"Dry Feb" is a new campaign challenging Canadians to go booze-free for the whole month to raise money for the organization. A recent survey commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society found that only 28% of Ontarians know that consuming alcohol can significantly increase your risk of developing cancer. Alcohol is one of the top three leading causes of cancer deaths worldwide. Last year, it is estimated that 10,700 Canadians were diagnosed with cancer related to their alcohol consumption.

Spokesperson Susan Flynn believes most people don’t understand the link between excessive alcohol consumption and their risk of cancer. “In terms of cancer risk at the Canadian Cancer Society, we recommend that women have less than one alcoholic drink a day and men have less than two, and these are standard drink sizes,” said Flynn. “So when we say ‘one drink,’ we don’t mean a pint glass of wine, for example. We mean five ounces of wine.” Flynn says a recent survey found only 28 per cent of respondents understood there was a link between booze and cancer. “Alcohol certainly is enjoyed by many Canadians, however far too few of us are aware of what ‘moderation’ actually means,” she said. “So many people don’t realize that they’re drinking unsafe amounts, and tend to underestimate how much we drink, quite considerably.”

The survey also showed that two-thirds of Ontarians would reduce their alcohol consumption if they knew that alcohol increased their risk of cancer. To help raise awareness about the importance of modifying alcohol consumption the Canadian Cancer Society is partnering with Clear Heads International to launch Dry Feb™.

Dry Feb challenges participants to go booze-free in February while collecting donations in support of vital cancer research. To participate simply register at DryFeb.ca. To learn more about alcohol and cancer visit cancer.ca

**Volunteer Driver Reimbursement Rate Announcement**

In July 2011 the Society adopted a formula for calculating the reimbursement rate for volunteers who submit a mileage expense. This formula is based on the preceding three months average fuel price and the fixed costs of a current year Grand Caravan. Any changes to the reimbursement rate will be made on the 15th of February, May, August and November of each year. The rate can go up, down or remain unchanged from the previous three month period.

**Calculation criteria:**

Based on the average price over the three preceding months the rate will cover 100% of the per kilometre price of gas in Ontario; 100% of the per km cost of maintenance; 100% of the per km cost of tires; 30% of the per km cost of depreciation; and 20% of the per km cost of insurance.

Based on the Runzheimer data and the established criteria, the reimbursement rate will go down by one cent to 28 cents per kilometre for the period 15 February to 14 May. We know gas prices continue to fluctuate across the province. *The next review of the rate will be 15 May 2016.*
Hello and happy Almost-Spring to everyone!

I don't often take advantage of the opportunity to add something to our newsletter as it is always packed full of information without me taking up valuable space. This newsletter edition, however, is a little different.

As you all know, we have undergone some significant changes to the Wheels of Hope service over the past few months. Let me begin by saying thank you to each and every one of you who have been so tremendous and patient as we transition through the regular "growing pains" that inevitably come with change.

Beginning last November, we started to move our dispatch into three dispatch centres in Southern Ontario. We currently have a dispatch centre in Toronto where Linnea, Frances, Alecia, Lia and Julie provide dispatch support to all of the Greater GTA, Simcoe Muskoka, Durham Region and Peterborough. In Ottawa, Candice, Emma and Mihaela are dispatching for the eastern regions in Ontario and in Hamilton Pascale, Sheila, Sam, Amy Kalmar and Amy Robb are dispatching for the remainder of Southern Ontario. Change does, unfortunately, sometimes come with some difficult moments which happened when we had to say goodbye to a number of dedicated staff members.

Many of our drivers have asked us why we needed to make the change when everything seemed to be working so well. Please know that this was not an easy decision, but, for the future of the service it was a necessary one. For the last few years, we've made some changes in order to prepare for the increase in the number of people that will be requiring the service in the future. We know that we needed to be more efficient in how we schedule your rides and we simply can't do that when our Transportation Coordinators are working alone in their offices. Working together as a group at the dispatch centres allows for more complex scheduling to completed which results in us helping more people get to treatment than ever before. I am not downplaying where there have been challenges and we know that, at times, a schedule may seem a little "wonky" to you. Thank you for calling and working through those challenging schedules with us. It is through learning about your areas and your preferences that we can continue to get more proficient at establishing your trip manifest.

Again, thank you for working with us through this transition. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to email me at transportation@ontario.cancer.ca.

Kindest regards,

Tanya Nixon
Senior Manager, Wheels of Hope Transportation Service
Meet the Ontario West Dispatch Centre!
(Hamilton) 1-800-263-6750

Pascale Lescure
Scheduler for the Niagara, Burlington, Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Regions. Pascale has been with the Society since 2008.

Sam Snider
Scheduler for the Brant-Norfolk, Huron-Perth and Oxford Regions. Sam has been with the Society since 2007.

Sheila Leach
Scheduler for the Wellington, Waterloo and London Regions. Sheila has been with the Society since 2010.

Amy Robb
Scheduler for the Bluewater Region. Amy has been with the Society since 2015.

Amy Kalmar
Scheduler for the Hamilton, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia-Lambton and Essex County Regions. Amy has been with the Society since 2005.

Meet the Central Ontario Dispatch Centre!
(Toronto) 1-855-552-7278

Linnea Nousiainen
Scheduler for long distance trips into Toronto for Peterborough and District area. Also schedules for Toronto, Peel and Durham Region trips into Toronto. Linnea has been with the Society since 1989.

Frances Vetter
Scheduler for local trips from the Peterborough and District area (everything except Toronto). Also schedules for Simcoe-Muskoka, north Peel, Dufferin, York Region and Durham Region (local). Frances has been with the Society since 2011.

Lia Ilasari
Toronto reimbursement, scheduling for Toronto and phone support. Lia has been with the Society since 2000.

Julie Clachar
Responsible for volunteer driver reimbursement statement reconciliations and adjustments. Julie has been with the Society since 2001.

Linnea Nousiainen
Scheduler for long distance trips into Toronto for Peterborough and District area. Also schedules for Toronto, Peel and Durham Region trips into Toronto. Linnea has been with the Society since 1989.

Frances Vetter
Scheduler for local trips from the Peterborough and District area (everything except Toronto). Also schedules for Simcoe-Muskoka, north Peel, Dufferin, York Region and Durham Region (local). Frances has been with the Society since 2011.

Lia Ilasari
Toronto reimbursement, scheduling for Toronto and phone support. Lia has been with the Society since 2000.

Julie Clachar
Responsible for volunteer driver reimbursement statement reconciliations and adjustments. Julie has been with the Society since 2001.

Meet the teams!
Meet the Eastern Ontario Dispatch Centre!
(Ottawa) Phone number: TBD

Candice Nelson
Scheduler for Ottawa area. Responsible for Family & Public transportation programs as well as billing for OE. Candice has been with the Society since 2008.

Mihaela Gaburici
Scheduler for long distance trips into Ottawa for Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russel area. Mihaela has been with the Society since 2013.

Emma Dolliver
Scheduler for long distance trips into Ottawa for Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russel area. Also schedules for Hastings, Prince Edward, Frontenac-Lennox & Addington trips into Toronto, Kingston and Brockville. Emma has been with the Society since 2013.

Insurance discount for winter tires

Ontario is helping lower auto insurance rates by requiring all insurance companies in Ontario to provide a discount for drivers who buy and install winter tires, starting Jan. 1, 2016. The discount of up to 5% is applied when you renew your policy but you must ask for it.

Winter tires enhance safety and reduce the likelihood of collisions by improving traction, braking and handling in frost, snow, slush and under cold and icy conditions. An eligible winter or snow tire is one that you install in the fall and take off in the spring. Some companies may approve an all-weather tire that stays on all year but is not to be confused with an all-season tire. Tires marked with the alpine symbol meet specific snow-traction performance requirements. It’s a good idea to check with your insurance company.

Tips when buying winter tires (or all-weather):
- Look for tires marked with a logo of a peaked mountain with a snowflake (see photo)
- Install winter tires in sets of four
- Do not mix tires with different tread patterns or size
- Change tires that are worn close to the tread-wear indicators

Each company applies discounts differently. Check with your agent or insurance company to determine the amount of discount they offer and the documentation required to verify use of winter tires as well as find out what other discounts are available to you.

They may include: Retiree Discount— the retiree discount can range from 5 to 15 per cent off your premium for Accident Benefits coverage if you are eligible.
Through this year’s Supports with Warmth campaign, an awareness and fundraising campaign in support of the Society’s patient transportation and support programs, Sunbeam is donating over $31,000 to the Society’s transportation programs in various provinces across the country.

When the Supports with Warmth campaign launched last year, Sunbeam focused its efforts in Ontario, supporting the Wheels of Hope program. This year, Sunbeam will continue to support patient transportation efforts in Ontario and expand the campaign to support other programs in Alberta, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and Yukon.

Sunbeam is donating almost 130,000 kilometres of patient transportation in Alberta, Northwest Territories and Ontario. In the hopes of bringing a little warmth and comfort to those dealing with cancer, Sunbeam is also donating 1,200 Heated Throws for distribution to cancer patients in Ontario, Alberta, Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Yukon.

Through our promotional efforts, we helped secure eight media interviews in Ontario which included coverage in Postmedia, Windsor Star and Cogeco Halton. We’d like to give a special thanks to all the volunteer drivers and clients who shared their story in support of this year’s campaign.

They include:

Steve Stober (seen here in the photo below)
Gilles Fecteau
Michelle Lawlor
Peter Quick
Frank Providenti
Sue White
Eric Malcolm
Shirley Burke
Frances Foster

**Family Snow Day, eh!** is our new winter event that encourages families to get together, get outside and get active against cancer. Our challenge is designed for the whole family to take part. From the little ones to grownups, we’re all going outdoors for an adventure in the snow. This year there are three events across Ontario where families can participate. By joining us for this brand-new Canadian Cancer Society event, you will support the Snowball Fund and help families living through cancer by funding life-saving research and vital support services.

This winter we are showing kids the power their fundraising can have in the lives of those facing cancer. Together we are ensuring that fewer children are lost to the disease, letting parents and siblings share the joy of a long and happy life. Visit [FamilySnowDay.ca](http://FamilySnowDay.ca) to register your family!

**Client feedback**

“God love your drivers, they’re fantastic. I don’t know what I would do without them. I’m so lucky to have received the drivers I have. They’re so accommodating and lovely; sharing stories with me and not just talking about cancer. From the bottom of my heart I thank you.” Jennifer Merry

“The new central number is working out quite well for me. I used to have trouble reaching someone in my local office but central seems to answer without fail. It’s a positive change.” Don Gunton

“Let me first say that your volunteers are all angels, they just haven’t received their wings yet. They have been fantastic and some have gone above and beyond. It’s comforting to know that I’m so well taken care of.” Margaret Horby

**Florence’s story**

When Florence Devitt retired early to spend more time with her teenaged children, she also wanted to do something meaningful with her time. The Pickering woman heard about the Canadian Cancer Society’s Wheels of Hope patient transportation service from a former colleague who used the service while undergoing treatment.

Wheels of Hope helps people who have no other way of getting to and from cancer-related care or who can’t afford the costs associated with travelling. Florence has volunteered with the service since 2004 and drives once a week mainly to hospitals in Toronto and Oshawa. Since this time, some of her friends and family have been diagnosed with cancer, circumstances which continue to fuel her passion for volunteering with the service.

“As a volunteer driver, I meet so many people who are vulnerable and in need because they don’t have family or friends. These people tell me if it were not for Wheels of Hope they would simply not be able to get to cancer treatment,” says Florence.

Florence says her favourite part of volunteering with Wheels of Hope is meeting people. “As a volunteer, I get so much more out of the experience than I give. Driving people to treatment is a small thing for me but has a huge impact in the lives of the patients.”

To submit a newsletter story email us at Transportation-ProvincialOffice@ONTARIO.CANCER.CA

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