



HopeSpring Cancer Support Centre

Strategic Plan



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1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1995, HopeSpring has been a community-based organization that supports individuals who have been affected by cancer. The organization provides a range of programs and services to support individuals who are impacted by cancer, as well as providing connections to other services that would benefit them physically, emotionally and spiritually. Programs offered by HopeSpring involve support groups, classes, relaxation therapies, a boutique for wigs and camisoles, workshops and access to resource information.

Over recent years, the organization has seen significant change in terms of its programs and services, its new location, new staff leadership and Board of Directors. These have been important but necessary transitions in order to advance HopeSpring to become a stronger and more effective organization in meeting its mandate.

In the spring of 2013, with a relatively new Board of Directors and staff leader, a decision was made that it would be timely to undertake the development of a Strategic Plan for the organization for the 2013 to 2016 period. In support of the development of a new Strategic Plan, a series of focus groups and information development frameworks were undertaken to inform the Strategic Plan's development. Four students from Conestoga College undertook a series of member and volunteer focus groups. The facilitator undertook focus groups with partners, volunteers, donors and staff. The results of this work are available under separate cover.

On June 1st, 2013, eight members of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director met with the facilitator to develop the Strategic Plan. The workshop involved a presentation on strategic trends, an overview of the results of the focus groups and operational frameworks, followed by the development of a Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions.

This document represents the HopeSpring Strategic Plan which was approved by the Board of Directors in July 2013. With approval, management and the Board will have the responsibility to develop an Implementation Plan for the Strategic Directions that can be based upon the Implementation Chart templates that are available in this document.

2 VISION

A Vision defines the horizon or the journey that the organization and its stakeholders are on in order to realize their mandate and achieve their ultimate purpose. A Vision is like a horizon that moves as you come closer to it, which reflects the fact that the operating environment is continually changing, and the Vision needs to have the flexibility and the foresight to be relevant and valued within a constantly changing world.

The following Vision was developed for HopeSpring.

Inspire • Empower • Hope

The following material provides perspectives on the intent of the themes within the Vision.

- **Inspire** – HopeSpring is committed to inspiring people who have been impacted by cancer. Many of these individuals are concerned, sometimes frustrated and don't know what is going to happen. HopeSpring creates an opportunity for them to gather information, participate in programs and to undertake other initiatives that will inspire them, gain confidence and to move forward.
- **Empower** – HopeSpring inspires people which then empowers them to act, to take control of their lives and to effectively respond to the challenges that they have endured and/or are experiencing. Through empowerment, people impacted by cancer can take action, overcome and live positive lives.
- **Hope** – once inspired and empowered, HopeSpring gives hope to people who have been impacted by cancer. With hope, these individuals and their families are strengthened, take charge and can see the future through more positive and manageable perspectives.

3 MISSION STATEMENT

A Mission Statement informs a reader as to the fundamentals and essence of the organization's purpose. In application terms, every strategic and operational decision an organization is undertaking, needs to align with and be supportive to its Mission. If the organization is undertaking a strategic or operational decision that is not aligned or supportive, it needs to ask why it would make such a decision or whether it's timely to review its Mission.

The following Mission Statement was developed for HopeSpring.

We are an independent community organization committed to empowering those whose lives are impacted by cancer to improve their emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

The following material provides some additional insights and perspectives on the themes within the Mission Statement.

- **Independent community organization** – HopeSpring is not an institution, or a large organization. It is independent, grassroots and community-based. It utilizes volunteers extensively in its programs and operations. It intentionally remains small, focused and people-oriented in order to enhance the experiences and outcomes for the members served.
- **Committed to empowering those whose lives are impacted by cancer** – the primary role for HopeSpring is to empower people to act, to respond, to take charge and to manage their life in a positive way through family-oriented programs, workshops, resources and venue. The people who are empowered involve any person impacted by cancer, whether directly as an individual, or their families, caregivers and others, which reflects the holistic nature of the services provided and the way HopeSpring engages with people;
- **To improve their emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing** – HopeSpring's efforts and outcomes focus on the individual member in terms of strengthening their capabilities in a holistic way, across emotional, physical and spiritual dimensions that collectively represent every person's being. The intent is to strengthen all three human dimensions in order to enhance the collective well-being of each member in order to improve their sense of hope through fostering inspiration and empowerment.

4 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Principles and Values have three dimensions within a Strategic Plan. First, they provide the opportunity to further describe key dimensions of the organization's Mission. Second, and potentially most importantly, they identify how the organization will interact with the people it serves. Third, they have the potential to identify key organizational accountabilities and outcomes.

The following Principles and Values have been developed for HopeSpring.

We Believe in....
Member-Focused
In working with each member as a person, respectful of their individual situations, needs, strengths and capabilities
Inclusive and Accessible
Providing programs and services that support all people who have been impacted by cancer and which are accessible and affordable
Holistic
In providing a spectrum of quality programs and services that meet the holistic needs of each individual member and build on their individual strengths and capabilities
Compassion and Dignity
Approaching each individual with compassion and respect as a basis to honour their dignity and in building trusting relationships
Innovation
Developing an organizational culture that nurtures innovation, learning, team approaches and continuous improvement, and community engagement, along with ensuring member confidentiality
Valuing Staff and Volunteers
In the importance and value of our staff and volunteers in achieving positive outcomes for our members and in achieving HopeSpring's Mission
Accountability
In being accountable for the resources provided to us, the decisions we make and acting with integrity in all that we do.

5 STRATEGIC GOALS/OUTCOMES AND DIRECTIONS

5.1 STRATEGIC GOALS/OUTCOMES

Five Strategic Goals/Outcomes have been identified for HopeSpring over the next three years. The subsequent Strategic Directions provide their implementation framework and the Implementation Charts offer a roadmap and metrics for the achievement of the Strategic Goals.

- 1. To position HopeSpring to effectively meet the significant growth in demand and changes in member demographics that are evolving in its operating sector**
- 2. To creatively generate the financial resources necessary to both sustain and grow the organization in an operating environment that is going to continuously change and grow**
- 3. To ensure HopeSpring reflects the diversity of the community across its members, volunteers, staff and Board**
- 4. To enrich the volunteer experience and their contributions in serving their fellow community members**
- 5. To be a leader in communication and educational initiatives in support of Cancer Care services**
- 6. To exceed donor, member and community expectations for the sound, transparent and effective governance of HopeSpring**

5.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Directions identify the key priorities the organization feels it needs to work on over the next three to four years in order to continue to advance towards the achievement of its Strategic Goals / Outcomes. Strategic Directions are by definition strategic in nature and need to be connected to all dimensions of the organization's development in terms of its annual planning, staff and volunteer performance management / appraisals, budget development and organizational outcomes measurement.

The following Strategic Directions have been identified for the 2013 to 2016 period for HopeSpring.

- 1. To undertake an Organizational Growth Preparation Plan to be prepared for the significant changes in demand for HopeSpring services that will occur over the medium and longer term, focusing on:**
 - Identification of Core Services**
 - Expanding the diversity of the people supported / members**
 - Examining the geographical reach of the organization**
 - Assessing the potential for virtual / digital services**
 - Determining the services and supports needed to achieve the Plan related to locations, funding and human resources capacities and technology supports**

2. To develop a long term Fund Development / Sustainability Strategy based on short and long term considerations, and connected to the needs of the Organizational Growth Preparation Plan
3. To undertake a Diversity / Broadened Community Representation Strategy for HopeSpring, involving developing enhanced connections with multicultural communities related to engaging them as:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members • Volunteers • Staff • Board representatives
4. To undertake a Volunteer Development Strategy / Plan and ongoing Plan evaluation, focusing on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention • Training • Effective assignments and inputs • Evaluation • Recognition
5. To develop an integrated Annual Communication / Education Plan, focusing on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing public awareness of HopeSpring as to its mandate and supports / services, who it is and how they can support the organization • Undertaking a donor stewardship and communications program • Significantly improving internal and external communications in terms of the formats used, integrated messaging and other technical perspectives
6. To further develop HopeSpring's governance model, including:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved identification and understanding of the roles of Board and senior management • Greater clarity of the Board's governance model, policies and processes • Introducing a Board Succession Plan

The first Strategic Direction responds to the anticipation of a significant “wave” of potential new members for HopeSpring. Within increasing cancer survivability rates, a profoundly aging population over the next thirty years and other factors, the potential member base could grow greatly and will be much more diverse in terms of culture, gender, etc. In this light, a plan is needed to focus on the changing multicultural mix of the population, which sees 26% of the current Waterloo Region population not born in Canada and the current membership profile being primarily Anglo-female. Being prepared for these changes is important in order to effectively respond both to the increased enquiries and needs that will occur, as well as the fact that such volume increases will also attract other service providers and create potentially a more competitive operating environment. The Organizational Growth Preparation Plan needs to involve geographical service delivery and defining what the best geographical service area is, as well as the use of virtual / digital and on-sites services. In addition, the Plan needs to have an implementation component that identifies the programs and services required to meet the evolving needs,

the locations, funding, human resources related to volunteers and staff and technology supports that will be necessary.

This should be a comprehensive Organizational Growth Preparation Plan that will take one or two years to fully develop and requires significant research and discussion but establishes the future foundation and positioning of the organization for long term success. It will need to focus on identifying core services and locations, as well as the fact the service population is changing significantly and a broader reach is needed for HopeSpring to be successful.

The second Strategic Direction requires a focused initiative to look at short and long term fund development initiatives. HopeSpring receives no government funding and is dependent primarily on donations and community supports. Currently, there is a funding shortfall, and it is acutely recognized that the organization needs to deal with short term fund development needs, as well as longer term sustainability needs, particularly linked to the Organizational Growth Preparation Plan.

The third Strategic Direction involves the development of a strategy by HopeSpring to diversify its multicultural reach, connections and representation. This needs to occur across members, volunteers, Board and staff dimensions. The community is changing significantly with 26.0% of the Waterloo Region not being born in Canada, and this number will grow significantly, over the next ten years. The ability to represent the whole community, in all dimensions of HopeSpring, will be important in order to be valued, relevant and successful.

Volunteers represent a significant strategic resource for HopeSpring in the delivery of its programs and supports, as well as in its administrative activities. Concerns were raised in the Environmental Scan about the effective use of volunteers, and their training, recognition and related components. HopeSpring needs to respond comprehensively to the importance of volunteers, and the ongoing need for effective recruitment, recognition, assignments, training and related dimensions. As a strategic asset, volunteers cannot be replaced by funded / paid staff, and therefore, going forward, volunteers are important both in terms of the current context of HopeSpring and the future growth perspectives that will emerge.

Communications and educational needs are continually evolving for all non-profit organizations. The expansion of non-profit organizations, the siloed nature of many of the service delivery sectors, and the ongoing technology and generational changes related to communication formats and other factors require HopeSpring and others to undertake more comprehensive and planned communication and educational approaches on an annual basis. A planned approach, that integrates messaging and delivery formats across and in alignment with different generational needs; key referral groups, such as the hospitals; members, donors that need to be stewarded effectively; and other dimensions are needed. Communications is the life-blood of the organization on multiple fronts and needs to be more formalized, effective and targeted.

The sixth Strategic Direction involves the governance of the organization. This has evolved considerably in the last two years, but continues to need further development and understanding. The clarity of roles,

the development of the Board governance model and Board policies, and succession planning strategies for Board positions needs to be focused on and continue to be developed. These dimensions also need to be aligned / connected with the six Strategic Directions, particularly with the long term Fund Development Strategy, the Diversity / Representation Strategy and the Organizational Growth Preparation Plan.