



Dear Friend,

Winter often brings with it a quiet beauty—fresh snowfalls, moments of stillness, and time to reflect. Yet even in this season of calm, we know that the shorter days and long, cold nights can feel heavy for many in our community. Discouragement and loneliness can settle in quickly, especially for those already facing difficult circumstances.

But even a little bit of light can change everything. It only takes one small spark to push back the darkness and bring hope.

For Patricia, that's what Mission Services was. When she was in her darkest hour, struggling with an addiction that she feared would take her life, she found Mission Services; a place of hope, healing, and refuge.

That decision changed her life. As she says in this newsletter, "I wouldn't be alive today if it wasn't for Mission Services."

The change in her life was made possible by her commitment and hard work, hand-in-hand with the guidance and care of our incredible staff here at Mission Services. As you'll hear from Greg, we have special people working here; people who are committed to helping people change their lives.

Two of those staff members, Ally and Kara, played a huge role in Patricia's recovery, and she is thankful for them every day.

We are able to be a lighthouse in our community and provide this care because of the commitment of our donors. We often hear from family members or former clients themselves, thanking Mission Services for being a major part in their recovery.

For the past 70 years, since our days as the Harbour Rescue Mission, our community has stood by us and ensured that we can keep our light burning to help guide our neighbours home.

Thank you for helping change lives forever,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn MacKeigan".

Shawn MacKeigan
Executive Director



A Light in Her Darkest Hour

Feature Story by Glen Cuthbert

When drug addiction left Patricia with nowhere else to go, she turned to Mission Services. That decision saved her life.

Patricia never expected to end up addicted to drugs. To the outside world, her life seemed stable, until the day she was diagnosed with cancer and her life changed forever.

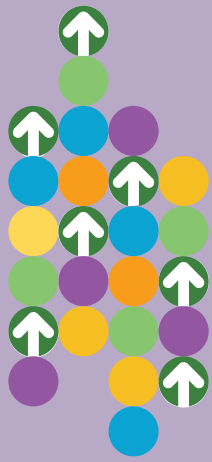
"I had a normal life until I was nearly 40. I had a good job, and my kids were pretty much grown, and then I got cancer. The doctors prescribed me opiates and it was all downhill from there."

She began to spiral into addiction. She lost her job and her home of 16 years. Things looked bleak, and she wasn't sure she was going to survive, until she came to Mission Services.

"At that point, it just seemed hopeless. I'd even written out a note to my family in case I overdosed," she said. "I was a sick person."

Patricia found herself at Willow's Place, Mission Services' drop-in centre for women needing to escape the pressures of the street. Each year, Willow's Place receives nearly 25,000 visits from women in need. For Patricia, Willow's Place was the light she needed in her darkest hour.

Continued Inside...



Act Justly. Show Compassion. Offer Hope.

Mission Services of Hamilton is located on the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas.

MISSION
Restoring hope and empowering people to find their way forward.

VISION
We envision a resilient and healthy community that is compassionate, equitable and hopeful.

VALUES
We are dedicated to and guided by these core values:

- Dignity
- Innovation
- Compassion
- Excellence

"I went to Willow's Place when I had nowhere else to go," she said. "Going there was the beginning of my recovery. They were such a caring community and didn't judge me. They connected me to the resources I needed."

One of those resources was Mission Services' Suntrac Addiction Program, where she was introduced to her case worker, Ally. That was a moment Patricia will never forget.

"She was caring and compassionate. It was here I realized that I needed to be honest with myself if I was going to beat this."

Patricia participated in the Suntrac program, and went on to complete residential treatment. She has now maintained recovery for over two years, is housed, works full-time, and spends her free time helping others.



She will soon graduate from Mission Services' financial management program. Regular check-ins with our systems navigators for help and guidance ensure she is supported on her journey.

"There was one day in particular that I was overwhelmed with life and close to relapsing, but I picked up the phone and called Kara," she says, voice breaking. "She listened to me, helped me through that difficult moment, and I was able to stay clean and sober."

"Patricia is the sweetest lady," said Kara, Systems Navigator at Willow's Place. "I'm so glad that we were able to help her, and see the transformation in her life."

"Her success story is not only motivating for us, the workers, to see that we're making a difference, but it's also an inspiration for the other ladies who are at an earlier stage in their process," Kara continued. "They can see Patricia's success and envision themselves in the same position some day."




"Mission Services saved my life."

We are able to provide a complete circle of care to people like Patricia because of the support of our donors.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING CHANGE LIVES!

As Patricia continues through her sobriety program, she achieves chips for every month that she maintains recovery. When she does, she sends those sobriety chips to Ally and Kara as a thank you.

"My journey continues on, and I wouldn't be alive today if it wasn't for them, so I make sure to thank them often. Mission Services saved my life." 

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

a 10-Day Scavenger Hunt supporting our Good Food Centre

MARCH 13-22

Over 100 fun missions for all ages
 Up to 5 people per team
 Prizes from local businesses
 Only \$40 per team to register

Register your team today for March Break fun!



Have fun Raise Funds



For more info & to register visit: mission-services.com/ma2026



A Passion for Changing Lives

Addiction Services workers help clients find their way forward

The Addiction Services space at Mission Services means many different things to many different people. For some, it is a lighthouse, illuminating their path back from a dark place. For others, it is a community, a place where they find strength and encouragement from their fellow classmates. Many consider it a refuge, a place of safety and protection from harmful influences.

The one thing that everyone can agree on, though, is that the caring and compassionate staff make it special.

“I tell that to new staff all the time,” said Greg, Assistant Director of Addiction Services. “This isn’t just another job. You have to be passionate about helping people change their lives.”

Each year, the lives of over 1,500 clients are touched through the addiction programs at Mission Services.

“Some people are trying to restore relationships with their families, others are trying to remain in or find housing. We work with them to come up with a plan to make positive changes towards living a more fulfilling life,” said April, Supervisor of Addiction Services.

Mission Services offers several different types of addiction programs, meeting clients where they are at and helping them reach the goals that they are ready for. In 2020, we expanded our supports to include one-on-one and online treatment groups for women.

No matter where clients are on their journey, staff are there to support them and guide them each step of the way.

“Our staff have an understanding of treatment and stages of change,” Greg added.

“We work with the clients to find out what goals are important to them, and what we can do to help them achieve those goals.”

While staff assist on their journey, Greg stressed that the clients’ hard work should never be overlooked, as their success would never be possible without it.

Continued on Back Page...

Your Gifts at Work in 2025



141,299

**MEALS
SERVED**



19,354

**HOUSEHOLDS
ACCESSING
GROCERY
ASSISTANCE**



24,946

**WILLOW'S
PLACE
VISITS**



61,678

**OVERNIGHT
SHELTER
STAYS**



1,658

**PEOPLE
ACCESSED
ADDICTION
SERVICES**

“We provide the program, the information, and the encouragement, which are all important, but the client applies what they learn and commits to doing the work that turns this opportunity for positive change into a reality,” Greg said.

“One of the things that is very rewarding for us is when we get to meet family members of our clients. They often express their gratitude for our program and tell us about the positive changes they’ve seen in their loved one because of it.”

“We are always grateful for their kind words, but we are also quick to point out that it is their loved one who put in the hard work and made those life changes so that their family and relationship could be restored once again.”

Seeing relationships restored, goals reached, and people finding their way forward is the ultimate measure of success for addiction workers.

“When you see the impact you’ve made in the people that you invested in, that’s when you know that you are truly where you’re meant to be.”



Greg, Assistant Director of Addiction Services, has been helping Hamiltonians for over 17 years.

Your generosity enables us to offer programs that give hope and change lives. You can support these programs by calling 905-528-4211 ext. 3113 or by visiting mission-services.com.



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