

## History of WMFC

WMFC had its origin in early 1999 when Arlene Hinchcliffe of Oakville, Ontario wanted to honour of her father who had died from WM, at a time when little was known about the disease. With help from the International WM Foundation, she started the first Support Group in Canada for patients and caregivers, to bring people together to meet and discuss their stories.

In the Fall of that year, the members of the Support Group started to explore ideas on how best to structure their group and this led to the decision in the Spring of 2001 to incorporate the group under the Ontario Corporations Act, so that they could apply for charitable status with the Canada revenue Agency.

They succeeded in obtaining Letters Patent as a corporation in Ontario on October 5, 2001 with the following objectives:

- (a) to undertake public education, family support services, dissemination and publication of information about WM disease, and to coordinate medical care and social services for persons suffering from WM
- (b) to promote and provide funds for research into the cause, control and cure of WM.

They then applied for charitable status with the Canada Revenue Agency and were successful, effective December 27, 2002, in being registered as a Charitable Organization, able to provide official tax receipts for donations from residents of Canada.

Operations of WMFC then started in 2003, with the first Board of Directors being composed of Arlene Hinchcliffe, Jim Bunton, Bert Visheau, Rodney Anderson and (no relation) Olga Anderson. Operations of WMFC have been managed by the successive Boards of Directors, all of whom have been volunteers. There have been no paid staff. WMFC has maintained a close relationship with IWMF whereby members of WMFC are automatically members of IWMF, able to avail themselves of services offered by IWMF.

By the end of 2019, WMFC activities had been broadened geographically by active support groups established in Calgary, Ottawa, Halifax, Toronto and Vancouver; eight one-day Educational Forums had been held in 4 cities, featuring expert speakers from the United States, UK and Canada; and fundraising efforts over the years had enabled WMFC to provide grants for research into the cause, control and cure of WM totalling nearly \$950,000. Grant recipients have included the Alberta Cancer Board, the BC Cancer Agency, the University Health Network in Toronto and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Massachusetts.