

# COMMUNITY OF CARE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

*“Caring for older adults by partnering  
with rural communities”*



## From The Executive Director

For 20 years, Community of Care has been providing care for older adults in rural Cass in order to keep them in the homes and communities they love. **For all of our 20 years, we have provided our services FREE-OF-CHARGE!** We are able to provide those services thanks to generous donors and grantors who partner with us. In 2023, we served 653 clients through all of our programs and our holistic approach. A significant number of our clients received multiple services in multiple program areas.

Highlights of our 20th anniversary year include:

- Record number of clients served
- Record number of Medicare Part D appointments
- 20th anniversary celebrations
- Board approval of a 3rd part-time Faith Community Nurse to serve in the Kindred, Davenport & Leonard area. New staff member started in 2024
- Continuation of consulting services for NDSU/Margaret A Cargill grant to replicate our model in Lisbon & Western Morton County
- Transition from membership to Rural Cass Roots Campaign
- Pen pal/journal project with

Northern Cass & Central Cass  
The most important highlight of any year is the services we provide to our clients. One example from 2023 is Oscar, a 93 year old who lives in a rural Cass community. Oscar receives rides to his medical appointments and commodities delivery facilitated by our Volunteer Coordinator. Our Faith Community Nurse visits Oscar to discuss his health conditions. Our Care Coordinator assists Oscar complete applications for housing, fuel assistance, commodities and Medicare Part D drug plan enrollment. Oscar’s daughter lives out of state and arranges for care for her dad from a distance. Our Care Coordinator works with his daughter to arrange for services and equipment to meet Oscar’s needs to remain in his home. Working with adult children, both those who live at a distance and close by, is a common occurrence.

We are able to provide our services Free-Of-Charge thanks to the donors & grantors who partner with our agency. In 2023, approximately 60% of our funding was received from local donors, grantors & fundraisers. We are truly a community owned organization.

*“Being 87 years old and living alone is very helpful having this program in our area. I know who I can call if help is needed.” -  
Community of Care Client*

### Inside this issue

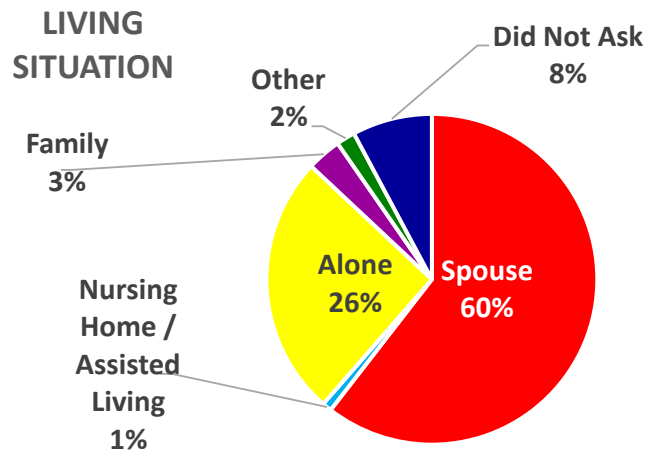
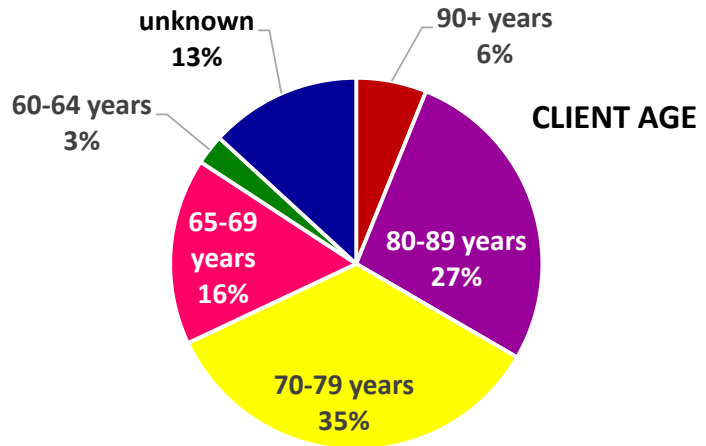
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### Special points of interest

- 4,989 client contacts
- 653 clients served
- Facilitated 7,227 miles of volunteer transportation providing 147 trips
- Served 370 clients during Medicare Part D open enrollment. Also served clients turning 65 throughout the year

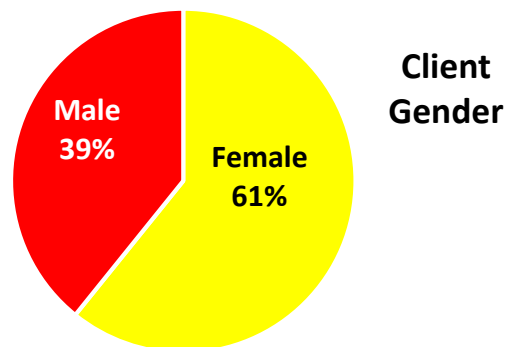
## WHO ARE OUR CLIENTS?

Community of Care serves older adults in rural Cass County, ND. The majority of our clients are 65 & older. In 2023, of our 653 clients served, 130 of them were new to Community of Care. All of our services are provided free-of-charge, regardless of a person's economic situation. It is very common for clients to receive multiple services—ex. ride to medical appointment, attendance at a Bone Builder class, review of their Part D and assistance with paperwork (food, fuel or prescription assistance, Medicaid, etc.)



### Service to Clients 2023

Client type	Number	Percentage
Active / Well	531	81.3%
Functional Decline	47	7.2%
Other	10	1.5%
Frail Elderly	18	2.8%
Adult Child	5	0.8%
Chronically Ill	13	2.0%
Disabled	19	2.9%
Professional	1	0.2%
Short - Term Ill	3	0.5%
Terminally Ill	4	0.6%
Other Family	2	0.3%
Spouse	0	0.0%



# 2023 Client Survey Results

## Top Five Concerns—2023

- 1) Exercise
- 2) General Health
- 3) Medicare Part D
- 4) Socialization
- 5) Transportation

## Top Five Interventions—2023

- 1) Exercise
- 2) Health Assessment
- 3) Medicare Part D
- 4) Education
- 5) Transportation

***“Thank you so much!  
Community of Care is the best  
service we have in Casselton!  
Every driver has been so kind!  
I don't know what I would do  
without you!”  
- Transportation Client***

## Medicare Part D Drug Plan

- 100% reported peace of mind
- 95% reported the service was beneficial or very beneficial
- 50% changed their plans as a result of review—of those who made a change
  - 90% did so to save money
  - 26% did so because meds changed
  - 32% did so because plan changed
- 86% reported independence
- 22% reported they wouldn't review their plan without this service
- 61% reported the services assist them remain in their home
- 100% reported they will return in 2024

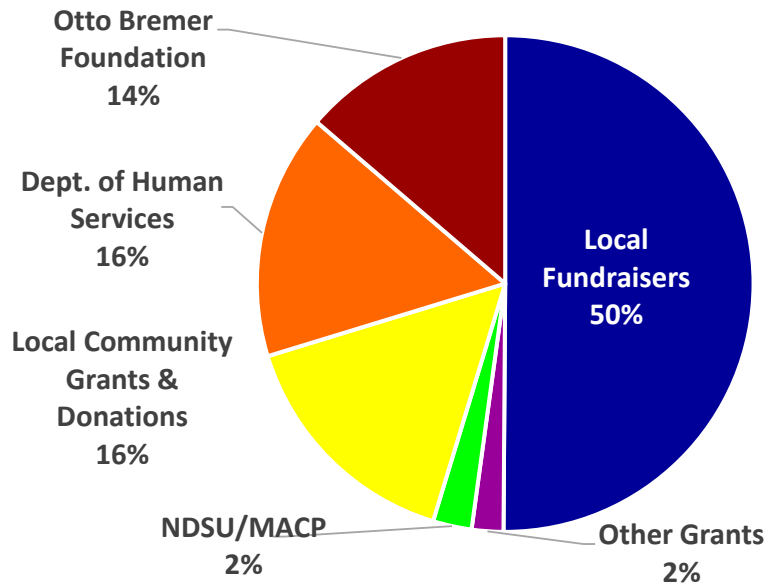
## Transportation Client

- 24% reported they do not drive
- 59% reported they do not drive in Fargo
- 24% reported they would not attend their medical appointment without the ride
- 94% reported reduced stress
- 65% reported increased social interaction
- 100% reported peace of mind
- 59% reported independence due to ride
- 100% reported the ride assists them to remain in their home

## Economic Impact Survey

- 10.3% of singles & 3.8% of couples reported income is below the poverty line
- 32.4% of singles & 19.6% of couples reported income between 100% & 200% of poverty line
- 57.3% of singles & 76.6% of couples reported income above 200% of poverty line
- Poverty line is \$14,581 for singles & \$19,720 for couples

## 2023 Funding

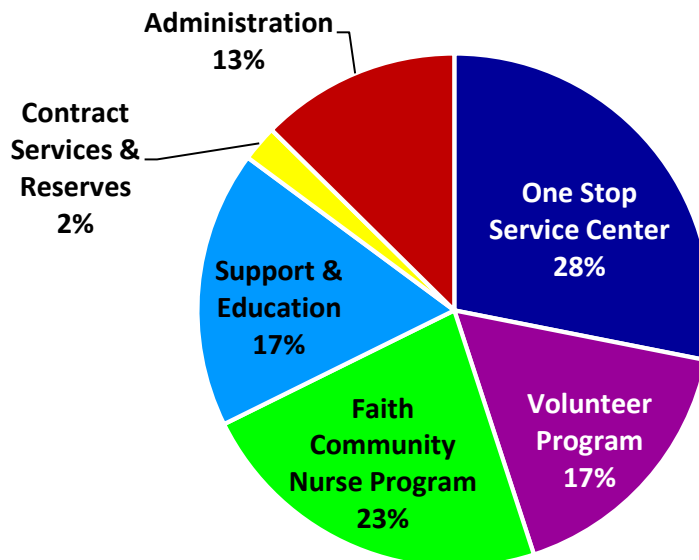


### Grants Received in 2023

Alex Stern Foundation—\$5,000  
 Arthur Area Foundation—\$15,000  
 Casselton Community Fdn.—\$1,000  
 Dakota Medical Fdn.—\$2,000  
 Casselton Medical Fdn.—\$7,500  
 BNSF Fdn—\$2,500

FM Area Foundation—\$4,000  
 ND Dept. of Human Services—\$70,034  
 Operation Round Up —\$2,500  
 NDSU Ext./MACP Consulting—\$11,034  
 Kindred Community Fdn.—\$750  
 Otto Bremer Trust—\$60,000  
 Midco Fdn.—\$1,000

## 2023 Program Budget



## Community of Care Board of Directors

Susan Stibbe —  
Hunter, Chair  
Jill Roden—Casselton,  
Vice Chair  
Joe Moore —Arthur,  
Treasurer  
Mary Gohdes—Mapleton,  
Secretary  
Stacey Cramer—  
Casselton  
Paula Glasow—Davenport  
Karen Hertsgaard—  
Kindred  
Scott Kroeger—Arthur  
Adele Smith—Tower City  
Pam Stirling—Gardner



The average cost  
of a nursing home  
in North Dakota  
in 2023 was  
**\$133,838**  
(source: ND  
Dept. of Human  
Services)

## ONE STOP SERVICE CENTER



Lauren Prante, Care Coordinator, assists clients with a wide range of concerns. She provides information, referrals, help with paperwork (food/fuel/prescription assistance & Medicaid), advance care

plans, care coordination, assistance arranging for in-home services/equipment & assistance for adult children of aging parents.

Lauren and two trained volunteers provided Medicare Part D enrollment appointments in Arthur, Casselton and Horace. During 2023 Medicare Part D open enrollment, they provided the following services:

- 370 clients served
- Total savings was \$573,870
- Average savings was \$1,151/client

Lauren assists numerous clients during the year as they turn 65 and make choices regarding Social Security, Medicare and Medicare Part D.



Socialization is important for the health of older adults. In summer 2023, Lauren planned picnics in Leonard & at Bremer Lake, an outing to a RedHawks game, the Page Theater outing (attendees received flowers from Hope Blooms as a surprise). Older adults from throughout rural Cass attend the socialization events.



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers are essential to our ability to serve our clients' needs. In 2023, volunteers served in the following way: Transportation volunteers, Board of Directors, Bone Builder class leaders, Medicare Part D, Health Cabinet, Fundraising committees, newsletter assembly, Wellness Fair student volunteers, Pen Pal Project, Fun With Tech & nursing practicum.

24% of our clients reported they no longer drive & 59% reported they do not drive in Fargo. A ride to their medical appointment is a vital element in older adults ability to remain in their rural



Cass homes. Without the ride, they would likely not receive the medical care they require or they would have to move.

In 2023, a total of 303 individuals volunteered in some aspect of our programming.

The following Volunteer Program services were provided in 2022:

- 7,227 miles & 339 hours provided for medical transportation
  - 147 rides facilitated to medical appointments
  - 8,160 miles & 2,159 hours provided by board of directors and other volunteers
  - Total economic impact of Volunteer Services in 2023 was \$92,625.

## FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE PROGRAM



Gwen Fraase & Cindi Godbout serve as part-time Faith Community Nurses (FCNs) in northern Cass & Casselton. They provide personalized visits to help clients understand medical conditions, physician's orders & medications.

FCNs facilitate Bone Builder exercise classes in 6 locations—Arthur, Casselton, Harwood, Horace, Hunter & Kindred. They also provide blood pressure screenings, Advance Care Plans & coordinate the Pen Pal/Journal project with Central Cass & Northern Cass school

students (picture at right)

Health Cabinets in northern Cass & Casselton help identify local needs & plan events with the FCNs. The Casselton Health Cabinet sponsored a Wellness Screening Fair in September 2023.

Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy & Speech Therapy students from local colleges provided screenings.

Cindi facilitated a monthly Alzheimer's support group in Casselton. FCNs & Care Coordinator installed lifelines for clients.



# GIVING HEARTS DAY, TOTALLY TABLES, CAR/BIKE CRUISE & RURAL CASS ROOTS CAMPAIGN

Community of Care's programs & services are provided Free-Of-Charge, thanks to support from local individuals, businesses & organizations, as well as the grantors listed on page 4. Local donors and grantors provided 60% of our income in 2023.

We had 384 donors on Giving Hearts Day, which included \$30,400 in match donations from 14 individuals & groups.

The 16th annual Totally Tables was a record breaking year. The event included twelve \$1,000 table sponsors and \$21,000 in Fund-A-Need matching funds.

Our 11th annual car & bike cruise received sponsorship from 24 sponsors.

We transitioned our Membership to the Rural Cass Roots Campaign in 2023. Donors from rural Cass, as well as those whose "roots" are in rural Cass provided \$32,679 towards our mission. In addition, we received \$24,761 in charitable contributions in 2023 (memorials, donations, etc.)



## Community of Care Staff

**Myrna Hanson**—Executive Director  
**Lauren Prante**—Care Coordinator  
**Cindi Godbout**—Casselton Faith Community Nurse  
**Gwen Fraase**—Northern Cass Faith Community Nurse  
**Tammy Schempp**—Volunteer Coordinator  
**Natalie Keller**—Bookkeeper



### Pictures:

- **Above—Buffalo Creek Equipment, People's Choice Award Winner at Totally Tables**
- **Left—Volunteers promoting Giving Hearts Day**
- **Below—Car & Bike Cruise participants**

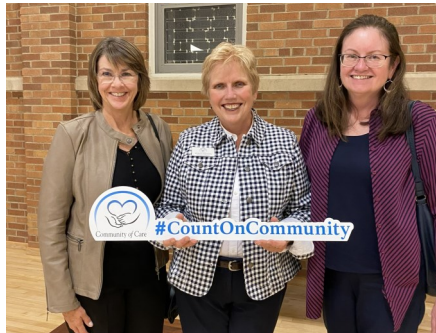


## 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Community of Care celebrated our 20th anniversary in 2023. Community celebrations were held, along with a dinner for current and former board members and staff. Judy Ryan, the President of the Good Samaritan Society had a vision in 2023 to create a program to assist older adults remain in their rural homes. When Community of Care began as a pilot project of the Good Samaritan Society, the goal was to fill gaps in services and base programs on local needs. For 20 years, we have continued that vision, along with providing all of our programs & services Free-Of-Charge. The Board of Directors and staff continue to evaluate and expand programs based on local community needs and look forward to the next 20 years of assisting older adults remain in their rural Cass County homes as long as safely possible.



Dr. Judy Ryan & Myrna Hanson,



Jane Strommen & Deb Coalter, first employees with Myrna Hanson



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION—October 2023

