

Exterior hospice construction should wrap by Christmas

‘We can’t believe it’s finally happening’



Ruddy-Shenkman construction

Jessica Cunha/Metroland

Construction is on-going at the site of the Ruddy-Shenkman Hospice in south Kanata. The new wing of the hospice will feature a 10-bed residence for people in their last days and weeks of life and two respite rooms for short-term care.

Kanata Kourier-Standard

By [Jessica Cunha](#)

Construction on Hein House at the Ruddy-Shenkman Hospice is progressing and the Kanata location should be ready to open by September 2017.

The exterior work on the residential hospice is set to finish by the end of December, said Hospice Care Ottawa executive director Lisa Sullivan, which will allow the workers to continue on the interior over the winter.

“The hole is there, the footings are in, they’re starting on the piping and cement work,” she said. “We’re pretty excited. We can’t believe it’s finally happening.”

When it’s all finished, the new wing of the hospice will feature a 10-bed residence for people in their last days and weeks of life, while two respite rooms will offer a space for short-term care.

Due to the ongoing construction, the hospice’s programming has moved elsewhere in the community.

The day programs, held Tuesdays and Wednesdays, are taking place at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Kanata – the same church the hospice bought its property from.

“We’ve kind of come full circle,” said Keitha Mitchell, co-ordinator of community hospice care who oversees the day program. “They’ve made us feel so welcome.”

The church is offering its space at no charge and clients have use of all the rooms for the various activities offered.

Barry Houle, who has an autoimmune disease, has been participating in day hospice since January. The move to the new location during construction has gone well, he said, and he’s looking forward to the hospice reopening.

“It’s more the people than the setting for me, but it is a lovely setting,” said Houle. “My surviving and being where I am is from coming here to the day hospice program.

“I’m anxious to see what the new Ruddy-Shenkman Hospice will look like, but I can say I’m not anxious to use their rooms.”

Aside from the day program, Ruddy-Shenkman’s grief programs are being held at the Bells Corners United Church, and St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Kanata is hosting the annual Shine a Light event on Dec. 2 – an annual remembrance ceremony where people are invited to hang a light in honour of a loved one who has died.

“We’re extremely grateful because it allows us to continue all our programs,” said Sullivan. “We didn’t have to cancel any of our programs due to construction.”

Even neighbours close to the hospice construction site have offered assistance.

“Our volunteers delivered little notices to let them know construction was going on,” said Sullivan, adding people were warned there would likely be more cars parked on the street. “Several of the neighbours all set up their driveways in case we needed it. The community, they’ve been patient, first of all, for us to raise the money. They’ve been generous in terms of the donations they’ve given us and really supportive and patient with the construction and allowing us what we need. It’s really special.”

Hospice Care Ottawa, which receives no government funding for capital projects, raised more than \$6 million for construction and is continuing to fundraise through its Brick by Brick campaign.

“We have about \$2 million left to raise; that’s what the mortgage is for,” said Sullivan.

Last year Hospice Care Ottawa served 357 people in residential hospice – up from 290 in 2014. All programs are provided at no charge.

For more information or to donate to Hein House and the Brick by Brick campaign, visit hospicecareottawa.ca.