



*Never in my life did I imagine writing this letter to you. But here I am.*

*I am a proud, young, naturalized Canadian. I am an ER nurse in a busy hospital. I am a daughter, a sister, an aunt, and a friend. And now, I am also a cancer patient—with a recent palliative diagnosis.*

*As a nurse, I knew our healthcare system well. I saw firsthand the rise in cancer diagnoses. I knew that while people were living longer with the disease, chronic underfunding meant longer wait times, earlier discharges, and exhausted families struggling to provide care at home. I saw it every day in my ER.*

*But I never truly understood the weight of it—until January 2022. A routine ultrasound led to the words no one wants to hear: “You have cancer.” And then, even worse: “You have cholangiocarcinoma—bile duct cancer.” A disease with survival rates that are, quite simply, terrible. And so began my journey through hell.*

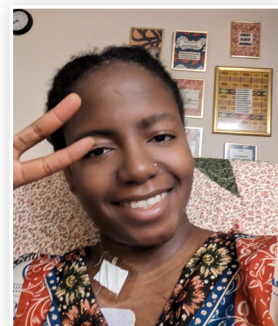
*This journey has been brutal—not just for me, but for everyone who loves me. The first year was a whirlwind of surgery, recovery, and treatment. The trauma of my diagnosis ignited an outpouring of support I can’t even begin to describe. My mother came from my home country. My brother, sister, and sister-in-law were by my side every step of the way. My friends rallied. I was overwhelmed by love. They saw me at my lowest and lifted me in ways I never thought possible.*

*Imagine needing help for the most basic human functions—standing up from the toilet, taking a shower. It was unimaginable. But it was real. After eight grueling months, my scans showed no visible cancer. The relief was indescribable. But it was short-lived. Recurrences followed—more surgeries, chemo, radiation, immunotherapy. Exhaustion became my new normal.*

*Then after one extensive surgery, my physiotherapist introduced me to CAP. She knew I wanted to be home. She also knew my caregivers—whose lives had been put on hold to save mine—were reaching their breaking point. My mother, who had never driven in snow, was navigating icy roads to take me to appointments. My brother, a first-time dad, had used all his vacation and sick time. He was exhausted for a very beautiful reason — my sweet sweet baby niece!*

*My entire support system was drained. I was overwhelmed. Isolated. Scared. We all were.*

*So I called CAP.*





*That single phone call changed everything. Within hours, I had the equipment I needed to regain my independence—so I could shower myself, get out of bed on my own, stand up without assistance. And the most incredible part? Rides to and from appointments, free of charge. No longer did my friends have to drop by the house early to clean my car of snow, no longer did my poor mom have to navigate icy streets or stress to find parking. CAP driver volunteers became a friendly face, safely driving both of us to my many cancer-related appointments. In an instant, my community expanded beyond anything I thought possible.*

*From the very beginning, I refused to let cancer define me. Cancer is not who I am. It is something happening to me. But some days, that belief was hard to hold onto. Some days, it felt like cancer was stripping me of myself. CAP gave me back to me. And I vowed that when I got through this, I would volunteer for CAP. I really wanted to drive for CAP.*

*That, unfortunately, is not likely to happen.*

*But I believe, to my core, that life is meant to be lived in community. That we are here for one another. That we must not live only for ourselves, but in connection—with purpose, for the common good. Cancer has made me a better person, a stronger fighter, and an even greater believer in the power of shared purpose.*

*As a nurse, I worked hard to be the best healer I could be. I stood beside my patients in their suffering and did everything in my power to provide compassionate care. I was never a bystander in life. And I refuse to be one now.*

*So while I may not be able to offer a CAP client a ride, deliver a piece of equipment to restore their dignity, or help them pick out a wig to rebuild their confidence, I can bring reality to the story of cancer.*

*I ask you to put yourself in my shoes. To recognize the privilege of not having a life-limiting illness—and to use that privilege to make someone else's journey just a little bit easier. Ensure that CAP is there today, tomorrow, and always—for every cancer patient whose community needs to be a little bigger.*

*So they—and their loved ones—can wage this battle with the strength and dignity they deserve.*

*Please give what you can today.*

*Sincerely,*

*Kelechi / CAP Client*

