



May 15, 2020

## Community Update

Hello community partners and members,

Below is a local funding update from the United Way of Lunenburg County in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Atlantic Compassion Fund was setup to quickly distribute funds to registered charities and their clients who may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding could help reduce isolation, provide meal support, safe transportation, medication, cleaning supplies, housing, social and mental health supports and other supports that are needed as a result of the pandemic.

Thank you to our individual donors, The Federal Governments New Horizons Program, The Province of Nova Scotia, Emera, NS Power, EfficiencyOne, Atlantic Business Interiors, Scotia Bank.

**To date \$94,878.88 has been invested in 29 local programs.**

### Funding Distributed on May 14, 2020

#### **1,800 Free VON Frozen Favourite Meals to Vulnerable Seniors Living in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. (1,000 Lunenburg and 800 Queens)**

Lunenburg and Queens County has many seniors living with low income, below the poverty line. Many of these seniors would have access to a network of family and friends. However, many others would not. Because of social distancing during this COVID-19 pandemic many more seniors are isolated and have limited opportunities to access nutritious foods. Many of these same seniors would also have little contact with the outside world.

The plan is to distribute 5 free VON Frozen Favourites meals to seniors in Lunenburg and queens County who would benefit from a nutritious meal. The additional benefit would be that each of the seniors served would also receive a check in from a VON representative. This check in would help to determine if the participating seniors are safe and to help resolve any issues that may be present. It would also provide an opportunity to share important information and resource numbers.

**Senior's Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The United Way has partnered with the Lunenburg County Senior Safety Program to produce 200 small Isolation Care Packages for seniors receiving 5 free Frozen Favourites meals from the Lunenburg County VON. These smaller packages would contain two masks, information about COVID-19 and community supports, one Vial of Life and a small treat.

**Lunenburg County YMCA - YOUTH Cooking Package – “Cook, Learn and Share!”**

Food insecurity already exists in Lunenburg and Queens County as community members currently have difficulty accessing or affording enough quality food to promote a healthy lifestyle. This lack of access is even greater during this pandemic. A significant number of youth were fed at school through breakfast/lunch programs and received groceries from SchoolsPlus food pantries. Many young people received a home cooked meal weekly at the YMCA King Street Youth Centre when attending the Home Cooking Program.

The early closure of schools and the mandated closure of the Youth Centre has left a gap and concern for the affected youth; from children in elementary through to grade 12. Many of these youth are responsible for cooking meals for their younger siblings at home. All of this “change” adds greatly to the health and wellbeing of youth and the loss of connections to safe supports can be overwhelming and increase the feelings of isolation many already experience.

The YMCA of Southwest Nova Scotia in partnership with South Shore HUB partners recognize that communities are crucial for developing solutions and creating positive change. This program is a short-term solution for long term gain to empower youth of Lunenburg and Queens County called. “*YOUTH* Cooking Package – Cook, Learn and Share!”

This targeted community initiative will provide enough groceries for 3 meals a week (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) per household, a pantry staples box (flour, spices, oil, etc.), a cookbook with recipes highlighted for the week (one cookbook per household with first carton). This program will support 40 families over a 6-week period.

**Our Health Centre / St. Stephen's Parish – Growing Friends**

This program will encourage volunteers to grow foods for seniors living with food insecurity in the Chester area. For those seniors that would prefer to do the growing themselves gardening supplies will be made available. One of the components of this project is to encourage youth to be those volunteers.

**Funding Distributed on May 07, 2020**

**South Shore Community Justice Society**

With the office closed, clients no longer have access to some of the added supports provided by the frontline workers at Community Justice, this small investment will be used to provide gift cards that will help clients who are struggling due to the pandemic get the products they need.

### **Freeman House**

COVID-19 has amplified the affordable housing crisis affecting communities across Canada and around the world. Housing insecurity is an issue that needs immediate attention by our governments and society. But right now, there are immediate local needs that need our attention. This funding will help with local homeless support, emergency shelter support and emergency funds to help stabilize our vulnerable neighbours which will help set them on a path for success.

## **Funding Distributed on April 29, 2020**

### **Hillside Pines Home for Special Care**

Maintaining proper social distancing and to protect the elders from the COVID-19 virus, Hillside Pines has divided themselves into 2 zones, with smaller households in zone. Because of this these previously shared resources like medicine fridges and DVD players are now not possible. The United Way purchased DVD players for elder entertainment and a fridge to hold important medicines. These purchases will make it easier on staff and provide a safer environment for the elders.

### **YMCA Grocery Delivery**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with the Lunenburg County YMCA and Sam's No Frills to bring a grocery delivery service to residents of Lunenburg County. This delivery service will be focusing on seniors 55+ and vulnerable adults but will be available to everyone. Do you know of someone who has trouble getting to the store for groceries and supplies? This program is for them.

Please contact Kim Roy at the YMCA for further information. Kim can be reached at 902-298-1900 or email [Kim.Roy@NS.YMCA.CA](mailto:Kim.Roy@NS.YMCA.CA) . You may have to leave a message.

### **South Shore Public Libraries**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused some short to mid-term needs in our community. One of those needs is access to technology that will help reduce social isolation. The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with the South Shore Public Libraries to provide 5 iPads and 5 Samsung tablets. These tablets will be put into action at our local nursing homes to help reduce the isolation many of our elders are feeling. Once the pandemic is over these same tablets will be used by library staff to engage the public.

### **Shoreham Village**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that staff and elders interact in our nursing homes. Large group activities are now simply not possible. With funding from the United Way of Lunenburg County recreation staff at Shoreham Village will have the ability to provide a variety of interesting, engaging and enjoyable activities to smaller groups of elders.

### **VON Frozen Favourites and Home Grocery Delivery**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with VON Lunenburg to help increase the availability of VON's Frozen Favourites meal program. This important program helps support some of the nutritional needs of those who are housebound due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or who are unable to cook a nutritious meal or shop for themselves.

VON meal programs help seniors and persons with disabilities access the nutrition and community support they need. With over 20 home-style frozen and well-balanced meals, Frozen Favourites are a

convenient and healthy meal option which helps alleviate hunger and boost nutrition. VON is currently offering frozen meals to clients by delivery, which also allows VON staff to check in on a client's wellbeing from a safe distance at the door. VON also offers seniors and adults with disabilities transportation to grocery stores and food bank delivery.

Do you know of a senior or vulnerable person who could benefit from these important programs? If you'd like to support the wellbeing of our friends and neighbours in Lunenburg, your family, business or community can sponsor 14 nutritious meals for \$70.00 for a senior or someone in need (meals are also available individually for \$5.00 each). . For more information or to place a meal order, **contact Kathy Thomas, Program Coordinator, VON, at 902-624-0318 or by email at [kathy.thomas@von.ca](mailto:kathy.thomas@von.ca).**

## **Funding Distributed on April 22, 2020**

### **Souls Harbour**

Practicing safe social distancing makes it that much harder for some of our seniors and the disabled to get out into the food stores to stock up on needed supplies. The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with Souls Harbour to deliver 20 free "Nutritious Brown Bag Meals" twice a week to seniors living in the Town of Bridgewater. Additional deliveries are possible based on the demand.

### **Senior's Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The United Way has partnered with the Lunenburg County Senior Safety Program to produce 50+ Isolation Care Packages for seniors living in our community who are isolated. These packages will contain items such as sanitizing wipes, a facemask, pet treats, relevant pandemic information as provided by Public Health and other items deemed essential. While practicing safe social distancing the Senior Safety Staff will also be able to gauge the health and wellbeing of the seniors receiving the packages. Appropriate action can be taken based on a as needed basis. Packages will be delivered and are not available for pick-up. Anyone interested in learning more is encouraged to contact Chris Acomb, 902-521-1506. Other partners on this project include private tailors in the community, Fresh Cuts, Low Tide Treasures, South Shore Regional Library and Elder Dog.

### **Senior's Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The Client Emergency Contingency Fund provides limited financial support to help seniors with time sensitive needs when other resources are unavailable. The goal is to reduce immediate risk and help address safety concerns for seniors. This fund is not meant to replace programs provided by Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, and Service Clubs etc. Funding considerations include what is the need, degree of risk, availability/access to other resources. Examples of support include a hot meal, emergency accommodations, a coat and boots, medicines, ..... The United Way of Lunenburg County believes that addressing the immediate and critical needs of our seniors is important.

## **Funding distributed on April 09, 2020**

### **Freeman House**

As the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic intensifies, already vulnerable individuals and families will need support. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping Freeman House and the Housing Support Workers help individuals and families cope in Lunenburg County. This investment will help staff assist vulnerable individuals and families to meet some of their basic needs.

Freeman House and our local #HousingFirst Homelessness Prevention Program at (902) 212-1055 and by email: [donettegetson.fh@gmail.com](mailto:donettegetson.fh@gmail.com)

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters**

Being disconnected from your “Big Brother” or “Big Sister” can be hard on vulnerable kids or “Littles”. This investment in kids will provide numerous activities and telephone phone check ins with the “Littles” and will help to create opportunities for the “Bigs to connect with their “Littles”

## **Funding distributed on April 03, 2020**

### **South Shore Family Resource Association Support for Vulnerable Families**

As the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic intensifies, already vulnerable families will need support. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping South Shore Family Resource Association help families cope in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. This investment will help staff assist vulnerable families to meet some of their most basic needs.

### **YMCA Youth Virtual Outreach**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has invested in the YMCA of Southwest Nova Scotia Youth program by providing funding that will allow the YMCA to connect with up to 100 local youth every Wednesday evening via ZOOM. These meeting times will be structured and facilitated by YMCA Youth Program staff.

This virtual meeting space will provide up to 100 youth with the opportunity to communicate, check in, calm their fears, get the facts, reach out and continue to gain valuable leadership skill training at the same time.

These weekly Wednesday meetings will run from 7 - 9 pm until the end of July 2020. For more information please contact the YMCA Youth Coordinator at [kim.whitman-mansfield@ns.ymca.ca](mailto:kim.whitman-mansfield@ns.ymca.ca)

### **Harbour House**

Family violence is wrong at any time, during a crisis like COVID-19 it puts extreme pressure on women, their families and staff at Transition Houses. Harbour House serves women and families facing family violence. In order to keep staff and clients safe during this pandemic crisis Harbour House needed medical supplies + cleaners and turned to the United Way for help.

### **Support for Low Income Kidney Dialysis Patients**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has invested in assisting local kidney dialysis patients whose income is being affected by the pandemic. This investment will help supplement the dietary needs of lower income patients in Lunenburg County.

Proper diet plays a major role in the treatment of Kidney disease. Having kidney disease requires that a patient be on a modified diet that is specifically for them. It would ensure they receive adequate calories and protein but may limit sodium, potassium and phosphorus in their diet - which can cause complications.

### **Chester Community Wheels Operational Support**

Isolation and poverty are extremely hard on seniors, its even harder during this COVID-19 crisis. The United Way of Lunenburg County is investing in Chester Community Wheels so that they can continue to provide a pre-order delivery service of food and medicine to the Municipality of Chester's most vulnerable people.

Faced with declining donation box revenue this funding will help keep one vehicle on the road to support Chester's most vulnerable residents in whichever way they can, as long as they are able to keep gas in the tank, the vehicle maintained, and most importantly their staff paid.

### **Souls Harbour Hot Meal Program**

The COVID-19 virus has changed a much-needed drop-in meal service. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping Souls Harbour cope with increased meal costs as they switch to a takeout meal service. This funding will help support the increased costs associated with the purchase of takeout containers, single serving packaged foods, as well as bottled beverages.

Souls Harbour now provides takeout hot lunches 4 days a week, they are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and are in Bridgewater at 136 Pleasant Street. (Corner of Pleasant and Empire.)

### **Queens County Food Bank**

With social distancing and stay at home orders it's hard for people to donate needed food to the local food bank. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping the Queens County Food Bank as they struggle to maintain this valuable service during the COVID-19 crisis.

**If you are interested in helping to fund needed local programs. Please consider donating.**

- You can donate to the Atlantic Compassion Fund [do so here](#). Please choose Lunenburg County from the drop-down menu. Tax receipts are issued immediately.
- Or you can donate directly to the [United Way of Lunenburg County](#). Tax receipts are issued immediately.

If you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Michael Graves  
Coordinator  
The United Way of Lunenburg County