

Media Release

United Way Simcoe Muskoka
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way Simcoe Muskoka providing additional funding to support vulnerable seniors

While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected all residents of Simcoe Muskoka, many of our senior residents are particularly at-risk with potential impacts to their physical and mental health as well as their social wellbeing. To help vulnerable seniors (aged 55 and older) in our communities, United Way Simcoe Muskoka is funding several local services and resources. These programs have been funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.

"While physical distancing is essential to protecting seniors from COVID-19, it risks isolating them from their community," says the Honorable Deb Schulte, Minister of Seniors. "That is why the Government of Canada is proud to work with United Way Canada to help support the needs of seniors during this difficult time. By using local expertise, this funding will help provide support tailored to the unique, local needs of seniors across the country. As we work together to flatten the curve and slow the spread of the virus, the government is supporting Canadians every step of the way."

United Way Simcoe Muskoka will distribute \$137,000 among several organizations across Simcoe Muskoka to ensure that the needs of local seniors are met. These organizations include Barrie Community Foundation, Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County, CONTACT Community Services, Elder Abuse Muskoka, Independent Living Services, Muskoka Seniors, Ryde Community Co-op, and Gravenhurst Against Poverty (GAP). The services provided will address mental health and social isolation, barriers to accessibility and mobility, and assist with access to food, transportation and digital supports.

This federal funding will supplement United Way Simcoe Muskoka's Urgent Needs Fund to meet basic and emergency needs of vulnerable seniors. Recipients include Community Connection 211 Central East, who manages the intake, assessment and data collection for UNF, as well as six Regional Agency Leads: CONTACT Community Services, Independent Living Services, South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre, Catholic Family Services, CHIGAMIK Community Health Centre and the District of Muskoka.

"More than many, our vulnerable seniors are in need of assistance," says Dale Biddell, CEO of United Way Simcoe Muskoka. "By distributing this funding to some of the most important resources in our communities, the needs of our seniors will get a needed boost during the COVID-19 pandemic. United Way Simcoe Muskoka and our partners have the knowledge and expertise to make sure that this relief is accessible and will have the greatest impact possible."

If you are a Simcoe Muskoka resident and require assistance, you are encouraged to contact 211 (dial 2-1-1) to be connected to local resources and services.

Funded by the Government of
Canada's New Horizons for
Seniors Program



About the New Horizons for Seniors Program

The New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) provides grants and contributions for projects that help improve the well-being of seniors and foster their social inclusion. To provide immediate essential services to seniors impacted by COVID-19, the Government of Canada is providing \$9 million under the NHSP to be distributed through United Way Canada network. These funds will help organizations providing support to seniors dealing with the impact of COVID-19.

About United Way Simcoe Muskoka

Poverty touches most aspects of a person's life from food, shelter and employment, to mental and physical well-being. United Way Simcoe Muskoka seeks to improve lives and build communities by leveraging collective resources and mobilizing collective action to achieve the greatest impact. Through services such as the Urgent Needs Fund and by funding critical services throughout our communities, United Way Simcoe Muskoka is ensuring that local residents have the resources and assistance they need to unlock their full potential.

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