



# ANNUAL REPORT

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2025





In 2025, MAID Family Support Society continued to meet a sustained and deeply felt need for one-to-one peer support for families navigating medical assistance in dying (MAID). While the rapid growth of our early years has steadied, the demand for support remains high.

Families across Canada—and beyond—reached out to MFSS during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. Many sought support before a MAID provision, others after, often finding us independently when they realized there was little else available to them. This reality continues to shape our work and affirms the unique role MFSS plays alongside clinical care.

We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers, whose compassion, generosity, and willingness to share their lived experience are at the heart of everything we do. We also thank our donors and partners for their trust and contributions, which allow MFSS to continue offering care while looking ahead to long-term sustainability.

Together, we remain committed to ensuring families feel seen, supported, and less alone as they navigate the MAID journey.

Signy Novak  
Founder

Caroline Brunt  
Board Chair

# VISION

Those supporting a loved one before or after medical assistance in dying (MAID) have the support they need to thrive.

# MISSION

We strive to provide compassionate, lived-experience support and connection to people helping a loved one who is considering or planning for medical assistance in dying or those who are grieving a loss due to MAID.

# VALUES

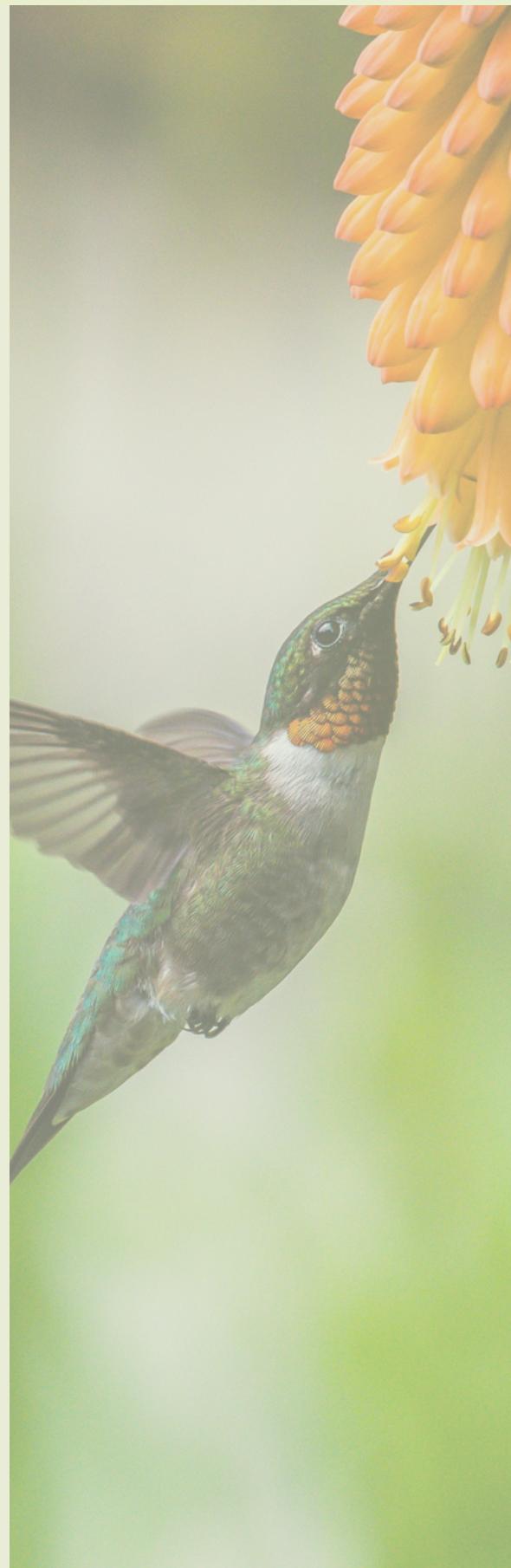
Community

Integrity and trust

Compassion

Respect

Equity, diversity  
and inclusion





# Year in review

In 2025, MAID Family Support Society continued to respond to a sustained and deeply felt need for one-to-one peer support for those supporting or grieving a loved one who has chosen medical assistance in dying. We received 329 requests for support over the year - a level of demand that remains significantly higher than in our early years and consistent with the growth seen since our launch in 2021.

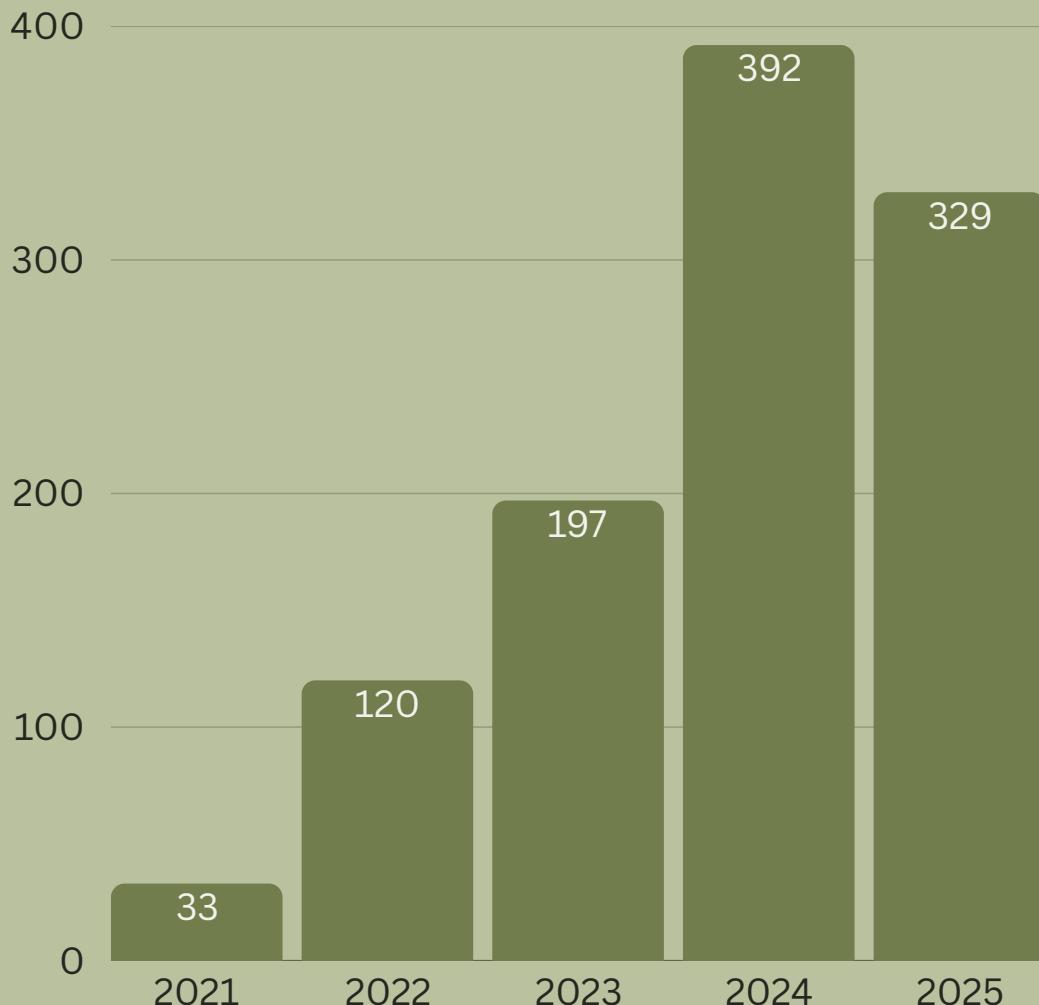
After several years of rapid expansion, this year marked a shift toward stability at scale. While total requests were slightly lower than in 2024, they remained nearly 10 times higher than in our first year, underscoring that families continue to face an ongoing gap in accessible peer support before and after MAID.

Requests came from across Canada, a geographic spread that demonstrates that the need for MAID-related support exists in all corners of the country. Most people reached out before a MAID provision, often during a period of uncertainty and anticipatory grief, while more than one third sought support after a MAID death, highlighting the need for continued connection beyond the provision itself.

Parents and spouses made up the majority of those seeking support, reflecting the significant emotional responsibility often carried by those closest to the decision. For many, MFSS was found through an independent web search, reinforcing that families are frequently seeking support outside formal care pathways. Together, this data reflects an organization that has moved beyond early growth into sustained service delivery, continuing to offer compassionate, lived-experience support at moments that matter most.



# Support demand and growth



Since 2021, annual requests for peer support have increased nearly tenfold. After several years of rapid growth, 2025 reflects sustained demand at scale.

# Volunteer community



By the end of 2025, MFSS had a dedicated group of 80 volunteers, with representation in almost every province and territory across Canada.

MFSS volunteers bring a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and personal experience with MAID. Together, they are able to offer support in five languages and are prepared to walk alongside people navigating a broad spectrum of experiences, including different diagnoses, from cancer to dementia; faith-based questions and tensions; and both track one and track two MAID processes.

Our volunteers share a commitment to listening with compassion, meeting people where they are, and offering support grounded in lived experience.

This diversity of lived experience allows MFSS to thoughtfully match people requesting support with volunteers who can understand the nuances of what they are facing.

MFSS is committed to supporting our volunteers as thoughtfully as they support the people who reach out. This includes ongoing training, regular opportunities for connection and debrief, access to guidance when complex situations arise, and a culture that prioritizes boundaries, care, and mutual respect.

# Requests by location

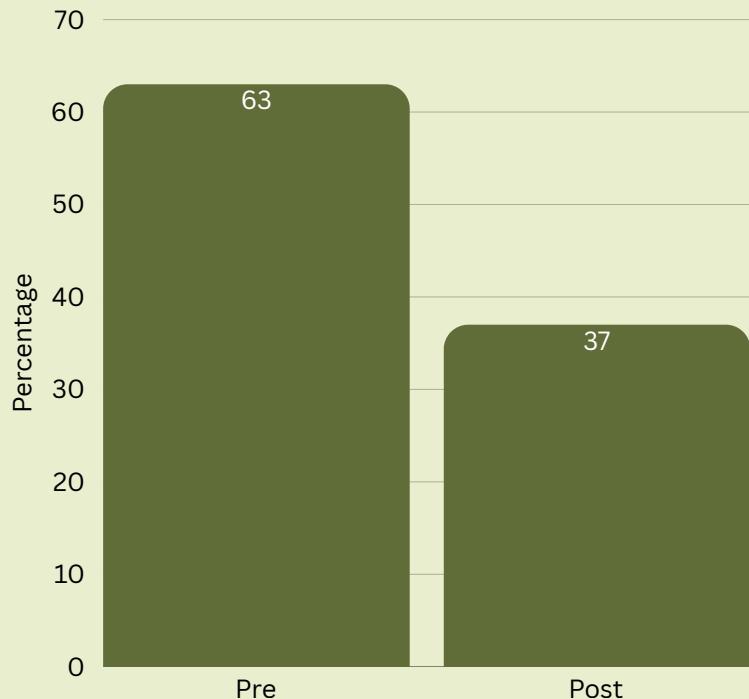


Requests came from every region of Canada, with the highest numbers from Ontario and British Columbia, alongside requests from the Prairies, Atlantic Canada, the Territories, and internationally.

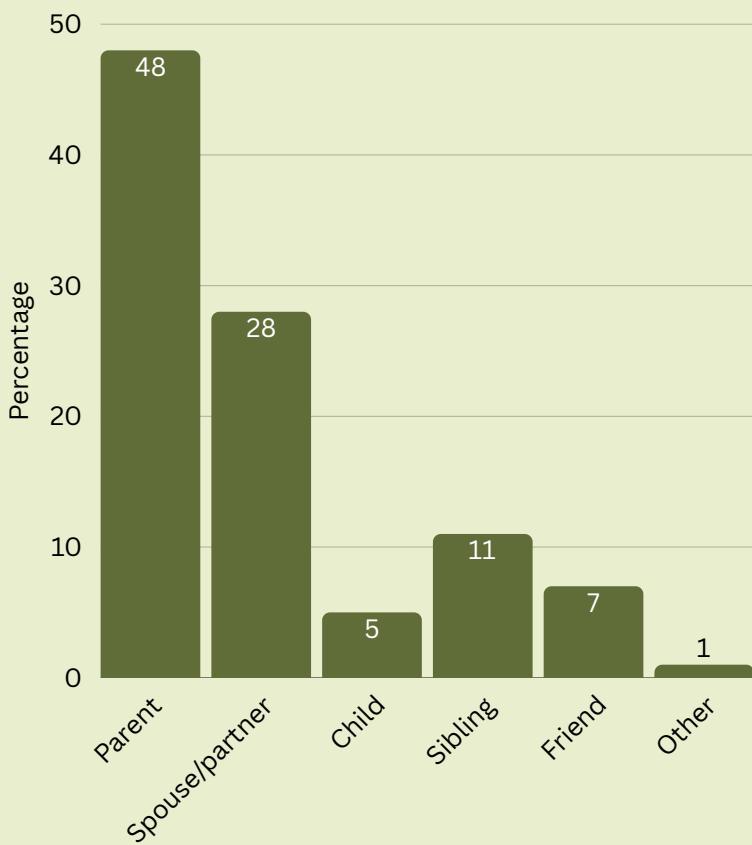
# Timing of support

**Most requests for support come before a MAID provision**

Nearly two thirds of requests were before the MAID death, often during periods of uncertainty and anticipatory grief. The requests after a MAID death highlight the need for ongoing support.



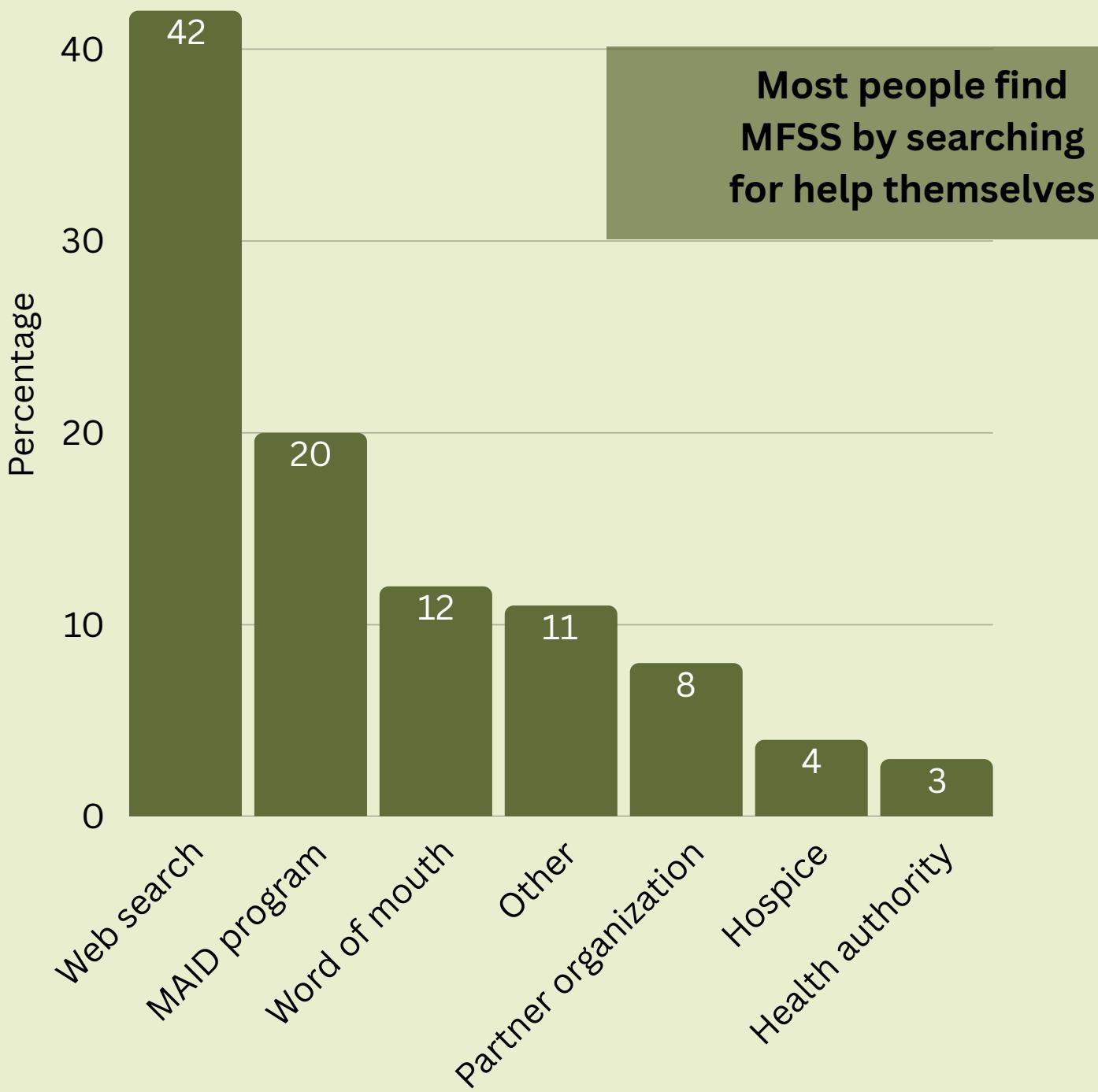
## Person who chose MAID in relation to client



**Children and partners carry the greatest support burden**

Children and spouses or partners of those choosing MAID made up the majority of those seeking support, reflecting the emotional responsibility often carried by those closest to the decision.

# How people find MFSS



**Web search was the most common referral source, suggesting many families are seeking support outside formal healthcare pathways, often when they feel unsure where to turn.**

# Testimonials

*My peer support was so important to our family's MAID experience and to my ability to prepare for the event, help my father and family prepare for and to live the event presently and fully. I am so grateful to your organization and for [the volunteer's] compassion.*

*My peer support has been exceptional. The fact that they had similar experiences with MAID was incredibly helpful.*

*I so appreciated the time the volunteer took to speak with me, empathize with me and provide crucial insights about the MAID process. Your organization is doing incredible work. Thank you for everything.*

*The support and information I received were invaluable. The peer supports were compassionate and understanding of my unique situation.*

*I'm very thankful that this organization exists, that your information was shared by the MAID nurse coordinator and that I was able to connect with [the volunteer]. I really appreciated how quickly you connected me with [her] upon receipt of my email. My mom's MAID process was expedited, so it really made a difference not to have to wait for days or weeks to text with someone.*

# Outreach in action

Ensuring family members of those choosing MAID can access support begins with awareness. Families need to know that support exists, and healthcare and community partners need clear pathways to connect them to it. Through presentations and outreach, MFSS works to ensure families know that MAID-specific peer support is available when they need it.

## **A trusted voice in MAID and palliative care conversations**

As MFSS has grown, our lived-experience perspective is increasingly sought by MAID teams, palliative care, and community organizations. We contribute alongside clinicians, researchers, and system leaders, helping ensure the family perspective remains part of how MAID care and policy are discussed.

In 2025, this included representation and a presentation at the Canadian Association of MAID Assessors and Providers (CAMAP) national conference, and a panel discussion exploring the intersection of MAID and palliative care at the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) conference. MFSS was also invited to share its perspective at the Huntington Society of Canada's biannual conference and we continue to be a member of the Canadian MAID network.

# Participation in research

In collaboration with MFSS, Mount Royal Researchers Dr. Tracy Powell and Dr. Collette Lemieux conducted a study examining the experiences of individuals who accessed peer support following a loved one's decision to pursue MAID. The research explored participants' experiences with the MAID process and their interactions with the health care system, as well as the timing, motivations, and perceived value of lived-experience peer support.

Phase I of the study involved an anonymous electronic survey completed by 47 participants and was finalized in July 2025. Findings from this phase were presented to the MFSS Board of Directors and documented in a formal report. Phase II consisted of in-depth interviews with 21 participants from Phase I and was completed in August 2025. Preliminary findings were presented at the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association Conference in Nanaimo, BC, in October 2025.

These findings underscore the significant responsibilities assumed by family members when a loved one chooses MAID and highlight the critical importance of timely and appropriate support. Final findings will be presented to the MFSS Board in April 2026, with broader dissemination to follow. Phase I of the study received grant funding from the Canadian Association of MAID Assessors and Providers (CAMAP).

# MFSS READING ROOM

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In 2025 we launched a new section of our website to share information and resources.

The Reading Room is a quiet place to explore stories, reflections, and resources about supporting a loved one through medical assistance in dying. Here we gather writing from people with lived experience, alongside articles and materials that speak to the emotional, relational, and often unspoken parts of this journey.

Whether you are seeking understanding, reassurance, or simply words that reflect what you are carrying, we hope the Reading Room offers a sense of recognition and connection.

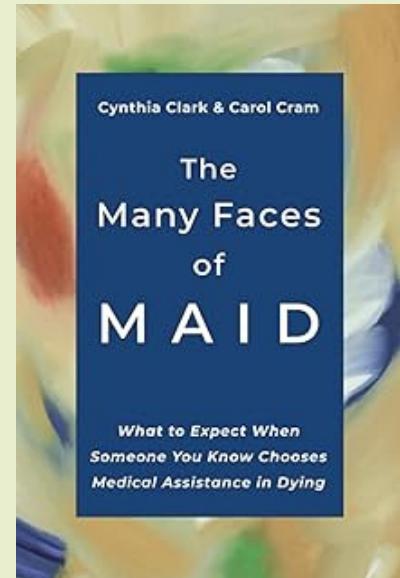
You can find the reading room at [maidfamilysupport.ca](http://maidfamilysupport.ca) > learn > reading room.

# Varied sources of support

People seek support in different ways when a loved one is choosing MAID. MFSS offers a range of resources so people can find support in a way that feels right for them, when they are ready.

## ***The Many Faces of MAID***

This collection of personal stories shares the experiences of people who have supported a loved one through MAID. The stories reflect the many emotions involved in this journey and help readers feel less alone.



## **Short digital stories on YouTube**

Our YouTube [playlist](#) features brief digital stories created by MFSS volunteers. In just a few minutes, each video offers a lived experience perspective that is accessible and grounding.

## **MAID stories on our website**

The [written stories](#) on our website offer thoughtful reflections on the emotional and relational realities of MAID, allowing readers to engage at their own pace.

Together, these resources offer connection, understanding, and reassurance that others have walked this path too.

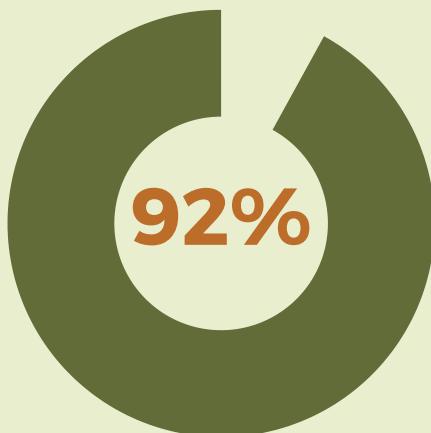
# 2025 financial overview

<b>Revenue</b>	
Donations	\$64,618.14
Book sales	\$3,186.77
Other	\$85.12
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$67,890.03</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Professional services	\$33,811.12
Operations and administration	\$1,968.20
Technology and digital infrastructure	\$2,162.49
Outreach and communications	\$14,189.52
Volunteer support and training	\$13,650.00
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$65,781.33</b>

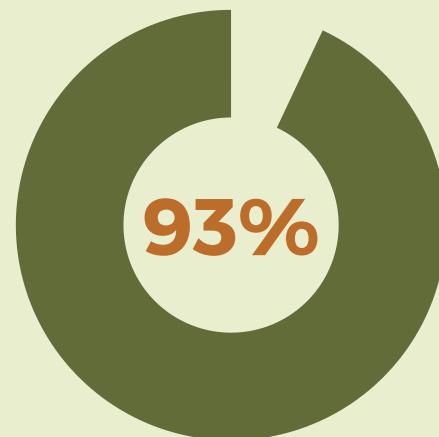
These numbers are preliminary and unaudited.

# Feedback on peer support

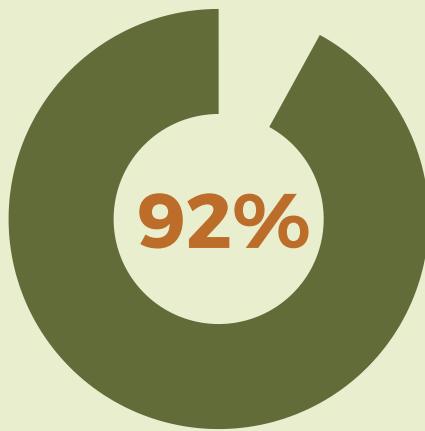
We regularly ask those who receive peer support to share their experience. Their feedback helps us understand what is working well and where we can strengthen our support. The results below reflect responses received this year.



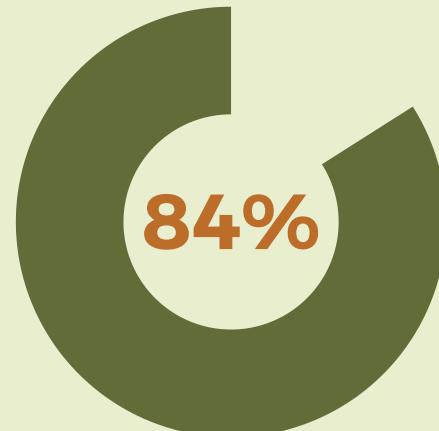
**My feelings felt validated**



**I received empathy and compassion from the peer support volunteer**



**The peer support volunteer understood what I was going through**



**Speaking with the peer support volunteer made me feel less alone**

# Board of Directors

Caroline Brunt, **Chair**  
*Vancouver, BC*

Signy Novak, **Founder**  
*Burnaby, BC*

Cynthia Clark, **Vice Chair**  
*Calgary, AB*

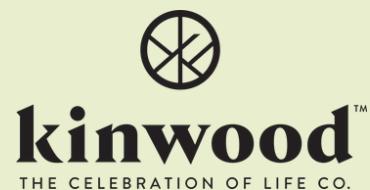
Pauline Abrahams  
*Toronto, ON*

Jasmin Alexander, **Treasurer**  
*Stuttgart, Germany*

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## Collaborations

We are proud to be affiliated with the Canadian MAID Network.



# With gratitude to our donors

MAID Family Support Society is sustained through the generosity of individuals, foundations, and community partners who believe in the importance of lived experience support for families navigating medical assistance in dying. Your contributions make it possible for MFSS to respond to a sustained and growing need, support and train our volunteers, and offer one-to-one peer support to families at some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives.

As the demand for our services continues, donor contributions also allow us to focus on sustainability, ensuring that we can respond to the people who reach out. We are deeply grateful for your trust, your generosity, and your belief in the value of compassionate peer support.

Thank you for helping ensure that families navigating MAID do not have to do so alone.



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

As MAID Family Support Society approaches our fifth anniversary in 2026, our focus is on strengthening the foundation needed to meet sustained demand while continuing to provide compassionate, lived experience support to families navigating MAID.

In the year ahead, we will prioritize:

- **Securing funding** to support organizational growth and respond to ongoing demand for support
- **Expanding access** to support by increasing the availability of resources in French, including exploring the translation of *The Many Faces of MAID*
- **Growing purposeful partnerships** with healthcare organizations, MAID programs, hospices, and community based non-profits
- **Enhancing digital and organizational infrastructure** to support national reach and efficient operations
- **Continuing outreach** through presentations and workshops to help families across Canada know support is available

As we enter this milestone year, MFSS remains committed to ensuring families feel supported, understood, and less alone, wherever they are on the MAID journey.



[www.maidfamilysupport.ca](http://www.maidfamilysupport.ca)



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