

# No One Should Face Cancer Alone in Hamilton



Dear

The doctor looked at us and said four words no family is ever ready to hear: **“Put your affairs in order.”**

My partner had just been diagnosed with terminal cancer. Within one week we did things most couples never imagine doing at the same time, we planned a wedding and a funeral.

When death seemed to stand at our doorstep, we felt an urgent need to celebrate our love openly, surrounded by our family and friends, and we didn't want me to be left with funeral decisions at a time when profound grief would most certainly overwhelm us.

So, three weeks later we stood in our local church surrounded by people who loved us, promising to love each other forever... without knowing what “forever” meant anymore.

But loving someone through the uncharted territory of a cancer journey means living each day with a weight that never lifts: the responsibility for medicines and appointments, and the constant worry, watching for every subtle change in his face and asking how he feels, fearing what it might mean.

And every single day, the person carrying that weight, the one who shoulders the invisible burdens, is me. Every day, the person who is managing that responsibility and worry is me.

My name is **Trish**, and my husband Dennis is living with stage-four cancer.

It is so true and I learned this very quickly, it isn't just the illness that is hard, it is equally the constant **“what if's”** that plague my daily thoughts:

What has he eaten? Why isn't he hungry? What if he misses his next appointment? Will he make it home safely after treatment? What happens if he's exhausted and misses the bus?

Dennis has treatment every three weeks. While there might be some predictability in his treatment schedule, there's absolutely none in how he feels afterwards. Some days, he's strong. Other days, he can barely get out of bed.

I work full-time, but every morning I'm checking his medications, making sure he eats, lining up pills, worrying about the next appointment, and managing all that, while trying to stay positive for him and our son. I had to keep working, it wasn't a choice our family could afford to make.





Dennis would rise from bed tired and rush to catch buses for medical appointments, sometimes in snow or rain, already exhausted from treatment. The rushing drained Dennis’s energy even faster than the cancer itself. I was constantly worried, yet I couldn’t see any other option.

**Then we discovered CAP’s volunteer drive program.**

Now a driver comes right to our door, takes Dennis safely to treatment, and brings him home again. For the first time in a long time, I can go to work knowing he is safe. That peace of mind is something I can hardly put into words.



Dennis gets to his appointments on time. He no longer must struggle through buses or long walks when he is already exhausted from treatment.

But CAP’s support went far beyond just helping Dennis, it eased a burden I carried every single day. Of course, I still worry, but now it’s not about whether he’ll make it to or from his appointments. When he struggles to eat there’s comfort in knowing that he has nutrition delivered right to our door. Knowing he’ll drink the Ensure gives me one less thing to fear.

All of us who have been thrust into the role of caregiver are doing everything we can to hold things together, managing appointments, medications, work, and the emotional toll of watching someone we love fight cancer.

We are struggling. And in the struggle, we are losing ourselves.

I know Dennis is living on borrowed time. I know I may lose him to this awful disease. But weighed down by responsibility and worry, I was losing my strength to be there for him and to live each and every moment we had together with purpose and intention.

The support CAP provides for Dennis and me allows me to focus on what matters most: caring for the person I love.

Every week, **CAP registers 30 new clients**, and that number continues to grow. If CAP cannot keep up with demand, it means someone may have to face cancer feeling completely alone.

CAP needs to be able to say *yes*, when someone calls needing a ride to treatment. *Yes*, when a patient comes home from surgery and urgently needs a walker. *Yes*, when a new client needs nutritional support to get through treatment.



That is why your support matters so much.

When you become a **donor**, you make sure CAP can keep showing up, for the growing number of families who need help. Becoming a **monthly donor** ensures sustainable funding for the FREE services CAP provides.

Your gift makes sure a driver is there, nutrition is received, equipment is available and caregivers like me can breathe.

**Please make your gift today.**

With gratitude,

**Trish | Caregiver**