

“Without accessible transportation, we don’t know what we would have done”.

Dear neighbour,

When Samantha and Holly Burke think about the initial years caring for their mom, when she was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer’s at just 60 years old, they think about the support that mattered.

“As a family, **we made it our mission to keep mom home as long as possible, and we did, for eight years,**” they shared. “It wasn’t always easy, but we have no regrets. Looking back, we know that we couldn’t have done it without the help of **Community Care.**”



At first, the family connected with our **Adult Day Program**, which provided **respite** for their dad while giving their mom a safe, engaging, and compassionate environment. However, as her condition progressed and she required the use of a wheelchair, a new challenge emerged. Transportation.

“Our world became smaller and we quickly realized that something as simple as getting mom to a doctor’s appointment was no longer simple.”



That is where the **Transportation program** became a lifeline, with vans modified to safely transport individuals who use wheelchairs and stretchers.

“The drivers are extraordinary people. They treat Mom with patience and respect making sure she’s comfortable, handling her wheelchair with care, and make what could be a stressful day feel calm and kind. **They allow us to focus on being her daughters instead of struggling with logistics.**”

For families caring for loved ones with mobility issues, transportation is a challenge. And that challenge is especially significant in the City of Kawartha Lakes, one of the largest municipalities in Ontario, covering more than **3,000 km²** of rural communities and towns. **Community Care vans can travel more than 100km a trip** to help a client who lives in Kirkfield, Bobcaygeon, Fenelon Falls, or Woodville, reach an appointment in Lindsay. A trip to a medical facility in Peterborough, Oshawa or Toronto can be **over 300km**. As a result, our vans experience considerable wear and tear, leading to **high maintenance costs, reduced vehicle lifespans and the need to replace one or two vans each year!**

Combine our geographic challenges with the fact that **28% of our population is over the age of 65 (far above the provincial average of 18%)** the demand for transportation services is extremely high.

For some clients, these rides allow them to get to medical appointments both locally and out of town, including cancer treatments and specialized vision care. For others, it serves as their **only way to continue to attend community groups, meet with family to celebrate milestones such as a wedding**, and participate in programs we offer such as **Diners Club** or **Adult Day Programs** which reduce isolation and build connection.

Community Care operates two vital transportation programs:

- **Specialized Transportation** using accessible vans equipped for wheelchairs and stretchers
- **Volunteer Transportation** where dedicated community volunteers use their own vehicles to help residents who are mobile but unable to drive themselves.

Together, these programs provides **more than 100 rides a day** ensuring seniors and vulnerable residents can continue participating in the life of their community.

For Samantha and Holly, the impact has been profound. *“Community Care has truly changed our lives. **Their programs have allowed us to continue caring for Mom with dignity and support, without feeling like we’re doing it all alone.** There are countless small moments that stand out: the cheerful greeting from a driver, the comfort of knowing Mom is safe, the relief of not having to worry about how to get her to an appointment. Each of those moments adds up to something big.”*



As the demand for transportation continues to grow, so does the need for community support. **Rising fuel costs, vehicle maintenance and specialized equipment all place increasing pressure on these essential services.**

Today our fleet has **11 specilized transporation vans** and **annually we replace 1 or 2** as they reach their end of service life due to the sheer distance travelled. **Each van costs upwards of \$120,000 making this a very costly program to run.** The Foundaion aims to **raise \$50,000** to cover the cost to modify 1 of these new vans. Your donation ensures families like the Burke’s can continue to receive safe, compassionate transportation when they need it most.

Your gift ensures that families like Samantha and Holly’s never have to face these challenges alone.

Give before **Aug 31st, 2026** and your impact will be doubled, thanks to the generosity of **Julie Johnson Dentistry** who will match your gift*.

**gift matching up to \$2,500*



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DENTAL CENTRE**
Dr. Julie Johnson

Make your gift today at drivecare.ccckl.ca or click the button below and **Help Drive Care Forward.**

Your support ensures that seniors and vulnerable residents are not left isolated or unable to access the care and connection they need. Your support helps make every ride possible.

On behalf of the **Community Care Foundation** and **Community Care City of Kawartha Lakes**, thank you for your compassion and generosity.

With gratitude,

Ryan Alexander
Lead Executive, Community Care Foundation
CEO, Community Care City of Kawartha Lakes

Paul Davidson
Chair, Board of Directors
Community Care Foundation

