the importance of a meaningful mealtime. Fostering a culture of quality improvement is key to our success and we welcome input from residents, clients and families to optimize the quality and experience during mealtime.

Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Services

Carewest's Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Services provides consulting services to Carewest programs to help achieve the best quality of life for residents and clients who are experiencing pain and other uncomfortable symptoms, or facing serious illnesses and end-of-life issues. The team works with the care centres' interdisciplinary teams to provide pain and symptom management, grief and loss support, ongoing education about end-of-life concerns for families, residents, clients, staff and volunteers.

Employee Health and Safety

At Carewest, "culture of safety" isn't just a buzz phrase. All Carewest sites have successfully received their Certificate of Recognition through the Partnerships in Injury Reduction (PIR) program – run jointly through the Workers' Compensation Board, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, and industry partners.

Being involved with the PIR program means that Carewest demonstrates a commitment to maintaining and improving its health and safety program and has achieved a consistently high standard of safety in the continuing care industry, evidenced through our annual PIR Audit results.

Carewest is also a signatory to the Conference Board of Canada's CEO Health and Safety Leadership Charter – a re-affirmation to support the continuous improvement of a healthy and safe workplace.

Promoting a high level of staff participation in our annual influenza vaccination campaign is another important part in striving to keep everyone who enters our sites healthy. An unwavering commitment to employee wellness, staff education focused on awareness, and a commitment to the goal of immunization for all staff has resulted in consistently high staff vaccination rates that meet or exceed the target rate set by Alberta Health Services.

Infection Prevention and Control

Carewest's Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) service provides expertise to all Carewest sites and programs on infection control issues which support staff, volunteers and families in providing safe resident and client care. The service activities include education, surveillance, consultation, resident/client immunization, and policy review and development based on best practice evidence. The IP&C service also works collaboratively with an interdisciplinary team within Carewest, including the Employee Health and Safety service, and externally with Alberta Health Services' Supportive Living and Public Health areas.

Education and Training

Everyday, Carewest demonstrates its commitment to education. We take pride in ensuring our staff are well-trained and have access to a wealth of ongoing education and inservice training sessions. In fact, we're so successful at what we do, others have taken notice.

Our Supportive Pathways "Train the Trainer" Program was previously chosen by Alberta's Minister of Health as the provincial standard for dementia care education and the basis of the curriculum for the provincial Health Care Aide program. Carewest continues to facilitate Train the Trainer sessions throughout Alberta and across the country.

A number of Alberta Health Services departments and other care providers are also using teaching modules developed by Carewest Education Services to provide education to their staff. Carewest also delivers the Bow Valley College course, Advanced Assisting with Medication Delivery, to health care aides.

Quality and Safety

Carewest places high value on continuously offering quality services. Staff are encouraged to identify and work together to make improvements in processes and practices that contribute to a high quality of care. Carewest participates in regular audits and accreditation initiatives to assess ourselves against provincial standards and national benchmarks.

Creating a culture of safety is a cornerstone of our quality improvement program. Identifying changes to improve quality advances the safety of our environment and services. This includes the installation of overhead ceiling lifts, improved standards in medication delivery processes, and creating an environment that supports timely reporting of incidents that are investigated with a focus on learning from the incident and reducing its reoccurrence.

Quality Councils are another means for Carewest staff and management to use their collective experience to improve the quality of service. These councils have been proactive in establishing best practices to continually improve care within the organization. They include:

- Continence
- Skin and Wound
- Medication Safety
- Falls Reduction & Injury Prevention

Quality of care is also supported by unit- and program-focused efforts to implement quality improvement initiatives, to continually improve the care and service offered within Carewest.

Partnerships

At Carewest, we believe our residents and clients can benefit not only from our skills and expertise, but from those of others. That's why we have developed partnerships with a wide variety of organizations across all sectors. We aim to provide the most current services available from those most appropriate, while sharing with others the valuable information and knowledge we have to offer.

Our partners include:

- Alberta Environment
- Alberta Health Services
- Alberta Health
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- Bow Valley College
- Calgary Health Trust
- Calgary Paraplegic Association
- Calgary Poppy Fund and Veteran's Food Bank
- Conestoga College, Ontario
- Conference Board of Canada
- Continuing Care Safety Association
- Friends of the Colonel Belcher Society
- Freedom's Wings
- Heart to Heart Support Society
- Huntington Society of Canada
- Junior high and senior high schools
- LINKages
- Mount Royal University
- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Pet Access League Society (PALS)
- Recycling Council of Alberta (RCA)
- Research Institute for Aging (RIA), Ontario
- Royal Canadian Legion - Calgary Branch
- Unions
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- Veterans Affairs Canada
- Vets' Angels
- Volunteer Calgary
- Youth Volunteer Corps
- And many more... 



“Even though I’m just sitting in a wheelchair and pushing it around, it feels like I’m working.”

photo.....

Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning resident Victor McWhan mows the lawn outside the centre using a lawnmower blade adapted to his wheelchair. In the winter, Victor swaps out the blades in favour of a plough to help with moving snow off the sidewalks. When Victor isn’t helping to maintain the property, he is delivering punch lines on stage during regular appearances at the city’s comedy clubs.

Photo by Sean Dennie

Victor McWhan never thought he would one day be a quadriplegic.

Back in high school, which Victor McWhan attended in Delburne, Alta., he was instructed by an English teacher to write an essay about the ways he would – and wouldn't – like his life to turn out.

The irony struck him five years later as he was lying on the ceiling of a flipped vehicle, unable to move his legs, that he had written he would never want to be paralyzed.

But being a quadriplegic for 25 years hasn't slowed Vic down for a minute, nor has it extinguished his love for life, laughter and a little hard work on the side.

The Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning resident can often be seen participating in a little "recreational mowing", using a lawnmower blade adapted to fit onto his wheelchair, for his neighbours in the communities of Renfrew, Tuxedo and Windsor Heights.

"I found a lawnmower at Canadian Tire and my buddy fabricated the skeleton for it," says Vic.

"Even though I'm just sitting in a wheelchair and pushing it around, it feels like I'm working. It's really neat because I always liked manual labour."

Born and raised in Lousana, Alta., Vic began working in the Central Alberta oil patch, on a drilling crew. He was promoted to Driller six months before his accident.

"Me and another fellow who worked on the same rig went to a bar in Red Deer and we were both drunk when we left. I was driving. But after one mile, I decided I couldn't drive, pulled the vehicle over and slept in the back seat," says Vic, adding that sometime during the night, his friend woke up and got behind the wheel.

"He hit a traffic light post, which flipped the vehicle over

and I woke up, lying on the ceiling. There was no pain but when I tried to move, I knew immediately what had happened. I knew I was paralyzed."

After six months in the hospital and two years in a group home, Vic sought a more independent lifestyle by moving into an assisted living facility, buying a van and enrolling into the Mechanical Engineering Technology and Bachelor of Applied Petroleum Engineering Technology courses at SAIT.

After that, Vic was hired to teach at SAIT – a job he held for seven years. During those years, he met a woman, got married and bought a house in Citadel.

But his failing health, coupled with a separation from his wife and the loss of his job forced Vic to re-evaluate his living arrangements and his doctor suggested long-term care at the Fanning centre.


"I wept quietly every day for a couple of months after moving to the Fanning," says Vic.

"But it ended up better after all because I think this is a super location and my health is much better now."

While he lived in Citadel, Vic would often hang out with a group of friends at a nearby pub, laughing and cracking jokes.

Those jokes caught the attention of people, who suggested that he write them down and try them on amateur night at a comedy club. Since then, he was hooked.

"I got into the semi-finals in the Canada's Top Comic competition in 2011 and third place in Yuk Yuks Calgary Comedy Contest," says Vic.

"It's really gratifying to get the audience feedback and that laughter but to have professional comedians telling you they would go on the road with you right now – I feel really good." 



“Everything I need is here. I’m setting my future up.”

photo.....

Mary Lucyk, right, Carewest Comprehensive Community Care (C3) program client plays dominoes with Activity Convenor Sandra Mooney. The C3 programs at Carewest Beddington Towne Centre and at Carewest Sarcee offers seniors ongoing medical care, home services and day support to enable them to remain independent at home for as long as possible.

Photos by Sean Dennie

Profile

The landscape of care in Calgary is constantly changing, particularly in the northwest.

That's where the Carewest Comprehensive Community Care (C3) program has grown into its second location, to better serve the citizens of Calgary.

And changing for the better, according to 68-year-old C3 client Mary Lucyk, who was pleasantly surprised by the calibre of care that she experienced upon joining the program.

Mary was a florist in Calgary for many years until an ankle injury forced her into a hasty retirement and kept her confined to her home.

"I lived like that for 3.5 years. I was housebound for so long, I felt like I didn't want to get out anymore. When you're stuck at home for that long, you really start feeling like you aren't important to anybody and that you don't really deserve to go out," says Mary.

"I feel really good about me, now. Here, they put a new spin on your outlook on life and they are really caring. It has certainly made me feel better about myself."

Located at 8120 Beddington Blvd. N.W., the Beddington Towne Centre is the new home for Carewest's north location C3 program with the capacity to serve up to 90 clients.

This community resource has the ability to assist in alleviating acute care pressures and similar to the well-established C3 program at Carewest Sarcee, the C3 program at the Beddington Towne Centre offers seniors with unstable chronic illness ongoing medical care, home services and day support to enable them to remain independent at home.

Jennie Hollings, Client Service Manager, C3 Beddington, says clients living in northwest Calgary will now have the benefits of accessing the C3 program.


"People in northwest Calgary never had access to the C3 program until now, as the Sarcee C3 program only served clients living in the south of the city," she says.

"Clients living in northwest Calgary can now take advantage of the program's Community Care Assistants to help with bathing, getting dressed, taking medications, etc., and also have the security of knowing a registered nurse is just a phone call away through our 24-hour telephone service."

The 8,300-sq.-ft. space includes three exam rooms, a large therapy area, dining room, tub room and quiet room.

Clients of the C3 Beddington program will be picked up at their home two days a week and transported to the day centre, where a team of health care professionals, including a physician, nursing staff, therapy staff, social worker and pharmacist, will provide for care, medications, social activities and nutrition.

"The staff that greeted me were just incredible. I've received excellent care here. There is always a doctor on board if we need to see them. There is a mental health nurse, registered nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists. We even had the dietitian explain a lot to us. And you talk with them on a one-to-one basis about your health and how to improve it," says Mary.

"They have everything here and while I may not need it all right away, it will all benefit me in the long run. I know, in the future, I'm going to need more help and it is all available here. You don't have to go someplace else to get different kinds of care or sit in line-ups at a clinic. Everything we need is here." 



“Carewest views all volunteers, whether individuals or groups, as a great asset to our organization.”

photo

Volunteers Ken McKay and Shawn Hauck, from Van Houtte Coffee Services, spend a few hours with residents at Carewest Sarcee, cheering them on during the centre’s Fall Fair. Volunteers - whether they are individuals or groups - make a positive difference in the lives of Carewest residents and clients.

Photo by Sean Dennie

Profile

The voices from the group of 15 volunteers rose in a loud cheer as the woman in the wheelchair proved there was nothing lacking from the accuracy of her aim.

Armed with only smiles, the group of Van Houtte Coffee Services employees laughed and joked with residents at Carewest Sarcee, as they manned games stations like bean-bag toss and ring-throw during the care centre's fall fair.

One might think getting 15 people together to do anything requires a scheduling mastermind but that isn't the case with employees from Van Houtte, who routinely come together to fulfill their mission to give back to the community.

The volunteer opportunities are endless at Carewest for companies like Van Houtte, whose comprehensive Corporate Social Responsibility program encourages staff to give back to the community.

Ken McKay, Customer Satisfaction Manager at Van Houtte, says it's very convenient to have an organization like Carewest to partner with to help Van Houtte fulfill their corporate social responsibility mandate.

"It makes us feel more like a family instead of just employees at an organization," says Ken. "It helps us know that what we do counts."

Corporate volunteers in large and small groups are always welcome at Carewest, whose Volunteer Services department will work to find an opportunity in one of its 12 locations around Calgary.

No matter what the interest, available skills or size of group, there is always something engaging to do for volunteers to the organization.

Jessica O'Connor, Coordinator, Volunteer & Recruitment

Services at Carewest, says the opportunities are endless for corporate groups looking to volunteer – from decorating the sites during the holidays, to working on specific projects, Carewest can always find a way to accommodate a corporate group of volunteers.

"Carewest views all volunteers, whether individuals or groups, as a great asset to our organization. Our volunteers and their contributions are invaluable to our residents, clients and programs," she says.


"Corporate groups positively impact the sites through their hard work, providing one-to-one interactions, brightening up and decorating our sites, and connecting with the Carewest community. We only hope to grow our corporate partners in the future."

Van Houtte's Corporate Social Responsibility program allows its employees to give back through four different streams – Dollars for Doers, the Employee Donation Matching Program, the Employee Sponsorship Program and the Café Time program.

Ken explains that it's Van Houtte's Café Time program that allows employees to volunteer during normal work hours for up to 52 hours per fiscal year. Café stands for Community Action for Employees and allows employees to volunteer without losing any wages.

Employees may choose to volunteer on an individual basis and/or through group-led efforts that are organized throughout the year. Employees may use Café Time to volunteer at non-profit organizations that provide benefit to the community.

"It's nice to be able to have these opportunities. It means a lot and says a lot of a company and its ownership and values," says Ken.

"For me personally, it's about seeing those smiles and it's nice to see the residents active and letting us know they appreciate what we're doing. 



“It was new to me. I never heard about it and I still have to keep trying to remember what it’s called.”

photo.....

Carewest George Boyack resident Marian Hoffert discovers hidden treasure while Geocaching - an activity that uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) to locate treasures all over the world.

Photo by Sean Dennie



Profile

When Marian Hoffert, a 93-year-old resident at Carewest George Boyack, was told that the day's activity was Geocaching, she wasn't sure what to think.

"It was new to me – I never heard about it and I still have to keep trying to remember what it's called," she says.

Sitting outside in one of the city's many public spaces, Marian and a group of other residents from the care centre were taken on an adventure – an old-fashioned activity with a modern-day twist.

Geocaching is an outdoor activity during which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver and other navigational techniques to find hidden treasure. More often than not, the treasure hunt yields items of little nominal value, but the objective is not gold coins or precious gems. It's just plain fun.

These treasures are hidden in hide-and-seek containers in places around the world – the locations of which are uploaded to a website that anyone can access.

Geocaching participants select one of over 2 million caches globally and the hunt begins. Using a GPS device or a cell phone with GPS capability, participants search to locate the container in the specified area.

The terrain could be treacherous or easy and the container could be hidden or out in the open. It could be small or large. Once found, participants sign and date a log, saying they found the cache, select an item from the container and replace it with one of their own.

Carewest George Boyack Recreation Therapist Tracey Vigneault began taking residents geocaching in 2011 because she always enjoyed the activity and wanted to get residents involved.

"My husband and I started geocaching in 2009. It motivated us to get up off the couch and took us places we never thought of going," she says.

"Initially, I wanted to create a geocache at Boyack and was encouraged by my manager to try it with residents."

These excursions are part of recreation therapy programming at Carewest – activities designed to restore, remediate and rehabilitate a person's level of functioning and independence in life activities and to promote health and wellness. In addition, recreation therapy can reduce the limitations caused by an illness or disabling condition what would normally pose a barrier when participating in some activities.


Recreation therapists work with residents to restore motor, social and cognitive functioning, build confidence, develop coping skills, and integrate skills learned in treatment settings into community settings. Tracey worked to break down barriers by sourcing geocaches that are not only easy to find but to which the path was accessible to those with mobility constraints.

She taught residents how to use the GPS receiver and with the help of Carewest Transportation Services and volunteers, brought residents to locations around Calgary like Baker Park, Laycock Park, and Pearce Estate Park.

"Finding wheelchair-accessible geocaches was a challenge. I wanted to visit areas that could allow us to find more than one cache. My first step was to contact the City of Calgary to find accessible parks in the city," she says.

"It is important for me that our residents are still connected with the community and that they are open to exploring unique ways of doing it. Many residents said that it was an enjoyable experience and would like to do it again."

At least one resident echoed that sentiment.

"It was nice to have somebody show us around. I didn't know about the treasure yet until we started looking for it, and then I got excited," says Marian. "I can't believe it myself – I'm hunting for treasure." 



“The person with dementia may be cognitively impaired but not emotionally impaired. They still react to love and kindness...”

photo

Marlene Collins, Director, Complex Continuing Care, left, and Hana Linek, Resident Assistant, centre, spend some time outside with resident Millie Lawson in one of the gardens at Carewest Signal Pointe.

Photo by Sean Dennie.

Life with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias has often been described as a journey and that each person's pathway is a different one.

It's this belief that forms the foundation of Carewest's Supportive Pathways program – a dementia care training curriculum that has caught national and international attention and that has defined best practices in caring for those with dementia.

Marlene Collins, Director, Complex Continuing Care, says the seven-module program emphasizes the importance of maintaining a resident's personhood while providing individualized care and how to respond to altered behaviours in a manner that preserves dignity.

"We train our staff to see things from the residents' perspective. In order to be good at that, you have to love what you do, you have to love the residents and respect them and their dignity. Protect their dignity," she says.

"The person with dementia may be cognitively impaired but not emotionally impaired. They may not know you or even where they are but they still retain their personhood. They still react to love and kindness and their personhood and autonomy is important."

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive degenerative disease that affects the brain, causing brain cells to shrink and be replaced with dense plaques.

As Alzheimer's disease affects each area of the brain, certain functions or abilities are lost. This results in specific symptoms or changes in behaviour and memory.

Although the disease results in changes, it does not

affect the person's ability to experience and respond to feelings such as joy, anger, love or sadness.

According to the Alzheimer's Society of Calgary, approximately 11,000 individuals in Calgary and surrounding area have Alzheimer's disease or other dementias.

The philosophy of Supportive Pathways is simple: accept the resident's reality is different from your own and do your best to support that person in their reality.


This means encouraging discussion about the time or people that the resident is speaking of and allowing that person to guide you down their own personal pathway through their disease.

"The thinking is that you have to go to that person's reality. If they're looking for their mother, they're not usually looking for their actual mother, they are looking for a time where they felt comforted and part of their family. They are looking for a time they felt they knew where they were and that they belonged there," says Marlene.

"Our challenge is to get into that reality and to find out where that person is and what's bothering them at that time. You would say, 'Tell me about your mom – what is your favourite thing about your mom'. You spend the time validating what they are feeling and reminiscing with them."

Today, Carewest has trained over 850 trainers in the province and 33,000 health care workers have taken the training in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and even as far away as China.

"We try to help families understand the stages of the disease and their expectations of the care and what's reasonable," says Marlene.

"In our organization, one of our key goals is looking at families as partners in care." 



photo

Collin Koch, foreground, is surrounded by his loving family at Carewest Nickle House. From left are Lindsay, 24, Taylor, 22, Keira, 21 and wife Gail. The Koch's are very involved in Collin's life and collectively see him almost every day of the week.

Photos by Sean Dennie

“We’re a pretty tight family and when we feel we’re not getting what we need, we all band together to be a voice for Collin.”

Profile

Being the family provider with a busy schedule, involved father of three and supportive husband is a role that Collin Koch always cherished.

The 51-year-old resident at Carewest Nickle House loved nothing more than coaching his children's soccer teams, organizing family camping trips, going to the Calgary Stampede or spending time outside with his wife of 27 years.

When a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis (MS) was shared with Collin 19 years ago, it did nothing to shatter his determination to be the best he could be.

"I think I was in Gr. 8 when dad told us he had MS and diabetes," says daughter Lindsay Koch, 24.

At that time, symptoms of the disease had begun to show up and Collin's wife, Gail, says it marked the beginning of a dark time for the family.

"He wanted to be the provider, a dad of three and a husband, but he couldn't do it anymore. Surrendering to that was a really hard process," says Gail.

It was challenging for everyone as the children and Gail sought counselling to understand the changes Collin experienced and to address their own mental and physical health needs.

Despite having to spend a few years apart to do that, the Koch family has come back together and are now stronger than ever.

"It was a huge change for us, and it wasn't pretty for a few years, but we all worked at it and came together through counselling," says Gail.

"I think we're a pretty tight family, and are there for one another and when we feel we're not getting what we

need, we all band together to be a voice for Collin."

Gail and Collin met in 1986 while working for the City of Calgary in the Parks and Recreation department, and were married a year later.

They had three children – Lindsay, Taylor, 22, and Keira, 21.

Today, the Koch family is very involved in Collin's care and will see him almost every day to spend time with him and ensure he's feeling well.

Gail visits four or five times a week for walks, meals and meetings with staff.

Their children all go to school and work full-time, but make sure to spend Saturday having breakfast and lunch with their dad at the family home. They exchange text messages with him to start and end every day.

The siblings say they are so grateful for their lives, their group of friends and each other.


Lindsay has earned her Bachelor's of Kinesiology degree and is currently pursuing a Nursing degree.

Taylor is completing his Business degree at the University of Calgary and Keira is studying Nursing at Mount Royal University.

All three are part of the Global Youth Volunteer Network and have travelled to places like Uganda, Thailand, Nepal, Brazil, Finland, Denmark – either putting their clinical skills to work or learning and expanding their horizons.

The whole family is grateful to have the opportunity to be involved in Collin's care at Carewest Nickle House and credits the staff and Craig – the chef – for the excellent, quality care and delicious meals that keep Collin's life a full and healthy one.

"He loves having his own room. The staff are very approachable and it's a real community here," says Gail.

"His health has really improved since he's been here. Not every day is easy, and things come up, but the staff are willing to work with us and we're grateful to be here." 

Supporting our Staff

We believe offering excellent care to our residents and clients starts with our staff.

We've worked hard – and will continue to work hard – to listen and respond to the needs of staff in providing them with the knowledge, tools and resources to ensure their success at Carewest.

Carewest's belief in and commitment to staff is reflected in many of our values:

- Opportunities for staff to utilize their full skill set
- Investment in staff through opportunities for ongoing learning and development
- Ability to support staff in the increasingly complex world of health care, including complex continuing care, rehabilitation and recovery services, and community programs
- Comprehensive and committed employee occupational health and safety program
- Clear, honest and open communication
- Opportunity for employees to create their own career path within a large and diverse organization
- Team-focused environment
- Systems and processes that support the work of staff and care providers

Workforce Planning

Creating a great place to work means listening to employees. For all of us, being able to come to work and enjoy the relationship we have with our manager and co-workers makes all the difference in the world.

At Carewest, we're committed to doing what we can so employees leave work feeling like they've made a positive contribution, not only to the lives of the residents and clients, but also to their careers and workplace.

Carewest is continually finding new and better ways to engage with staff to develop innovative human resource practices that keep us in Alberta's Top 60 employer group.





This includes enhancing Carewest's recruitment strategy, social networking, staff retention, ensuring greater flexibility in our policies and procedures, staff recognition, and maintaining a respectful workplace.

Ongoing Education

Carewest believes well-trained and educated employees are an essential part of the work we do. That's why we invest in ongoing education and in-services at all levels throughout the organization.

Carewest conducts regular, formal assessments of educational needs in addition to responding to more informally identified needs, and tailors education and in-service training programs around those needs.

These programs are supplemented by other numerous and ongoing educational offerings facilitated by expert trainers.

As a result of expertise developed at Carewest, we offer program-based education in partnership with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services, while offering internal learning programs as well. Carewest also delivers the Bow Valley College course, Advanced Assisting with Medication Delivery, to health care aides.

From the first day of employment, Carewest works with employees to ensure their full understanding and appreciation of Carewest and its culture. We provide a paid, comprehensive general orientation to all new employees, during which each new employee is paired with an experienced staff member known as a Learning Guide. This provides an opportunity to establish a 'mentor' relationship. Orientation at Carewest does not finish when orientation week comes to a close but extends until the pertinent learning needs identified by the new employee are met. Their progress is reviewed regularly and new employee feedback is not only welcomed but encouraged.

Healthy Employees Make Happy Employees

Looking after the well-being of our residents and clients requires a lot of physical work to allow them to be as mobile and independent as possible. Reducing the physical demands placed on employees and ensuring

safety for everyone is a top priority for Carewest. Initiatives like the establishment of Wellness Resource Centres at Carewest sites, health and wellness seminars, discounted gym memberships, cholesterol testing, nutrition education, and health counseling are just some of the steps taken to ensure our employees stay healthy – and happy.

Training

In addition to our internal education and in-services, Carewest is known province-wide for its external teachings. At Carewest, residents who have a diagnosis of dementia live in comfortable and safe settings as part of our Cognitively Complex Care program. All employees who work with residents with dementia go through the Supportive Pathways education program, which focuses on seeing the person behind the disease.

Our education program has proved so successful that we've taken it to the next level, offering a "Train the Trainer" course so other organizations can learn from us and take those lessons back to their staff.

Employee Recruitment, Retention & Engagement

We think it's important to recognize staff for the good work they do every day. Events such as the Carewest Staff Appreciation Week and many site-based activities are held throughout the year to help celebrate our work and say thank you. The importance of our employees in the work that we do is reflected in Carewest's comprehensive Employee Recruitment, Retention & Engagement strategies.

Communication


Within Carewest, we continually strive for open, honest communication. This is achieved through publications such as Carewrite and our internal staff website, Careweb. However, like e-mail, these are simply tools, they don't replace the all-important, face-to-face communication that is so vital in our daily work.

That's why at Carewest, we promote positive verbal communication. This means not only speaking to

each other more, making sure you're understood, and appreciating others' points of view, but doing so with positive intentions and an optimistic outlook.

There is a strong link between positive communication and a positive workplace – how you speak to someone is as important as why you're speaking with them. For Carewest, it's such a priority, that we have created a series of illustrated Positive Talk booklets that staff, residents and families can reference for hints on how to handle many common workplace scenarios.

Staff Survey

We believe it's crucial to hear from employees about how we, as an employer, are doing, what they like about Carewest, and the areas in which we can improve. That's why we perform comprehensive staff surveys to seek feedback from employees. We take the results from staff surveys to heart and take concrete steps to improve the areas that need work, while ensuring we continue to perform in the areas in which we're doing well. 

photos

top

Kelly Clavette, Manager, Support Services, checks under a resident's bed at Carewest Garrison Green as part of a Carewest-wide initiative to audit each resident room for cleanliness, safety and maintenance on an ongoing basis.

Photo by Samara Sinclair

bottom


A dozen bins, overflowing with food and hygiene items were delivered by Santa's elves to the Mary Dover House as part of Carewest's Social Responsibility Commitment to support our community. From back left are Carewest staff Jaqueline Jones, Monique Poirier, Nirene Mijkes, and in front are Debbie Chaisson, left, and Jean Stern.

Photo by Samara Sinclair

funding Carewest Operations

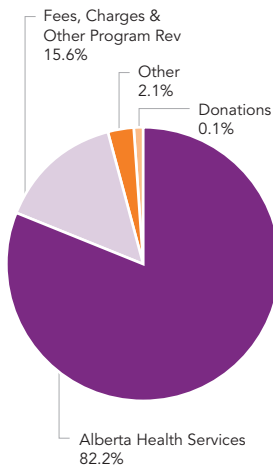
Carewest is a public, not-for-profit organization and a wholly owned subsidiary of Alberta Health Services. That means, every dollar we receive goes back into programs, services and buildings. While most of our funding comes from Alberta Health Services, long-term care residents pay an accommodation fee – a standard fee set by the provincial government that applies to all long-term care residents across Alberta. This fee pays for the residents’ room, food, laundry, utilities, building maintenance and housekeeping services – not care. The cost of care, such as care staff, medication and care equipment is covered by Alberta Health Services.

Alberta Health Services is the major source of funding for Carewest, representing 82 per cent of total revenue. This funding supports complex continuing care, rehabilitation and recovery services, and community programs.

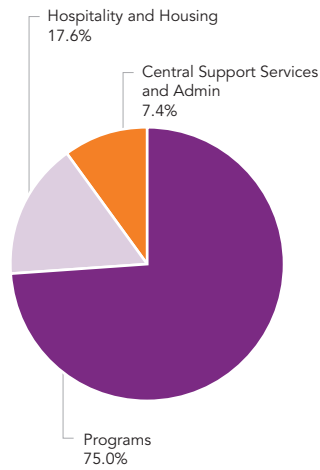
Programs, housing and hospitality represent 93 per cent of total operating expenditures. Central support services and administration make up the balance. 



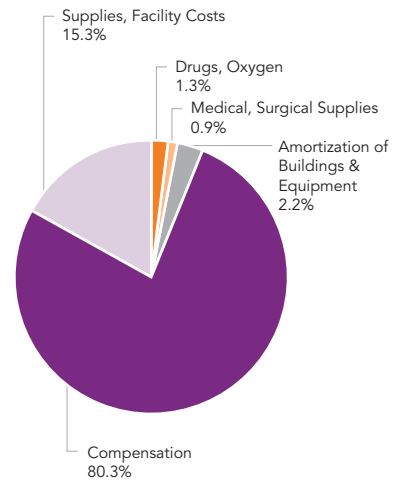
2012/13
Revenue By Source
(Including Amortization)



2012/13
Expenses by Category
(Including Amortization)



2012/13
Expenses by Object
(Including Amortization)





support Donors Make the Difference

Caring for our residents and clients goes well beyond medical care. Carewest believes in a “whole-person” model of care that also encompasses mental, spiritual, social and emotional aspects of the person. Balancing these aspects is achieved through our various quality-of-life programs and initiatives offered to our residents and clients.


With the help of the Calgary Health Trust, Carewest is committed to raising money to support residents’ and clients’ quality of life. Carewest programs, such as the Grateful Resident and Family program, provide another opportunity for people to donate.

At Carewest, we define quality of life as activities, technology and mobility supports that contribute to the enjoyment of living, social engagement and well-being of Carewest residents and clients.

Quality of life means different things to different people.

It doesn’t matter if you’re young or old; the feelings of independence, joyfulness, productivity, success and creativity are universal. We all strive for it and crave it. It’s no different for the residents and clients at Carewest. For 85-year-old Frank, quality of life means having access to a bus that will take him to the Legion for lunch to catch up with old friends, while for Cara, 24, quality of life means having access to e-mail and the Internet so she can stay connected to her friends and keep up to date with music and trends.

The benefits of donations and the spirit of philanthropy are evident at every Carewest site. We are thankful for donations that help enhance the quality of life of those we care for.

You can donate to Carewest through the Calgary Health Trust in many ways – single gifts, memorial donations to honour a loved one, gifts-in-kind and more. Please visit www.calgaryhealthtrust.ca or call 403-943-0615 for more information. Every donation, regardless of the amount, makes a difference to the quality of life of our residents and clients. 





Carewest.
Today.



Visit us at
www.carewest.ca



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