



July 09, 2020

## Community Update

Hello community partners and members,

Below is a local funding update from the United Way of Lunenburg County in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Atlantic Compassion Fund was setup to quickly distribute funds to registered charities and their clients who may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding could help reduce isolation, provide meal support, safe transportation, medication, cleaning supplies, housing, social and mental health supports and other supports that are needed because of the pandemic.

Thank you to our local individual donors and businesses, The Federal Government New Horizons Program, The Government of Canada, The Province of Nova Scotia, Emera, NS Power, EfficiencyOne, Atlantic Business Interiors, Scotia Bank.

**To date \$177,130.88 has been invested in 41 local programs.**

### Funding Distributed on July 08, 2020

#### **VON Queens County – Meal Subsidy Program**

This funding would directly offset the cost of the Frozen Favourites meals for seniors and persons with disabilities. As the pandemic progresses, long term food costs become a hardship for those on fixed incomes. These meals will help their food security. Approximately 30 seniors will be assisted on an ongoing basis.

Users of the program will also receive a visual check in to help ensure that they are safe and their needs are met. Program runs until March 31, 2021. **Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

#### **Senior Wheels**

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic Senior Wheels was forced to close for safety reasons. All their volunteers and drivers are senior citizens. They were in need of PPE and disinfecting supplies to ensure that their service is safe for our clients and drivers. They reached out to the United Way Atlantic Compassion Fund for support.

### Funding Distributed on June 29, 2020

#### **South Shore Regional Library – Care and Call**

The Care Call Telephone Check-In service will help individuals in Lunenburg and Queens Counties who are over the age of 65. They will begin with library card holders (there are approximately 4000 active card members who are over the age

of 60). Many of the older adults the service will reach out to will be older people living alone. They will also reach out to organizations that work with seniors.

As the service evolves, they will create an online place people can ask for a call for themselves or identify their loved ones as needing a call. It is estimated that 5,000 seniors could be engaged in one year.

The goal of the program is to enhance aging in place by addressing social and emotional needs and providing a simple connection with others. Program runs until March 31, 2021. **Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

### **VON Lunenburg County – Meal Subsidy Program**

This funding would directly offset the cost of the Frozen Favourites meals for seniors and persons with disabilities. As the pandemic progresses, long term food costs become a hardship for those on fixed incomes. These meals will help their food security. Approximately 65 seniors will be assisted on an ongoing basis.

Users of the program will also receive a visual check in to help ensure that they are safe and their needs are met. Program runs until March 31, 2021. **Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

### **Shoreham Village – Recreation Support**

The United Way of Lunenburg County Atlantic Compassion Fund helped Shoreham Village in Chester help their elders by providing a grant that allowed them to purchase arts and crafts and gardening supplies as well as board games and some prizes for bingo. This grant will allow elders living in all 5 sections to enjoy positive recreational experiences.

**Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

## **Funding Distributed on June 24, 2020**

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters – Mentoring Startup**

As things are slowly opening, organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters and their volunteers want to get back to helping their kids. The pandemic has all but eliminated the opportunity to fundraise. Funding provided by the United Way Atlantic Compassion Fund will help children and youth the opportunity to ease back into their “Traditional Match” settings while adhering to provincial health guidelines. Funds will also help provide a safe workspace.

**Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

## **Funding Distributed on June 11, 2020**

### **Queens County Food Bank**

The pandemic has increased the need to be extra vigilant when it comes to maintaining a clean and safe environment for volunteers and clients.

## **Funding Distributed on June 04, 2020**

### **South Shore Chapter of Autism Nova Scotia – Home Sensory Kits**

The Covid19 Pandemic has disrupted the schedules and routines of Autistic individuals. It has increased their stress and anxiety, which has led to emotional dysregulation. By providing school aged children and youth with an at home sensory kit, they will be able to use the tools include to help regulate their emotions. Students may typically have these support items at school, but they not had access to them. Many of our families have been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic financially and the stress of acquiring these items is too much for them. 25 families will be helped.

### **Supported Community Living Options – Recreation supplies**

The Supported Community Living Options supports 15 individuals living in 3 homes in the Town of Bridgewater. Because the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the movement and activities available to these clients the purchase of arts and crafts supplies will provide some much-needed creative opportunities to their day.

### **Family Service Association of Western Nova Scotia – Transitional Housing Support Kits**

Due to the magnified impact of individual, community and system barriers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our neighbours who have been denied their Right to Housing are now experiencing intensified impacts due to COVID-19. Those who had been couch surfing are no longer welcome; folks existing health and justice systems face increased risk and difficulty with community integration and wellness due to a lack of housing; and those without access to a living wage are experiencing significantly more pressure on their already precarious budgets. This has resulted in a higher need for emergency housing in our region; in response, we have been securing emergency housing for folks in our local hotels.

To support our precariously housed neighbours we are seeking support for Transitional Housing Support Kits that would be part of a welcoming gift as they enter their transitional home or permanent housing. As many of the hotel rooms we have placed people in do not have appliances such as microwaves, the kits would support those in hotels by providing them with a few small appliances that can be used to make snacks, tea/coffee and/or healthy meals. The kits will include: cleaning supplies; personal hygiene products; games; books; snacks; tea/coffee/hot chocolate and grocery cards. For those transitioning from hotels, the kits and their contents would be theirs to take with them to their second-stage or permanent housing; and for those moving into stable, permanent housing the kits would act as a housewarming gift. This will also help recipients access healthy foods and give them more control over their lives.

These Kits will allow our neighbours to feel settled and welcomed to their transitional or permanent housing. During this time of social and physical distancing the Kits will welcome our neighbours into their homes, provide them with some initial set-up and allow the housing program to focus our funding on the provision of emergency, transitional and permanent housing supports. This program will help 40-60 of our precariously housed local youth, families and seniors. Program runs until March 31, 2021

**Funded by the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)**

### **Funding Distributed on May 28, 2020**

### **Schools Plus – Personal Care Kits**

COVID-19 has highlighted the challenges that many individuals and families face daily. These challenges are often related to financial insecurity, social isolation, lack of family or individual supports, mental health and addictions and stress.

Personal care and hygiene products are expensive and not always the priority for those who are struggling to meet their own basic needs. Depression and other mental health issues can also have an impact on a person's motivation to maintain personal hygiene.

SchoolsPlus maintained "Emergency Pantries" at many of the Junior and Senior High Schools as personal care products were often needed by our youth. Those youth now have no means to get these products.

Putting together basic hygiene and personal care kits for families and individuals in need could help alleviate some of the financial pressures they are experiencing, but also motivate better hygiene practices and potentially prevent the spread of illness. We also know that better hygiene practices lead to improved self-esteem and confidence.

SchoolsPlus in partnership with other local South Shore HUB partners are working together to meet the needs of individuals and fill the gaps where services are required.

This program will help at least 100 families of 4 and 40 individuals for a total of 440 vulnerable people living in Lunenburg and Queens Counties.

### **Schools Plus – Summer Activity kits**

Social distancing and social isolation caused by COVID19 can play havoc on a young person's ability to stay active and mentally stimulated in a positive way.

Many educators including SchoolsPlus staff are concerned that children may be sitting in front of screens/devices and not getting the physical and mental stimulation they need.

We know that getting physically active is good for our bodies and minds. We know that isolation from others impacts our emotional wellbeing. We know that engagement in mental and physical activities and building skills improves our sense of wellbeing and belonging. We also know that some children and youth do not have access to parks or playgrounds and their families cannot afford recreational equipment.

The SchoolsPlus Team of 11 staff have developed a number of "Doorstep" Summer Activity Kits to engage children and youth in a variety of activities for a variety of ages. These programs will be directed to those families that do not have easy access to other social and financial supports. SchoolsPlus staff will work with school staff and community agencies to help ensure the children who need these programs can access them.

Kits include Sumer Fun Kits, Reading Program, Mindfulness for Kids, Paracord Bracelet Making, Rock Painting Scavenger Hunt and The Baking Club. In total 172 families and 80 students in Lunenburg and Queens Counties will have access to this program.

### **SchoolsPlus Technology Program**

During COVID-19 students were transitioned to online learning modules. It quickly became apparent that not all students had access to proper or efficient technology needed to make their online learning experience successful. The United Way is pleased to provide technology for some of the Indigenous and African Nova Scotian families in Lunenburg County to help alleviate some of the stresses that many families are experiencing during this difficult time. The ability to purchase technology to provide a positive online learning experience is just not possible for some families.

The United Way of Lunenburg County worked with SchoolsPlus and the Mi'kmaq School Coordinator to help provide 12 Chrome Books to students who would benefit.

## **Funding Distributed on May 14, 2020**

### **1,800 Free VON Frozen Favourite Meals to Vulnerable Seniors Living in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. (1,000 Lunenburg and 800 Queens)**

Lunenburg and Queens County has many seniors living with low income, below the poverty line. Many of these seniors would have access to a network of family and friends. However, many others would not. Because of social distancing during this COVID-19 pandemic many more seniors are isolated and have limited opportunities to access nutritious foods. Many of these same seniors would also have little contact with the outside world.

The plan is to distribute 5 free VON Frozen Favourites meals to seniors in Lunenburg and queens County who would benefit from a nutritious meal. The additional benefit would be that each of the seniors served would also receive a check in from a VON representative. This check in would help to determine if the participating seniors are safe and to help resolve any issues that may be present. It would also provide an opportunity to share important information and resource numbers.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

**Senior's Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The United Way has partnered with the Lunenburg County Senior Safety Program to produce 200 small Isolation Care Packages for seniors receiving 5 free Frozen Favourites meals from the Lunenburg County VON. These smaller packages would contain two masks, information about COVID-19 and community supports, one Vial of Life and a small treat.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

**Lunenburg County YMCA - YOUTH Cooking Package – “Cook, Learn and Share!”**

Food insecurity already exists in Lunenburg and Queens County as community members currently have difficulty accessing or affording enough quality food to promote a healthy lifestyle. This lack of access is even greater during this pandemic. A significant number of youth were fed at school through breakfast/lunch programs and received groceries from SchoolsPlus food pantries. Many young people received a home cooked meal weekly at the YMCA King Street Youth Centre when attending the Home Cooking Program.

The early closure of schools and the mandated closure of the Youth Centre has left a gap and concern for the affected youth; from children in elementary through to grade 12. Many of these youth are responsible for cooking meals for their younger siblings at home. All of this “change” adds greatly to the health and wellbeing of youth and the loss of connections to safe supports can be overwhelming and increase the feelings of isolation many already experience.

The YMCA of Southwest Nova Scotia in partnership with South Shore HUB partners recognize that communities are crucial for developing solutions and creating positive change. This program is a short-term solution for long term gain to empower youth of Lunenburg and Queens County called. “YOUTH Cooking Package – Cook, Learn and Share!”

This targeted community initiative will provide enough groceries for 3 meals a week (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner) per household, a pantry staples box (flour, spices, oil, etc.), a cookbook with recipes highlighted for the week (one cookbook per household with first carton). This program will support 40 families over a 6-week period.

**Our Health Centre / St. Stephen's Parish – Growing Friends**

This program will encourage volunteers to grow foods for seniors living with food insecurity in the Chester area. For those seniors that would prefer to do the growing themselves gardening supplies will be made available. One of the components of this project is to encourage youth to be those volunteers.

**Funding Distributed on May 07, 2020**

**South Shore Community Justice Society**

With the office closed, clients no longer have access to some of the added supports provided by the frontline workers at Community Justice, this small investment will be used to provide gift cards that will help clients who are struggling due to the pandemic get the products they need.

**Freeman House**

COVID-19 has amplified the affordable housing crisis affecting communities across Canada and around the world. Housing insecurity is an issue that needs immediate attention by our governments and society. But right now, there are immediate local needs that need our attention. This funding will help with local homeless support, emergency shelter support and emergency funds to help stabilize our vulnerable neighbours which will help set them on a path for success.

**Funded in part by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

## Funding Distributed on April 29, 2020

### **Hillside Pines Home for Special Care**

Maintaining proper social distancing and to protect the elders from the COVID-19 virus, Hillside Pines has divided themselves into 2 zones, with smaller households in zone. Because of this these previously shared resources like medicine fridges and DVD players are now not possible. The United Way purchased DVD players for elder entertainment and a fridge to hold important medicines. These purchases will make it easier on staff and provide a safer environment for the elders.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **YMCA Grocery Delivery**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with the Lunenburg County YMCA and Sam's No Frills to bring a grocery delivery service to residents of Lunenburg County. This delivery service will be focusing on seniors 55+ and vulnerable adults but will be available to everyone. Do you know of someone who has trouble getting to the store for groceries and supplies? This program is for them.

Please contact Kim Roy at the YMCA for further information. Kim can be reached at 902-298-1900 or email [Kim.Roy@NS.YMCA.CA](mailto:Kim.Roy@NS.YMCA.CA). You may have to leave a message.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **South Shore Public Libraries**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused some short to mid-term needs in our community. One of those needs is access to technology that will help reduce social isolation. The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with the South Shore Public Libraries to provide 5 iPads and 5 Samsung tablets. These tablets will be put into action at our local nursing homes to help reduce the isolation many of our elders are feeling. Once the pandemic is over these same tablets will be used by library staff to engage the public.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **Shoreham Village**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that staff and elders interact in our nursing homes. Large group activities are now simply not possible. With funding from the United Way of Lunenburg County recreation staff at Shoreham Village will have the ability to provide a variety of interesting, engaging and enjoyable activities to smaller groups of elders.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **VON Frozen Favourites and Home Grocery Delivery**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with VON Lunenburg to help increase the availability of VON's Frozen Favourites meal program. This important program helps support some of the nutritional needs of those who are housebound due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or who are unable to cook a nutritious meal or shop for themselves.

VON meal programs help seniors and persons with disabilities access the nutrition and community support they need. With over 20 home-style frozen and well-balanced meals, Frozen Favourites are a convenient and healthy meal option which helps alleviate hunger and boost nutrition. VON is currently offering frozen meals to clients by delivery, which also allows VON staff to check in on a client's wellbeing from a safe distance at the door. VON also offers seniors and adults with disabilities transportation to grocery stores and food bank delivery.

Do you know of a senior or vulnerable person who could benefit from these important programs? If you'd like to support the wellbeing of our friends and neighbours in Lunenburg, your family, business or community can sponsor 14 nutritious meals for \$70.00 for a senior or someone in need (meals are also available individually for \$5.00 each). For more information or to place a meal order, **contact Kathy Thomas, Program Coordinator, VON, at 902-624-0318 or by email at [kathy.thomas@von.ca](mailto:kathy.thomas@von.ca).**

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**



## Funding Distributed on April 22, 2020

### **Souls Harbour**

Practicing safe social distancing makes it that much harder for some of our seniors and the disabled to get out into the food stores to stock up on needed supplies. The United Way of Lunenburg County has partnered with Souls Harbour to deliver 20 free “Nutritious Brown Bag Meals” twice a week to seniors living in the Town of Bridgewater. Additional deliveries are possible based on the demand.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **Senior’s Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The United Way has partnered with the Lunenburg County Senior Safety Program to produce 50+ Isolation Care Packages for seniors living in our community who are isolated. These packages will contain items such as sanitizing wipes, a facemask, pet treats, relevant pandemic information as provided by Public Health and other items deemed essential. While practicing safe social distancing the Senior Safety Staff will also be able to gauge the health and wellbeing of the seniors receiving the packages. Appropriate action can be taken based on a as needed basis. Packages will be delivered and are not available for pick-up. Anyone interested in learning more is encouraged to contact Chris Acomb, 902-521-1506. Other partners on this project include private tailors in the community, Fresh Cuts, Low Tide Treasures, South Shore Regional Library and Elder Dog.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **Senior’s Safety Program** serving seniors throughout Lunenburg County

The Client Emergency Contingency Fund provides limited financial support to help seniors with time sensitive needs when other resources are unavailable. The goal is to reduce immediate risk and help address safety concerns for seniors. This fund is not meant to replace programs provided by Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, and Service Clubs etc. Funding considerations include what is the need, degree of risk, availability/access to other resources. Examples of support include a hot meal, emergency accommodations, a coat and boots, medicines, ..... The United Way of Lunenburg County believes that addressing the immediate and critical needs of our seniors is important.

**Funded by the Federal Government New Horizons Program**

### **Bonnie Lea Farm – Recreation Supplies**

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Bonnie Lea Farm was forced to close their program which employs farm participants. Because there is no work and due to social distancing are staying at home in their residences. Without family visits, group outings, Special Olympics, regular activities the residents are feeling restless. All the routines that Bonny Lea farm has in place help to keep the residents grounded and contribute to their overall meant and physical health. This group of people does not fully grasp the COVID-19 situation and the new rules that it has imposed.

Bonnie Lea farm asked the United Way of Lunenburg County for financial support to help purchase supplies to engage the 37 residents in fun and creative ways.

## Funding distributed on April 09, 2020

### **Freeman House**

As the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic intensifies, already vulnerable individuals and families will need support. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping Freeman House and the Housing Support Workers help individuals and families cope in Lunenburg County. This investment will help staff assist vulnerable individuals and families to meet some of their basic needs.

Freeman House and our local #HousingFirst Homelessness Prevention Program at (902) 212-1055 and by email:

[donettegetson.fh@gmail.com](mailto:donettegetson.fh@gmail.com)

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters**

Being disconnected from your “Big Brother” or “Big Sister” can be hard on vulnerable kids or “Littles”. This investment in kids will provide numerous activities and telephone check ins with the “Littles” and will help to create opportunities for the “Bigs to connect with their “Littles”

## **Funding distributed on April 03, 2020**

### **South Shore Family Resource Association Support for Vulnerable Families**

As the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic intensifies, already vulnerable families will need support. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping South Shore Family Resource Association help families cope in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. This investment will help staff assist vulnerable families to meet some of their most basic needs.

### **YMCA Youth Virtual Outreach**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has invested in the YMCA of Southwest Nova Scotia Youth program by providing funding that will allow the YMCA to connect with up to 100 local youth every Wednesday evening via ZOOM. These meeting times will be structured and facilitated by YMCA Youth Program staff.

This virtual meeting space will provide up to 100 youth with the opportunity to communicate, check in, calm their fears, get the facts, reach out and continue to gain valuable leadership skill training at the same time.

These weekly Wednesday meetings will run from 7 - 9 pm until the end of July 2020. For more information please contact the YMCA Youth Coordinator at [kim.whitman-mansfield@ns.ymca.ca](mailto:kim.whitman-mansfield@ns.ymca.ca)

### **Harbour House**

Family violence is wrong at any time, during a crisis like COVID-19 it puts extreme pressure on women, their families and staff at Transition Houses. Harbour House serves women and families facing family violence. In order to keep staff and clients safe during this pandemic crisis Harbour House needed medical supplies + cleaners and turned to the United Way for help.

### **Support for Low Income Kidney Dialysis Patients**

The United Way of Lunenburg County has invested in assisting local kidney dialysis patients whose income is being affected by the pandemic. This investment will help supplement the dietary needs of lower income patients in Lunenburg County.

Proper diet plays a major role in the treatment of Kidney disease. Having kidney disease requires that a patient be on a modified diet that is specifically for them. It would ensure they receive adequate calories and protein but may limit sodium, potassium and phosphorus in their diet - which can cause complications.

### **Chester Community Wheels Operational Support**

Isolation and poverty are extremely hard on seniors, its even harder during this COVID-19 crisis.

The United Way of Lunenburg County is investing in Chester Community Wheels so that they can continue to provide a pre-order delivery service of food and medicine to the Municipality of Chester’s most vulnerable people.

Faced with declining donation box revenue this funding will help keep one vehicle on the road to support Chester’s most vulnerable residents in whichever way they can, as long as they are able to keep gas in the tank, the vehicle maintained, and most importantly their staff paid.



### **Souls Harbour Hot Meal Program**

The COVID-19 virus has changed a much-needed drop-in meal service. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping Souls Harbour cope with increased meal costs as they switch to a takeout meal service. This funding will help support the increased costs associated with the purchase of takeout containers, single serving packaged foods, as well as bottled beverages.

Souls Harbour now provides takeout hot lunches 4 days a week, they are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and are in Bridgewater at 136 Pleasant Street. (Corner of Pleasant and Empire.)

### **Queens County Food Bank**

With social distancing and stay at home orders it's hard for people to donate needed food to the local food bank. The United Way of Lunenburg County is helping the Queens County Food Bank as they struggle to maintain this valuable service during the COVID-19 crisis.

**If you are interested in helping to fund needed local programs. Please consider donating.**

- You can donate to the Atlantic Compassion Fund [do so here](#). Please choose Lunenburg County from the drop-down menu. Tax receipts are issued immediately.
- Or you can donate directly to the [United Way of Lunenburg County](#). Tax receipts are issued immediately.

If you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



Michael Graves  
Coordinator  
The United Way of Lunenburg County