



A much needed Respite for Jiong and Miao

Interviewed by Nicole Mireault

It was 2006 when, as a young couple, Jiong and Miao arrived in Canada to start a new life. Soon after, Jiong was enrolled in an actuarial studies program and Miao was able to find a job. Life took its course and they began to settle in. However, in June of 2009 following the birth of their daughter Angela, their world was turned upside down.

The diagnosis was harsh: their daughter had global developmental delay affecting many of her body's systems. Problems with coordination prevented her from swallowing and she needed to be fed using feeding-tubes. She suffered from convulsions, partial hearing loss and impaired vision. She would be unable to talk or walk.

It is difficult to imagine a more distressful situation for any parents. Since Jiong and Miao had no family in Canada to turn to for support, Jiong decided to devote himself full-time to care for their daughter. Somehow Miao found the strength to return to work. On one of their many visits to the Mackay Rehabilitation Centre, the exhausted couple heard about NOVA Montréal's Children's Respite program, a free service offered to parents of young children with special needs.

In fact, NOVA Montréal offers up to 6 hours per week of free in-home respite to parents of children under the age of six with chronic illnesses or physical and/or mental handicaps. These precious respite hours allow for parents to tend to other needs or to simply get some much deserved rest, knowing that their child is in good hands.

Through the Respite program, parents can count on the support of NOVA's qualified Home Health Aides and volunteers.

- Our Home Health Aides provide assistance with hygiene, feeding, mobility, independence, nutrition, medications and treatments, as well as valuable emotional support.
- Our volunteers, along with their caring presence, provide additional support by engaging children through play and reading activities.

Each request for assistance that NOVA Montréal receives is evaluated during a home visit from a registered nurse who assesses the situation and creates a care plan together with the child's parents.

Sharlene, one of NOVA's most senior and qualified Home Health Aides was assigned to Angela's case. For the first 18 months, Sharlene took care of Angela 6 hours per week. Then Jennifer, a student volunteer from McGill University, took over, devoting a portion of her weekends to care for Angela. When Jennifer finished her studies and returned home, she was replaced by Marilyn who volunteered her time for the remaining months before the school year started.

Angela is now 6 years old and attending Philip E. Layton School (EMSB). She goes to the pool, learns special skills and receives training tailored to her needs.

It is thanks to donations from people like you that NOVA Montréal is able to continue offering Respite programs which help to ease the burdens faced by parents of children who require special attention and care.

She had an infectious laugh and I thoroughly enjoyed playing and reading with her even if she could not understand the content of the books.

- Marilyn

[Volunteering] challenged [me] to communicate and teach in unconventional ways, and to hold [myself] to a standard of excellence in care to maintain that relationship.

- Jennifer

Jiong and Miao are united in their appreciation of NOVA:

"Sharlene, Jennifer and Marilyn's weekly visits provided us with invaluable moral support and peace of mind. Because of them we felt less alone and we were able to maintain some structure in our lives. We will always be eternally grateful to NOVA."

MISSION

NOVA Montréal is a not-for-profit, charitable, community-based organization whose mission is to respond to **identified unmet community needs** through the development and delivery of high-quality, innovative healthcare services.

CORE VALUES

Respect: All people must be treated with consideration and dignity, honouring their diversity.

Caring: We serve with empathy and compassion.

Participation: All members of our team: employees, volunteers, clients, family members, community organizations, and public healthcare agencies, work together in an effective helping relationship.

Courage: We have the strength to be independent and unique.

NOVA MONTRÉAL TERRITORY

Our services are offered in the territory bordered by St-Denis Street to the East; 32nd Avenue, Lachine, to the West; Metropolitan Boulevard to the North; the St. Lawrence River to the South, including Verdun, Nun's Island and Ville LaSalle.

For questions, comments or feedback, please do not hesitate to let us know. We always welcome suggestions so that we can improve as an organization.



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Still going strong after 117 years, NOVA Montréal nevertheless continues to face major obstacles. However, the 2014-2015 fiscal year has unquestionably been one of growth for our organization.

A second grant received from l'Appui Montréal, distributed over three years, has enabled us to immediately address certain needs of our community in accordance with our mission.

Because of this grant, we have been able to increase the number of free hours offered in our home-support and palliative care programs. These free hours have greatly benefitted the caregivers of our clients who are chronically/terminally-ill low-income seniors. We are very proud of this growth which is a 60% increase in the number of hours of support services provided to caregivers.

Significant challenges still lie ahead for 2016. NOVA, a pioneer in respite care, is the only organization in Quebec to offer free, in-home support services by trained home health aides for chronically-ill and special needs children and their parents. During the 2015-2016 period, NOVA Montréal's management team and board of directors will be diligently working together to find more sources of funding for this program. During our 2014-2015 fiscal year, 41 families received a total of 4 544 hours of free respite services with each family receiving an average of six hours of respite per week. The actual cost of maintaining services to these families was \$158 000.

Over the years, despite the growing demand for respite care, funding for our programs has been diminishing. This is why we greatly need your help. Without the support of our valuable donors, the existence of our children's respite program may be threatened. We remain confident that by intensifying our efforts to attract financial backing for this vital community service that we will be able to maintain the program and develop it even further. Together with our nurses, support staff, and volunteers, we will make every effort to continue assisting these special families.

A society is often judged by the degree to which it helps out its most vulnerable citizens, citizens such as chronically-ill and special needs children. As we accompany these families in their daily struggles, we continue to hope for a better future for them.

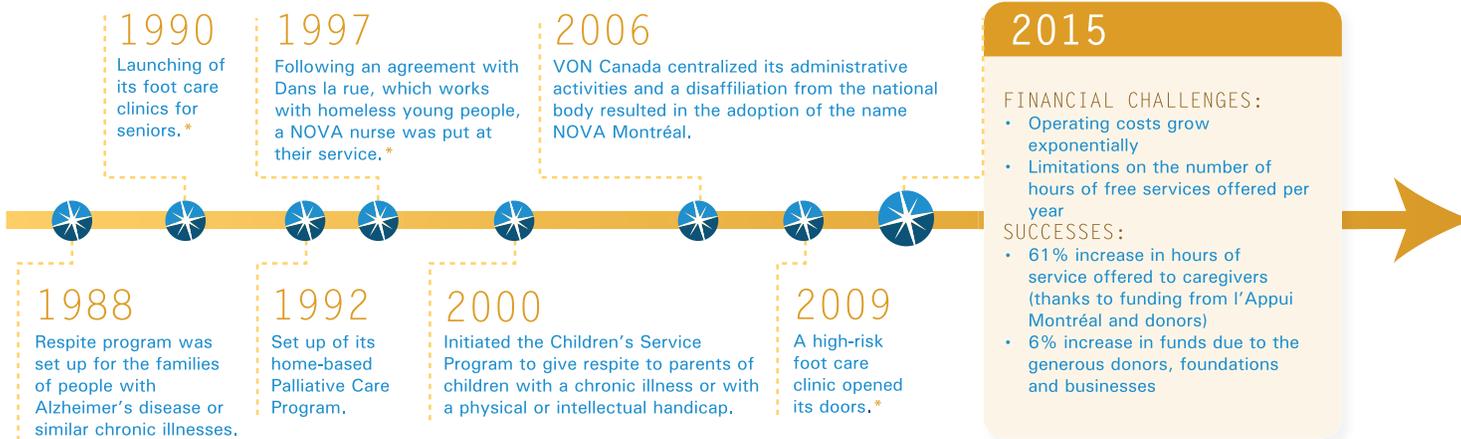
Thank you for your help in providing this better future.

Marie-Claude Mainville, Executive Director
Nancy Wells, President of the Board of Directors



THE HISTORY OF NOVA MONTRÉAL

NOVA MONTRÉAL EVOLVED FROM VON (VICTORIAN ORDER OF NURSES), A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT HAS BEEN PROVIDING HEALTHCARE SERVICES IN THE HOME SINCE 1898.



* termination of program or affiliation in order to reallocate much needed resources to existing programs.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Children's Respite Program

A pioneer of children's respite programs in Québec, NOVA Montréal offers in-home respite to families of chronically ill, pre-school aged children (0-6 years old) with severe or terminal illnesses

The only organization in Québec to offer free respite care on a regular basis for a maximum of 6 hours per week by a qualified Home Health Aide

A referral from a healthcare professional is required

"Thank you so much for the service. Your employee even showed me some new tips."

4544 hours
of services provided
to 41 families

Palliative Care

The program was initially set up to enhance the quality of end-of-life care for clients and their caregivers by enabling clients to pass away peacefully in familiar surroundings. This service is free of charge.

The service includes regularly scheduled visits by NOVA registered nurses. In case of emergencies, a 24 hour on-call nursing service is also available.

A medical referral from a healthcare professional is required. Medical follow-up care with a treating physician is a prerequisite.

"I could not have taken care of my husband before his passing if it were not for NOVA's help."

4110 hours
of services provided
to 300 clients

In-Home Support Program

The program was initially set up as a service to clients with compromised health conditions, to enable them to live at home safely and independently for as long as possible, while providing their caregivers a peace of mind.

The service is offered at 22\$ per hour, with a minimum of 3 hours per visit. Thanks to funding from l'Appui Montréal, however, caregivers of the elderly may be eligible for reduced rates, or even free respite services, if they meet our criteria of eligibility for low-income families or caregivers with a heavy burden.

No medical referral is required

"Know in your hearts that your service in home care is invaluable to the client as well the caregiver."

21 580 hours
of services provided to 98 clients

Our registered nurses provide our clients with:

- Physical and biopsychosocial support
- Help in the management of pain, nausea and other symptoms
- Bereavement follow-up visits

Based on the assessment of a NOVA registered nurse, a trained NOVA home health aide provides the following services:

- Emotional support
- Help with personal care and hygiene
- Help with dressing
- Exercises and mobility
- Light housekeeping
- Medication management
- Companionship
- Stimulating activities

Our Coordinator for volunteer and socio-community services provides our clients with:

- A psychosocial evaluation, as well as intervention and psychosocial support
- Referrals to community partners, if necessary
- Volunteer services through our volunteer bank



STRESS REDUCTION TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Each person responds in their own unique way to stresses involved in being a caregiver; however, you have more control over the situation than you might imagine.

HERE ARE SOME USEFUL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Discuss the level of acceptable intervention with the recipient and family beforehand
- Make sure the home is set up to enable the caregiver to administer adequate care
- It can be difficult to ask for help – therefore be specific of your needs to family, friends and community resources
- Ensure that the resources used are well coordinated
- Use resources of support groups
- Set up a routine of caregiving and adhere to it
- Accept what cannot be managed

STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES



Nº 1.

(reference: HChelpguide.org)

- Identify stressors and your coping strategies
- Learn to say 'no' – know your limits for caregiving
- Recognize when it is time to seek more professional assistance

Nº 2.

ALTER THE SITUATION

- Express your feelings and concerns; be willing to compromise
- Be assertive; deal with problems head on
- Know your limits; do not overextend yourself

Nº 3.

ADAPT TO STRESS

- Set reasonable standards for yourself

Nº 4.

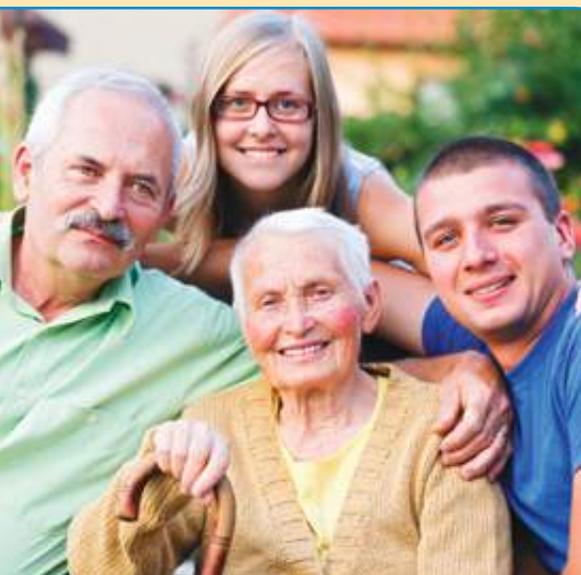
ACCEPT THINGS YOU CANNOT CHANGE

- Focus on what you are able to do
- Identify areas where you need help

Nº 5.

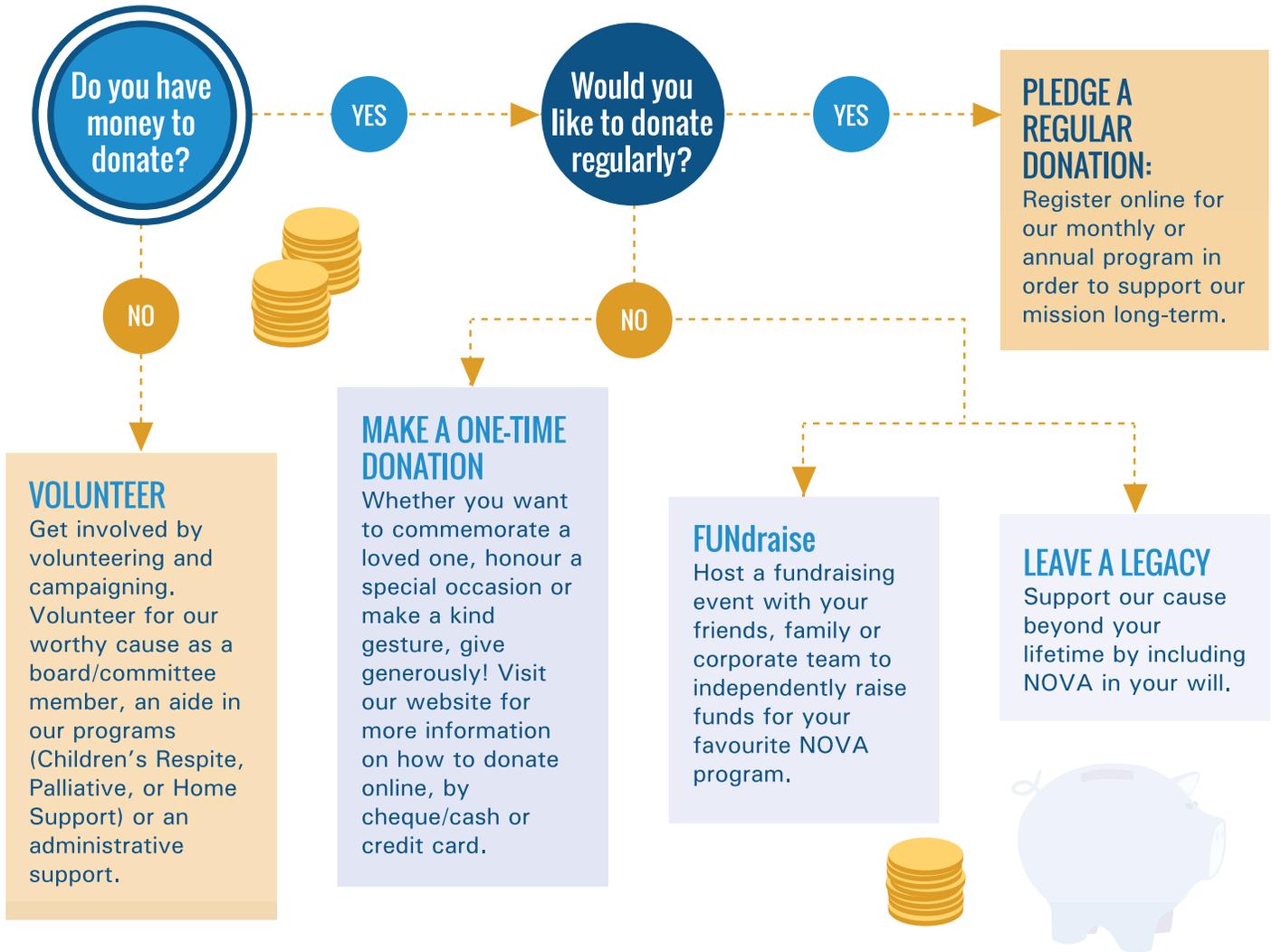
RESPIRE

- Make time for yourself
- Connect with others
- Avoid becoming isolated



Yvonne Mass and Susan Magor, members of the Board of Directors at Nova, are retired Registered nurses, educators, and former caregivers.

SIMPLE GUIDE TO GIVING GENEROUSLY!



YOUR DONATION IN ACTION

- \$75** enables us to offer a **3-hour respite** care service to the caregiver of a client with Alzheimer's disease. During the respite, the client will receive basic health care services and cognitive stimulation by qualified professionals.
- \$150** enables us to offer a free **6-hour respite** care service by a skilled and well-trained professional to a family with a preschooler suffering from a chronic illness.
- \$350** provides the caregiver of a palliative client with **a night's sleep** thanks to a skilled and well-trained home health aide.
- \$700** covers the cost of **training of new volunteers** to work safely and efficiently with our clients.
- \$1000** enables us to cover the costs of an on-call nurse in palliative care (evenings, nights, or weekends) for **an entire week**.
- \$2000** buys **one year's worth** of medical supplies for low-income clients in palliative care.



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Our Community Partners and Donors

Partners: Montreal Children’s Hospital, Montreal General Hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital, CSSS Dorval Lachine Lasalle, CSSS Verdun-Sud-Ouest, CSSS de la Montagne, CSSS Cavendish, MacKay Centre for children and many others

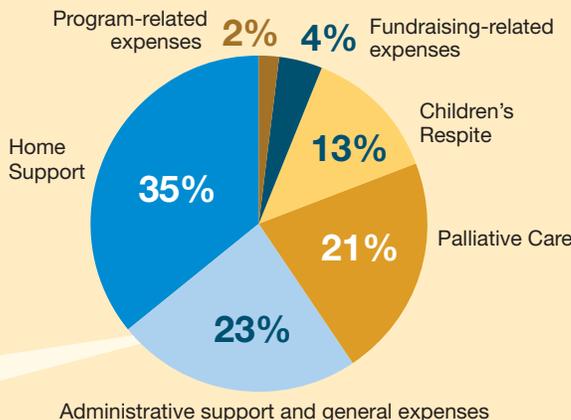
Collaboration with many community organizations: Alzheimer Group Inc, Groupe des aidants de Lasalle, ALS Society of Quebec, Alzheimer Society of Montreal, YWCA Montreal, etc.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS, FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS



2014-2015 STATISTICS

Here is how we spent the funds received:



WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

