



2023

IMPACT REPORT

POGO ENABLES ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY, COORDINATED CARE & SUPPORT

POGO partners to achieve an excellent and integrated childhood cancer care system for children, youth, survivors, and their families in Ontario. We are inspired by you, our valued partners and passionate donors, who share our vision and enable informed solutions that are critical to our success.

POGO 40th
PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY GROUP OF ONTARIO
**FOR KIDS WITH CANCER
FOR NOW, FOR LIFE.**

SURVIVOR CARE



Many childhood cancer survivors will experience complications either due to the disease itself, complex surgical procedures or the rigorous rounds of radiation and chemotherapy they were given during treatment. POGO provides support to these survivors into adulthood: systematic health monitoring through the POGO Provincial Pediatric Oncology AfterCare Program, and counselling support through the POGO School and Work Transitions Program (Transitions).

614 survivors
received services from
six POGO Counsellors:
a **53%** increase
from the previous year.

103 survivor clients applied for, are attending, were accepted to or
graduated from a post-secondary institution.



With the addition of one bilingual POGO Counsellor and newly translated consent forms and program evaluation surveys, survivor clients can now access and receive services in French, as well as fully participate in program feedback. Read story: "French Language Counsellor Builds Trust, Breaks Down Barriers".

FAMILY SUPPORT

In addition to the emotional stress that comes with a childhood cancer diagnosis, many families face tremendous financial, psychosocial and logistical challenges during their child's treatment. POGO provides complementary solutions to these challenges: financial support to families through the POGO Financial Assistance Program, excellent nursing support in hospital and at home through the POGO Interlink Nursing Program and care closer to home through the POGO Provincial Pediatric Oncology Satellite Clinic Program.

Last year, POGO provided **\$720,000**

(an increase of **35%** from the previous

year!!) to **796** families across Ontario.



EXCITING NEWS

The substantial increase in financial assistance to families was due to a one-time top-up payment (thanks to donor dollars!) made in March 2023.

Watch this brief expression of appreciation from our families.





CONTINUING EDUCATION

Pediatric oncology is a rapidly advancing field. POGO's Education initiatives provide a wide range of opportunities for healthcare professionals to enhance their knowledge and advance their practice in order to improve childhood cancer care.

POGO hosted several webinars to support the continuing education of pediatric oncology healthcare professionals in Ontario, including a webinar titled "Approaches to Harmonizing Indigenous and Western Medicine in Pediatric Oncology," which has been viewed (live and on-demand) by over **200** people.

POGO's annual Multidisciplinary Symposium on Childhood Cancer was offered in a hybrid format for the first time in 2022, taking place virtually and in person in Toronto. **Over 250** pediatric oncology health professionals from across Canada and around the globe attended.



RESEARCH

In 2022, the POGO Research team developed a new strategic plan that better aligns research funding with the Childhood Cancer Care Plan. Through the generous support of donor dollars, POGO relaunched the research funding program and put out a first call for grant proposals in January 2023. POGO-funded research contributes to a better understanding of childhood cancer and its impacts, and improved outcomes for children with cancer and their families. New Knowledge. Improved Care.

In March 2023, POGO awarded **\$200,000** to **3** research teams and their projects addressing precision oncology, financial hardship, and timely palliative care.



Read more about each research project and the investigators.

CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

POGO clinical activities take place at partner hospitals across Ontario, including within five specialized childhood cancer programs, three specialized adult cancer centres and eight community hospitals.

POGO Satellite Clinics had a **13%** increase in new patients seen.

As many COVID restrictions have been lifted, POGO Interlink Nurses returned to providing in-home support and school visits.

POGO guidelines help healthcare professionals in Ontario and worldwide deliver evidence-based supportive care and improve the health and quality of life of children with cancer. Last year, three POGO guidelines were completed and published in academic journals. The POGO guideline "Prevention and treatment of anticipatory chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting in pediatric cancer patients and hematopoietic stem cell recipients: Clinical practice guideline update" received an award for being one of the most downloaded articles during its first 12 months of publication in the journal Pediatric Blood and Cancer.

EXCITING NEWS

The POGO Satellite, Interlink Nursing and AfterCare programs received new funding to expand into new areas in Ontario. Stay tuned for new location announcements!

2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the POGO Satellite Clinic Program. Watch how it has grown!





BRINGING CLINICAL TRIALS CLOSER TO HOME

Childhood cancer outcomes have seen remarkable improvements thanks to large-scale participation of children and adolescents in collaborative group clinical trials. The five Ontario hospitals with specialized childhood cancer programs, all of whom are POGO partners, are able to provide specialized pediatric care and comply with ethical and regulatory standards of clinical trials. For some children with cancer, the long distance between their home and the institutions engaged in these clinical trials presents a barrier to enrollment in clinical trials.

Smaller community hospitals do not typically have capacity to support the regulatory and ethical oversight of clinical trials for special populations, such as childhood cancer. A system to access clinical trials was created in Ontario that allows the five specialized childhood cancer programs and the eight POGO Satellite Clinic locations to have shared responsibilities, essentially increasing access for families living far from the institutions hosting the clinical trial!!

The Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network (3CTN), in their efforts to improve access to oncology clinical trials for all Canadians with cancer residing in rural and remote communities, reached out to learn more about POGO's process.

THANK YOU

Our sincerest gratitude to all of our donors for your dedication to championing childhood cancer care. A special thank you to those who have committed to POGO with a multi-year agreement. Your ongoing commitment provides stable funding for today and tomorrow, allowing POGO to plan ahead, knowing that we have your support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US AT WWW.POGO.CA

Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario
480 University Avenue, Suite 1014
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1V2
416 592 1232 | 1 855 367 7646
fundraising@pogo.ca

Charitable #871067245RR0001

POGO secures Ministry of Health funding to support clinical activities at our partner hospitals and system-wide coordination of childhood cancer care in Ontario. Initiatives cited in this report that are government funded are the POGO Satellite Clinic Program, POGO Interlink Nursing Program, POGO AfterCare Program, Clinical Practice Guidelines Program, and the Childhood Cancer Care Plan. As a licensed charity committed to championing the cause, POGO has identified and continues to identify key support programs that are out of the scope of government, and raises private dollars to deliver these programs.

In this video, POGO co-founder Dr. Mark Greenberg illustrates how POGO's story reflects the childhood cancer experience.



@POGO4Kids



@PediatricOncologyGroupofOntario



info@pogo.ca

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