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Annual
Report



Actionmarguerite

Service & Compassion

*Co-creating living
environments
where life is good*

Engaging in Truth & Reconciliation

It is said that land acknowledgments “recognize the strength and wisdom of the place that has given rise to the people who are of that land and it invokes the spirit of that place to support your good intentions” (Clavez, S. & Roberts, R. 2020). We acknowledge that Actionmarguerite is located on Treaty 1 territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, and we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past. Together, we will work towards a more just and loving world in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.



Message from Board Chair & Chief Executive Officer

Greetings,

When we developed Actionmarguerite's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, an overarching theme emerged. This theme, *“co-creating living environments where life is good”* is at the heart of our approach, pulling us into new and inspiring directions. Our organization benefits from a solid foundation of delivering quality healthcare infused with excellence and compassion. It is from here that we embark on the co-creation of living spaces with the people who matter most.... that is a unique and worthwhile endeavour!

Everyone supported by Actionmarguerite has the right to a quality living environment that respects their identity, dignity, privacy, functional ability, and social participation. Accordingly, we must adapt our care and service to meet each person's needs. All should feel safe and secure in an environment that makes us all proud. By collaborating with the individuals we support and their families, we can achieve quality services and care that meet their needs, preferences, lifestyles, values, and cultures.

This year was another busy one for Actionmarguerite. After devoting the last few years almost exclusively to navigating the pandemic, we were finally able to return to more strategic activities with the launch of the strategic plan. We are proud to have embarked on key initiatives that serve to advance our commitment to service and compassion, such as:

- Successfully receiving funding from Healthcare Excellence Canada to modernize our way of getting to know residents; moving us to evolve to a person-directed living philosophy.
- Establishing an end-of-life working group whose focus is on better understanding the needs of residents and families and incorporating new ways to journey together.
- Supporting the participation of all Actionmarguerite leaders in attending the Finding the Space to Lead one-day retreat and indigenous cultural safety training.
- Designing health promotion and wellness opportunities with staff including pre-shift warm-ups and massages offered by the students enrolled at Wellington College, to name a few.
- Ensuring that all Spiritual Care Provider positions were filled.
- Continuing our partnership with Indigenous Health's Michael Thibert, a certified spiritual health practitioner, to offer one-on-one care and group smudges.
- Attending to the francophone ethos by incorporating French language training in our Mealtime Experience Pilot Project.
- Hosting a forum with Charités Despins on the Future of Aging to determine ways we can respond to unmet needs in alignment with our values.

As always, we worked closely with our partners – Réseau Compassion Network, other long-term care homes, Manitoba Association of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (MARCHE), Long Term & Continuing Care Association of Manitoba (LTCAM), the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), Shared Health, academic institutions, and community partners – to offer the best possible care and services to the people we support. Despite all this good news, 2022-2023 had its share of challenges; issues that will continue into the new year, with no promise of “magic solutions”.

Through the Stevenson Report recommendations, we received increased funding to hire additional human resources in the areas of infection control, housekeeping, allied health, and direct care. Yet, we feel the effects of a persistent shortage of human resources – a province-wide conundrum, exacerbated by the fact that we have a provincial mandate to serve the francophone population in the language of their choice.

At the provincial level, the transformation of the healthcare system continues, raising concerns about direction and funding. We are in discussions with the WRHA, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Seniors and Long-Term Care to ensure that we can access the needed resources to continue offering the exemplary services that set us apart.

We have also seen some changes in senior management over the past year. The most visible change was the arrival of Ms. Carol Styles, who took on the role of Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Care following the well-deserved retirement of Ms. Marielle Lafond. At the executive and management levels, we also welcomed several new leaders, bringing with them a new dynamic and new ideas.

Nearly one year into living this strategic plan, we want to acknowledge everyone's efforts in making this vision a reality. Wherever we go, we witness real-life examples of what it means to work together to promote a good life. Our deepest appreciation goes out to staff, volunteers, board members, funders, donors, and community partners for your spirit of cooperation as we create a strong and compassionate community. Mostly, thank you, too, to the more than 600 people we support, and to their loved ones, for entrusting us with their most precious asset: their well-being and health.

Enclosed are highlights from the 2022-2023 year that reflect the heart of Actionmarguerite. We hope they inspire you as much as they do us. The future of Actionmarguerite is bright. We are confident that the entire team is ready and motivated to continue our mission of service and compassion, offering exceptional services designed with you and for you. It will be good to see what 2023-2024 has in store for us.

With all our gratitude,



Marc Labossière,
Board Chair



Micheline St-Hilaire,
Chief Executive Officer





Good for the Soul

Our tagline is *"Service & Compassion"* because while we champion many ideals, these two top the list. We try to weave them into every activity, every day.

Annick Boulet is the Spiritual Care Provider at Actionmarguerite St. Vital. "My goals are making sure the residents feel loved and know that their life has value." Annick has many stories that illustrate her work but this one stood out: "One gentleman had an idea that we should paint a mural. We co-wrote the grant application including ideas from others. Now we've received the funding, and everyone will participate in the painting. Helping him contribute to our community felt essential to his well-being and his quality of life."

"My goals are making sure the residents feel loved and know that their life has value."

Sometimes our commitment extends to families. Annick shared, "I am always very honoured to be with a family when a resident is passing away. Once, I was praying for a resident and when I looked up the daughter was crying. She asked me to pray for her too. This was a deeply humbling experience; it's a remarkable feeling to see God working through you."

Annick raves about her colleagues who bring joy into the leisure and lifestyles of the people who live here. "Our recreation team is so inspiring. It's so exciting to see everyone participating and having fun." The steady stream of activities includes celebrations, crafting, fitness training, and special guests like local high school students. There is laughter, learning, camaraderie, and kindness.

How does it feel to serve with compassion? Annick says, "This job is good for my soul. It fills my heart every day."



Reunification – A Sign of Respect

One of Actionmarguerite's four key values is Respect. We strive to recognize the value and importance of each individual and treat them accordingly. We are proud of the respect that our staff show for each other, and for our history, but what matters most is the respect shown to the people we serve.

Stephen Tautjo, RN, BSN, is the Director of Care at Actionmarguerite St. Joseph. He shares that one way he and his staff demonstrate respect is by reuniting couples separated in the long-term care community. "The stories are ever so familiar. One spouse needs more care than can be provided in a community setting. They are admitted into a personal care home. The other spouse devotedly visits nearly every day. Then that spouse has a health event and needs long-term care. But if there is no space at the location where their partner resides, they will be admitted to an alternate personal care home, at least as an interim measure. Interim placements can be lengthy though, and sometimes it turns out that the final visit made from home may be the last time they see each other."

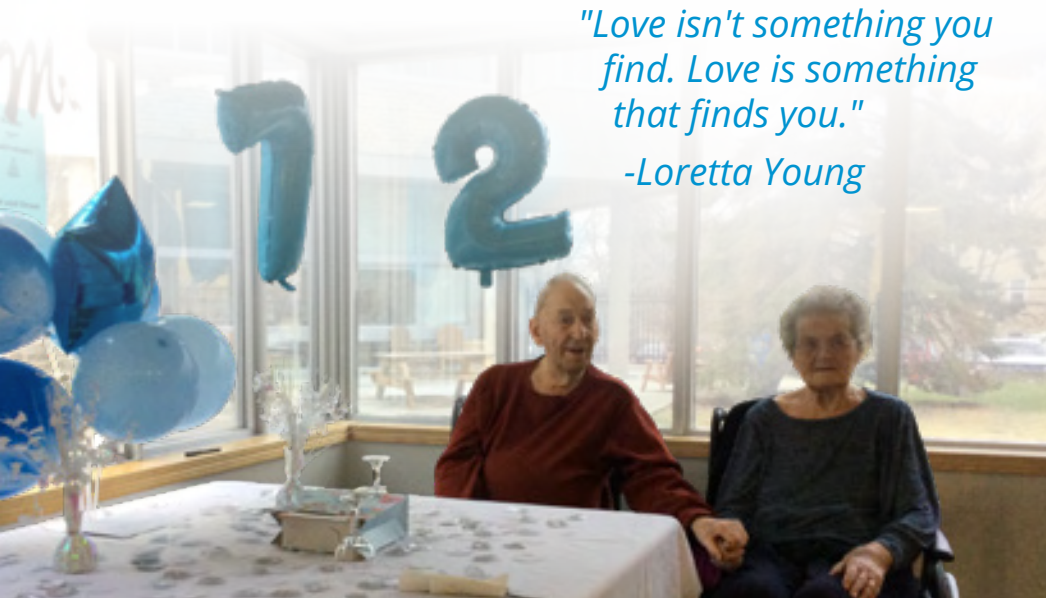
When Stephen and members of the care team are aware of situations like this, they first seek permission from the family, and then they advocate strongly to reunify the couple. "They shared their lives together for so many years. When time is limited, it is only right that the couple should be in each other's company. Sometimes we don't have room in the same living area. But still, if they are in the same building, they can be together throughout the day".

The care team loves to see these reunifications occur. Stephen says "Staff who work at personal care homes develop a professional bond with residents. You could say that generally, we can feel what they feel."

And as for the reunified couples? "You can just see the happiness on their faces when they see each other again," Stephen says. "With almost every situation it transcends the limitations posed by dementia. For one of the couples here, ever since reunification, they have not stopped holding hands."

"Love isn't something you find. Love is something that finds you."

-Loretta Young



Strength In Numbers

Actionmarguerite is a community, and everyone associated with it plays a part. Some would be surprised to know that across five locations we have:

600

individuals receiving care and support

900

staff

40

volunteers collectively contributing 1,500 hours of their time

In their own way, more than 1540 individuals and their families contribute to making Actionmarguerite the unique and amazing organization that it has become. Thank you to every single one of you.

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Thank you to our Board Members

We are incredibly grateful to Actionmarguerite's Board Members. By volunteering their time and talents they have supported us in pursuing our vision and executing our mission. Many thanks to:

Marc Labossière – Chair
Charlotte Hébert – Vice-chair
René Bouchard
Éric Courcelles
Brian Hayward
Gaëtanne Kurlowicz
Murielle Maccès-Nimi
Érik St-Hilaire
Susan Stratford
Claudette Toupin



The Healing Power of Music

In the tradition of our founders, hospitality was considered a virtue, or a moral obligation. Whether those we serve are guests, or whether Actionmarguerite is their home, we are called upon to make them comfortable and meet their needs with great humanity. Sometimes we can do this best through collaboration with others.

A wonderful example of providing hospitality collaboratively this year was our partnership with Artists in Healthcare Manitoba. They believe that music and the arts are essential components of human life; they bring music to health care settings across the province. We were able to invite several musicians to spend the summer with us. It had a profound impact on those involved. Frances, a Day Program participant, said "It was a good thing they put me in this program because I enjoy it so much!". Mariette, a resident, shared enthusiastically, "I was very impressed. I said to the musician: 'You are very good, and you help us relax'. We could have stayed there all afternoon. He made us all feel so comfortable."

"We could have stayed there all afternoon. He made us all feel so comfortable."

The musicians themselves were also moved by the experience. Giuliana said, "Music aside, I've just made connections with many of the residents. It's been nice!"

Her colleague Kael shared his most moving experience: "I was playing a Tom Petty song, and a fellow was visiting his wife. I don't believe she remembered him. But as I was playing the song it triggered some memories and they started dancing in the hall. It still gives me goosebumps."

Thank you to Artists in Healthcare Manitoba for partnering with us on this project; it was just one initiative designed to make people feel at home, but it was a powerful one.



Making a Difference

At Actionmarguerite we are in pursuit of excellence, all-ways. It requires many ingredients, but perhaps the most important are an outstanding staff and a healthy workplace culture. These are areas in which Actionmarguerite excels.

Feza Kungwa started at Actionmarguerite 19 years ago and is now the Manager of Housekeeping, Laundry, and Materials Management. Feza says, "I enjoy serving the seniors, and knowing that I make a difference. It gives me a sense of accomplishment. I take pride in the people from my departments providing exceptional service."

Feza has marketable skills; when asked what keeps her at Actionmarguerite she had wonderful reasons. "I enjoy the opportunity to work in both official languages, and I appreciate the opportunities for professional growth." More than that though, "Actionmaguerite is team oriented, and I feel a sense of belonging. We provide optimum care, but the organization also shows appreciation to the staff. This motivates me. I feel that I'm part of a winning team."

Elmer Aquino is an accounting clerk who joined the team three years ago. He also appreciates the chance to contribute and learn new skills, and he especially values teamwork. "Teamwork brings us together, and we can accomplish more. I appreciate the camaraderie, and it keeps me motivated when Actionmarguerite recognizes our efforts individually and together."

Elmer is more than an employee. After a day of journal entries and financial statements, Elmer volunteers his time by sharing his musical talents. "I get the best feeling when I sing their favourite songs. It helps bring back their memories. I feel that music is almost like medicine." But Elmer says he benefits too; he believes that volunteering is a way to build compassion, self-confidence, and good mental health.

With employees like Feza and Elmer, it is hard not to provide excellent services.

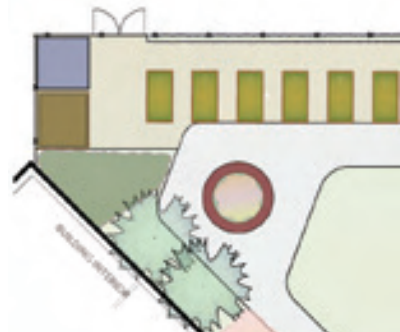
*"Where your talents
and the world's need
cross, there lies
your vocation."
-Aristotle*



Creating Wellbeing In Nature

Attending to matters of the spirit, and addressing unmet needs are two principles important to our sponsor, the Réseau Compassion Network, and to us. One way we addressed these aspirations this year was by initiating renovations to the courtyard at Actionmarguerite St. Boniface. The value of time in nature is irrefutable. Research has demonstrated that it improves cognitive function and feelings of well-being. It is a clear priority.

This sizeable space was built roughly 40 years ago; paths wind through trees and garden beds, with a few benches and the odd rabbit and squirrel. When the pergola became unsafe it had to be dismantled. The space is in poor condition, but full of potential.



"The value of time in nature is irrefutable."

In the spirit of co-creation, we consulted residents and families to see what features were important to them. We included resident, Christina Storm, and volunteer gardeners like Monique Dobson and Carole Danter. Their father lived at Actionmarguerite, and while he has now passed on, they remain committed to the project.

Based on these wishes and dreams, landscape designers helped us create a plan for an idyllic spot to garden, picnic, visit, and birdwatch. It will be accessible to people of all abilities. Sheltered seating, wheelchair-accessible gardens, a fireplace, a water feature, and fruit-bearing shrubs are all part of the plan.

The cost will be substantial, but we have begun applying for grants and are planning a fundraising campaign. The courtyard will truly attend to the physical and spiritual needs of those we serve.

To donate, visit our website www.actionmarguerite.ca.



Donations

Actionmarguerite continues to work towards our vision of being a leading provider of long-term care and exceptional health services. We are always grateful for donations that help us in this work. Contributions from our community allow us to provide enhanced programming, special events, capital improvements, and state-of-the-art equipment. We also truly appreciate the donation of time from our volunteers. Support this project and many others by making a donation today!

Scan this QR code to contribute



Donations of \$15 or more are eligible for a tax receipt.

For more information, call Ginette Castro at 204-233-3692, ext. 643.



Trailblazing efforts to achieve workplace health and safety certification

An organization like ours needs to be sustainable and rooted in sound ethical practices. Actionmarguerite was proud to become the first health care organization to be certified by SAFE Work Manitoba in September 2022. We met rigorous standards designed to empower, support, and enable employees in creating safe environments to reduce preventable harm.

Sarah Schiller is our Health and Safety Officer, but she credits her predecessor, Susie Nel Peadar, for playing a significant role in the certification process. "When Actionmarguerite was chosen to take part in the demonstration project, it was Susie who was tasked with getting us ready to be certified," she explains. In January 2023, we celebrated this important milestone.

Achieving the three-year certification is just the first step. Maintaining the certification requires ongoing training, audits, and safety surveys. But Sarah is not worried. "Whenever there is a safety concern senior management is heavily involved. Safety is part of meeting agendas. Training and solutions are supported. Next, we are creating a psychological health and safety program based on what staff feel they need."

"...the important thing is that employees go home at the end of the day safe, healthy, and fulfilled."

Sheila Bayda, Actionmarguerite's Chief Human Resources Officer, says, "Becoming SAFE Work certified is service and compassion in action!" It is by leading through innovation, excellence, and collaboration that employees know we care. Trailblazing requires courage to venture into unknown territory to explore new ideas and new ways of doing things. It also requires extensive collaboration both within our organization and with external partners. Sheila does not hesitate to say, "We are grateful to be the very first health care organization that has received this designation; and to be able to call the Manitoba Association for Safety in Health care (MASH) a true partner in safe health care."

Has it made a difference? Sarah thinks so. There have been fewer musculoskeletal injuries, and she credits in part the Pre-Shift Warm-Up initiative – a fun way to prepare staff for the physical challenges of their job. We can expect to qualify for a prevention rebate of 15 per cent on our Workers Compensation Board premium, on the one-year anniversary of our certification. "But the most important thing is that employees go home at the end of the day safe, healthy, and fulfilled. Safety is everyone's responsibility, and we are all doing our part!"