

## NEWS RELEASE

### Cancer support services to be provided across southern Alberta

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Calgary and southern Alberta, Oct. 21, 2020**

Everyday 58 Albertans hear the words ‘you have cancer.’ One in two people will hear these words in their lifetime. Wellspring Calgary’s vision is to ensure no one has to face cancer alone, and thanks to support from Alberta Cancer Foundation donors, the charity will extend its reach across southern Alberta, providing programs and services that meet the emotional, social and restorative needs of people living with cancer, their caregivers, and families.

“In 2016, I was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer. The fact that I am still here today is mostly attributable to my incredible oncologist and her team. Also, I credit Wellspring Calgary. Wellspring gave me back a sense of purpose and belonging, an outlet for my emotions, a community of people who understand and care. I have no doubt Wellspring is a big reason I’m still here,” says Ian Robinson, a Wellspring Calgary member.

Plans to expand Wellspring’s reach first began in 2018, when an environmental scan unearthed a compelling demand for non-medical cancer support programs and services in southern Alberta communities.

“Significant differences exist in service availability and accessibility of cancer support across the province. With more than 10,000 cancer cases projected for southern Alberta in 2021, support services are needed more than ever,” says Patti Morris, CEO Wellspring Calgary.

In response, Wellspring developed a three-year Southern Alberta Strategy, and with support and partial funding from Alberta Cancer Foundation, set in motion an operational plan to provide cancer support to communities in the region spanning Red Deer to the Canadian border.

Due to the increased vulnerability of cancer patients with respect to COVID-19, Wellspring quickly pivoted to online and telephone program delivery, which expedited its aim to broaden its reach and serve more people living with cancer.

“Another priority for Wellspring has been to collaborate with health-serving agencies, knowing that this multiplies our impact and ensures we aren’t duplicating services or efforts,” says Morris. “With the Southern Alberta Strategy, we are excited to continue our work with health professionals and importantly, to work directly with people living with cancer – to ensure we co-create sustainable programs and services that truly speak to the needs of those within these communities.”

“Most cancer patients experience things like fear, anxiety, pain, financial worries, isolation and guilt during their cancer journey. Living in a rural community adds an extra layer of difficulty accessing this type of supportive cancer care. Our donors are passionate about making life better for Albertans facing cancer, so we’re proud to help support this initiative for rural Albertans,” says Wendy Beauchesne, CEO of the Alberta Cancer Foundation.

“Ultimately we strive to empower people to live well with cancer and to ensure no one has to face cancer alone, regardless of where they live,” says Morris.

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**About Wellspring Calgary**

Wellspring Calgary is a charitable organization with a vision to ensure no one has to face cancer alone. Founded in 2007, it offers programs and services that meet the emotional, social and restorative needs of people living with cancer, their caregivers and their families. Wellspring's programs are all evidence-informed and offered free of charge and without referral. Wellspring Calgary operates two centres in Calgary and offers a full range of programs online and by phone, with a southern Alberta reach spanning Red Deer to the south border. For more information, please visit [Wellspringcalgary.ca](http://Wellspringcalgary.ca).

**About Alberta Cancer Foundation**

Alberta Cancer Foundation is the official fundraising partner for all 17 cancer centres in the province, including the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton and the Tom Baker Cancer Centre in Calgary. Through this partnership our donors are able to make the most significant impact with a straight line of sight to patients. Our purpose is to create more moments for Albertans facing cancer by inspiring our community to give to innovation in detection, treatment and care. Learn more at [albertacancer.ca](http://albertacancer.ca).