

## **Dr. Anna Voeuk: Winner of the 2024 CSPCP Humanitarian Award**

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The Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians (CSPCP) is pleased to award the 2024 Humanitarian Award to Dr. Anna Voeuk in recognition of her exceptional work and leadership on Palliative Care program development and direct clinical care regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Over the past 10 years, Dr. Voeuk has focused her time on improving access to palliative care for underserved populations. As a member of the Frontenac Lennox Addington Ontario Health Team (FLA-OHT), Dr. Voeuk participated in two different working groups. As part of the working group for Underserved and Vulnerable Populations Palliative Care Strategies, she collaborated with local colleagues and partners to improve access to palliative care for people experiencing structural vulnerabilities, such as incarceration and homelessness, and for individuals in rural/remote areas needing palliative care. A result of this initiative was palliative care outreach to the Integrated Care Hub in Kingston. Dr. Voeuk also co-led the Indigenous Focused Palliative Care Strategies Working Group with an Indigenous partner. She met and co-led projects with Indigenous leaders and collaborators in the region to improve access to palliative care and to develop Indigenous-specific palliative care strategies in southeast Ontario. In partnership with Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, she also provided palliative care support for people from and in the James Bay region.

To address the gap of palliative care access in prisons, Dr. Voeuk became a physician lead for developing a palliative care outreach program to federal penitentiaries in the Kingston area. She provided consultations for patients in prison and worked together with teams to provide additional support for patients receiving end-of-life care. She was also invited to provide input to Correctional Service Canada in its development of national strategies for palliative care for people experiencing incarceration in federal correctional facilities.

Internationally, Dr. Voeuk's humanitarian efforts have been in areas of great need and where humanitarian crises arise. This has led her to experiences in several countries through various non-governmental organizations. For example, in collaboration with local, national, and international partners, she and her team set up and oversaw an Ebola Care Centre in Sierra Leone, trained people from the local community to work in the centre, and provided direct care for patients and families. She also worked in Northern Iraq in an Emergency Field Hospital, where she provided palliative care alongside life-prolonging interventions that patients received in the setting of conflict and trauma. In doing so, she increased awareness of the role of palliative care in this context. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Voeuk was seconded to the International Organization for Migration as a Palliative Care Consultant for the Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh. She created a 2-day Training-of-Trainers palliative care session and co-wrote a palliative care guidance document for use by Health Sector Partners with limited access to resources and essential medicines for patients within the camps. More recently, she was a faculty member of a team, supported by local and global partners, that delivered in-person training to learners enrolled in a multi-professional palliative care diploma program in Gaza.

Dr. Anna Voeuk – a palliative care physician seen by her colleagues as someone who reflects humility with those she serves and unselfishly shares her expertise with the palliative care community nationally and abroad.