



MEDIA RELEASE | January 7, 2022

Ontario Trillium Foundation Supports Sunbeam Through COVID-19

Kitchener, Ontario – In 2020, Sunbeam Centre—now known as Sunbeam Community & Developmental Services—received a \$125,000 Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) to rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Over a span of nine months, Sunbeam used these funds to adapt its programs for in-person and virtual delivery to allow people living with disabilities to fully participate.

"Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services is richly deserving of this grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation," said Amy Fee, MPP for Kitchener South-Hespeler. "Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, Sunbeam staff persevered and found unique ways to continue supporting individuals and families in several communities in Ontario."

This grant supported virtual delivery of Sunbeam's day program, providing resources for staffing, equipment, and supplies. iPads were purchased for use by participants who did not have the hardware needed to join the virtual program. Additionally, hundreds of "Fun Boxes" were provided to participants so they could join in on all activities from home. Over the 9-month period of this grant, Sunbeam's virtual day program delivered over 3,800 attendance days to participants across the community. The grant also allowed Sunbeam to purchase outdoor gazebos, which made outdoor day program activities possible when limited in-person attendance was enabled. These structures will serve Sunbeam's day programs for many years to come.

Brian Swainson, Chief Executive Officer of Sunbeam Community & Developmental Services, said, "We have never been more proud of and thankful for our front-line staff members, and all our dedicated employees who continue to work passionately in support of all the individuals we serve during the COVID-19 pandemic."

This support from OTF impacted the many families in the community who access Sunbeam's day program. Without this programming, many families would have little opportunity to take a much-needed break from caring for loved ones with developmental disabilities. During the pandemic, with prolonged isolation and a lack of usual activities, day program participants enjoyed the emotional, recreational, and learning supports needed to ensure their wellbeing. This grant allowed Sunbeam to continue offering the high-quality service local families rely on.

Sunbeam fosters inclusive communities where people of all abilities are valued, and provides innovative opportunities that enable the people it supports to reach their goals and achieve recognition of their value in the community. Each year, Sunbeam supports over 14,000 individuals and their families by offering access to the vital services they need. More info is available at <https://sunbeamcommunity.ca/>

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. Last year, nearly \$112M was invested into 1,384 community projects and partnerships to build healthy and vibrant communities and strengthen the impact of Ontario's non-profit sector. In 2020/21, OTF supported Ontario's economic recovery by helping non-profit organizations rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Denis Zikovic, Manager of Communications & Community Engagement
Sunbeam Community & Developmental Services
519-584-5122 | d.zikovic@sunbeamcommunity.ca