

Lace up to Hike for Hospice

Event kicks off Hospice Palliative Care Week

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Hundreds of people are expected to lace up their sneakers for the annual Hike for Hospice, which begins at the Carleton University Field House on April 30. The annual walk helps Hospice Care Ottawa raise much needed funds for its programs. - Metroland file photo

Hundreds of people are expected to lace up their sneakers for the annual Hike for Hospice on April 30.

The annual five-kilometre walk is one of the largest fundraisers for Hospice Care Ottawa, which has to bring in close to \$2 million every year to continue providing its programs and services free-of-charge.

“One hundred per cent of the funds raised stay right here in our community,” said Kristina Voth-Childs, communications co-ordinator for Hospice Care Ottawa.

Last year’s hike saw about 500 people take part, raising more than \$121,000 for the nonprofit organization.

“We’re hoping that we can beat it this year,” said Voth-Childs, adding participants have already raised about one-third of this year's goal. “We hope our community will pull through and help us reach that goal.”

Families, individuals, co-workers and groups are invited to sign up to participate in person and help the hospice reach its fundraising target.

Hospice Care Ottawa provides residential end-of-life care, as well as in-home support, bereavement and caregiver services, and day programs for those with end-of-life illnesses and their loved ones.

The charitable organization has hospice sites in Kanata, Orléans, Old Ottawa South and west Ottawa.

The hike will feature a new track along Carleton University’s campus trails and the scenic Rideau River. Fingers are crossed for sunny skies, but there’s a backup plan should there be April showers.

“The nice thing is, if it’s raining and drizzly, we can just walk around the Field House,” Voth-Childs said of the university's indoor sports facility. “We’ve got a plan.”

The event will feature activities for all ages, including a kids zone with bouncies and crafts, musical entertainment and refreshments following the hike.

“There will be something for everyone,” said Voth-Childs. “Come out and enjoy a fun-filled morning.”

Mayor Jim Watson will also proclaim April 30 to May 6 Hospice Palliative Care Week in Ottawa to coincide with the nationally recognized week. Other government officials are expected to attend as well.

For more information, to register or to donate, visit hospicecareottawa.ca.