

## **Possibilities Press +**

The official blog of The Possibilities Project Plus

### **TOGETHER WE ARE: ENABLING Accessibility, EMPOWERING Possibilities**

Welcome to Possibilities Press Plus! We are thrilled to announce the inception of a monthly blog that will be sent directly to recipients' emails at the beginning of every month.

Through this grassroots Possibilities Press Plus blog, we hope to foster a community that values rehabilitation, celebrates the power of individuals' stories and offers valuable insight from clinicians and researchers.

One of the core pillars of this blog is the celebration of individuals' stories and experiences. We recognize that each person's journey is unique, yet has the potential to inspire others. By sharing these narratives on our platform, we aim to create a supportive space that highlights resilience, empowerment, and personal growth.

In addition to personal experiences, we are dedicated to bringing you the perspectives of clinicians and researchers. Impactful research about the latest advancements, emerging therapies, or new technology is published every day - yet much of it remains inaccessible to the impacted population. Our goal is to help bridge the gap between professionals and the public, ensuring that valuable information is accessible to all.

Our blog is a way of personally connecting with you, and inviting you to remain a part of the Possibilities Project Plus community. Whether you are an individual with lived experience or a caregiver we are confident that each Possibilities Blog will leave you with new found knowledge and community connections. Sign up today to embark on a journey towards new insights, and endless possibilities!

## **Vision**

Our vision is to provide access to assistive devices at no cost to Ontario residents with disabilities.

We hope to alleviate the financial burden of medical equipment for those with spinal cord injuries, acquired brain injuries, amputations and neurological conditions.

## **Mission**

Our mission is to enhance independence and the quality of life of individuals with disabilities and create mutually supportive community partnerships. Additionally, we strive to reduce environmental waste by reusing and relocating assistive equipment to those in need.

## **A TIMELINE OF POSSIBILITIES**

### **Foundations – PP (2013)**

- Possibilities Project emerged from the Parkwood Rehab Team under the direction of Chris Fraser
- Possibilities Project worked to help patients with financial needs access equipment
- The fundraising arm eased the burden of inpatients and outpatients at Parkwood

### **PP+ Beginnings (JAN-FEB 2023)**

- Possibilities Project Plus emerged as an expansion of the Possibilities Project
- Received the Trillium Resilient
- Communities Fund Grant
- Became an endorsed partner of SCIO
- Official PP+ logo was created

### **Expansion (MARCH 2023)**

- March 16: Formal partnership created with Hamilton Dream Centre
- March 20: Formal partnership created with Goodwill Industries

- March 31: First PP+ Interview with an individual with lived experience

### **Funding/Research (APRIL 2023)**

- Proposal submitted for the FHS WeLL
- Planning Grant (\$5000 towards planning for an in-person space at 450 Talbot St.)
- April 12: ACRM abstracts submitted
- April 21: First PP+ Health Equity Impact
- Assessment Facilitated Brainstorming Session

### **What's To Come (FUTURE)**

- August 2023: Public launch in partnership with SCIO
- In-person, physical presence in London's city centre (450 Talbot St.)

### **From Vision to reality: Transforming the reach of assistive devices**

Losing a loved one is a profoundly challenging experience. Amidst the emotional toll, there are practical matters to think of. One such concern may be the fate of the medical equipment that was once vital to the care and well-being of your loved one. Unfortunately, for many communities in Ontario, a lack of a dedicated equipment hub exacerbates the difficulties experienced by grieving families. Who will they give the equipment to? How will they get it there? Why does no one want it back? These are lingering questions many families across Ontario must consider with very limited resources to turn to.

Jane Hsieh, an Ontario resident and spinal cord injury research consultant had such an experience. After her mother passed away in a care home, Jane was also left wondering what to do with her mother's assistive equipment; a brand new bed and mattress, an electric lift, a wheelchair - all of it gently used for a little shy of a year. She couldn't bear to see the equipment go to waste. Determined to find someone out there who would benefit from it, Jane called every organization she could think of because the alternative would be to see the equipment end up in a landfill.

She called vendors (they don't want to experience a net loss by not selling their own equipment), rehab organizations (who couldn't possibly accept mismatched equipment), and even asked the care facility if they would like to keep it (it won't suit the next resident) - but the equipment could not find a home.

This is the reality across Ontario. Families do not have a feasible solution to turn to and as such there is a pressing need to establish a comprehensive solution that enables individuals to donate, recycle, and be able to repurpose medical equipment.

After being turned down by every facility, Jane reached out to Dalton Wolfe, the dedicated project lead for PP+, and Chris Fraser, the visionary founder and project lead, who had long held the dream of creating such a platform. Following a series of chain reactions over the past few months, their collective vision has materialized in full force, ready to serve any Ontario family who may find themselves in need of this invaluable service.

The Possibilities Project Plus truly takes after its name - it is a platform of possibilities that hopes to alleviate the many layers of difficulties that arise in situations surrounding equipment exchange. There is no shortage of stories like Jane's - and many lessons can be learned from these lived experiences. PP+ addresses the pervasive issue of what to do with lingering medical equipment. It mitigates the financial barriers associated with costly medical equipment. It is a sustainable solution that reduces our environmental footprint by redistributing equipment. And above all, it embraces everyone involved, anchoring them in a powerful legacy of compassion and goodwill.

## **OUR PARTNERS**

### **Spinal Cord Injury Ontario**

Spinal Cord Injury Ontario is a non-profit organization with a mission to enhance the quality of life for people living with spinal cord injuries. This organization provides essential services, resources, and advocacy across Ontario. Together we hope to help this population gain access to the equipment that they need.

**Ontario Trillium Foundation**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is a leading grant-making foundation in Ontario, Canada. The foundation plays a vital role in supporting our project and others that contribute to the well-being and growth of communities across the province.

**Parkwood Research Institute**

Parkwood Institute is a vibrant academic health care community. Through the Possibilities Projects, Parkwood is fulfilling the needs of its patients by connecting them with equipment and assistive devices that will enhance their daily living.

**Lawson Health Research Institute**

LHSC is one of Canada's largest teaching hospitals that is dedicated to research and patient care. Lawson Health Research Institute is a research hub providing administrative support to help us deliver our objectives.

**Western University**

Western University is one of Canada's top research-intensive universities and many of the students and researchers involved in PP+ are affiliated with Western. Western University fuels the team creating the logistics to move the project forward.

**THANK YOU!**

Thank you for your readership! Stay connected for upcoming volumes where you can expect more stories and experiences.

[www.possibilitiesprojectplus.ca](http://www.possibilitiesprojectplus.ca)