



Media Kit

This year, we're celebrating 10 years of stepping up for cancer support!

Wellspring's 10th Annual Firefighter Stairclimb Challenge is taking place at Brookfield Place in Calgary on June 9, 2024. This remarkable event sees firefighters wearing modified firefighting gear to ascend 1,370 steps, spanning 57 stories, all in the name of cancer support.

While the stairclimb promises a physical challenge and camaraderie, its significance lies beyond the climb itself. By participating, firefighters are not only honing their fitness and agility to better serve their communities in times of crisis, but they are also rallying together to raise funds for essential cancer support programs in their own backyards.

Inspired by Seattle's Scott Firefighter Stairclimb, and founded by Kathy Blas, sister of fallen Calgary firefighter, Gord Paul, this event is fully endorsed and supported by the Calgary Fire Department and the International Association of Firefighters Local 255.

Event highlights:

- Since the event began in 2015, firefighters have raised over \$2 million.
- Over 3,400 professional, volunteer, and retired firefighters have participated in the event since it began.
- Participants have hailed from Alberta, BC, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Texas, Alaska, California, New York, Australia, New Zealand, and Denmark.

In Alberta, there are 20 presumptive cancers recognized as occupational hazards of the firefighter's job¹. The goal of this event is to bring awareness and support to all firefighters and citizens living with cancer. Event proceeds support Wellspring Alberta, a charity that offers programs and services for people living with cancer – those diagnosed, caregivers and kids – with a vision that no one has to face cancer alone.

Wellspring Alberta will also gift a portion of event proceeds to support the Firefighters Assistance Charitable Society (FACS), whose mission is to empower and strengthen the firefighter by enhancing the success and resilience of the firefighter community.

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¹ Workers Compensation Board of Alberta (April 5, 2023). Worker Fact Sheet – Firefighters with Cancer: https://www.wcb.ab.ca/assets/pdfs/workers/WFS_Firefighters_with_cancer.pdf



Wellspring Alberta is a registered charity offering a range of **free programs for cancer patients and their families** designed to provide connection and belonging; ease pain, fatigue and distress; build strength and mobility; and support financial and workplace challenges. In Alberta, Wellspring is the only organization that devotes itself exclusively to the unique non-medical needs cancer patients face. Wellspring Alberta programs are available online, over the phone and in-person – meeting people where they are or where they feel most comfortable.

What kind of programs?

We offer **professionally-led** programs that meet the emotional, social, and practical needs of people living with cancer. Programs fall these areas:

- **Self development & educational** – Learn about resources, strategies and tools to live well with cancer. Besides recurring regular programs, Wellspring brings in a variety of speakers on different topics relating to cancer.
- **Therapeutic arts** – Creative expression can foster healing, improve mental wellbeing, reduce stress, and support social development. Members express themselves through visual arts, writing, music and more.
- **Exercise and movement** – Activity can be an important part of a cancer treatment plan, improving both physical and mental health. Health restoring programs help people recover from the various physical impacts of cancer. Programs include Tai Chi, golf, yoga, indoor and outdoor activities, and more.
- **Individual & group support** – Many people living with cancer find it important to find a safe and confidential place to share personal feelings and concerns with others in similar situations. Here they can receive individual and/or group support that is specific to their needs. Wellspring has groups specifically for caregivers, Indigenous Peoples, men, and more.
- **Symptom management** – Cancer and cancer treatment can bring a variety of symptoms, from brain fog to general fatigue to pain. These programs help manage symptoms to live better with cancer.
- **Finance & workplace strategies** – Living with cancer brings many practical, real-life challenges, such as financial struggles, or returning to work following an extended leave of absence. These programs provide help overcoming challenges in the context of day-to-day issues. Programs include Legal and Employment Matters; Money Matters; Resumes and Interviews; Returning to Work; and more.

Wellspring Quick Facts

- **History:** Wellspring Alberta was founded in 2022 when Wellspring Calgary (founded 2006) and Wellspring Edmonton (founded 2010) joined together to form one province-wide charitable organization.
- **Our centres:**
 - Calgary:
 - Carma House | 1404 Home Road NW, Calgary, AB T3B 1G7
 - Randy O’Dell House | 3910 Seton Drive SE, Calgary, AB T3M 2N9
 - Edmonton:
 - Edmonton House | 11306 65 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB T6H 2Z8
- **Members:** Any adult who has had a cancer diagnosis of any type, caregivers and family members, are welcome to become a Wellspring Alberta member free of charge, without referral, and at any point on their journey.
- **Funding:** Wellspring Alberta receives no core government or agency core funding but relies on events and the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- **Online programs:** In March 2020, Wellspring began offering its programs and services online and over the phone, ensuring that anyone can access us, regardless of location or circumstance.