

CARE North Hastings is adjusting during COVID-19

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By Chris Drost

In this fourth of a series on local organizations and the impact COVID-19 is having on their operations and volunteer base, The Bancroft Times reached out to CARE North Hastings to see how they are weathering the pandemic.

Senior program coordinator Jenn Potsma, tells us that some volunteer drivers are no longer providing transportation services but overall, they are doing alright with the drivers that remain. Initially there were some issues with the delivery of meals when some of the regular drivers decided not to continue, but fortunately they have found others to fill in.

One of the good things to happen during COVID-19 is that CARE North Hastings has teamed up with Bancroft Community Transit who has been delivering the frozen meals for them over four different routes.

"The thrift stores in both Bancroft and Coe Hill are closed right now and we have had to stop all congregate dining. There is no group dining or getting together. It is all stopped," explains Potsma. In the past, they hosted regular lunches and special events for seniors. Additionally, both the chair yoga program and smart exercise in Coe Hill have been cancelled.

"While we have lost a few things, we have managed to broker some new workers. The number of frozen meals provided has increased and the frequency of deliveries increased from once per month to twice monthly," says Potsma.

CARE North Hastings has also been successful in receiving some grants to help fund the frozen meals for people. They have also teamed up with the North Hastings Community Cupboard to provide a luncheon pack for anyone receiving frozen meals. Each time the meals are delivered, twice per month, the individual receives a pack with a sandwich and fruit to enjoy for lunch.

Foot Fix is still open but by appointment only by calling 613-332-4848. "We are so fortunate that a lot of our volunteers can still help out," adds Potsma. If any seniors are having challenges with having food insecurity, (having enough food), Potsma encourages them to call CARE North Hastings at 613-332-4700 and speak to anyone in the office to get some help.