



Empowering Care Program Community Updates Spring/Summer 2025

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GOOD TO BE GOOD is a grassroots, community-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering women and gender-diverse individuals in Canada who face significant barriers due to gendered injustices such as violence, discrimination, and systemic barriers to access and inclusion.

Our mission is to advance women's rights and promote gender equality by creating intersectional-oriented opportunities. Through our on-the-ground solutions-oriented programs and services, we focus on bolstering rights, inclusion, dignity, and empowerment. *Empowering Care Program* (ECP) is one of the main programs that helps reduce these gendered barriers.

ECP provides direct relief assistance to our priority communities through practical supports, including transportation, gift cards, clothing , nutritious food and groceries, and menstrual and wellness products.

The program offers tangible support to help cover essential expenses —such as costs related to leaving violence, securing permanent resident status or Canadian citizenship, and accessing reproductive or gender-affirming health care.

It is designed to support women and gender-diverse individuals navigating socio-economic challenges and systemic barriers that limit access to the resources and opportunities needed to live with dignity, community, and full rights realized.

This quarterly report covers April to June 2025 programming and shares the work done through ECP during this time.

Streamlining Applications & Disbursements

As we continue to improve the Empowering Care Program, we carefully review each application to ensure the process is more efficient and financial help reaches those who need it most. We observed a growing number of applicants, driven by word-of-mouth, organizational partner referrals (e.g., St. Felix Centre and Battered Women's Support Services) and through personal inquiry and outreach.

While applicants wait for confirmation around their eligibility, our team reaches out to check on their current needs and offer any extra help or resources they might require individually and with care. If an application does not meet our eligibility criteria, we do our best to connect the individual with alternative supports, referrals, or resources in the community—ensuring that no one is left without care, options, or guidance.

To make the application process more equitable and low-barrier, we offer assistance via Zoom or phone calls to support community members in completing their forms. We also understand that some people may feel uncomfortable sending their identification online, so we provide safe Zoom sessions where applicants can show their supporting documents in real time, ensuring their privacy is respected. This approach helps us meet people where they are, ensure safer access to support, and affirm that we're connecting with a real person—while upholding trust, dignity, and care at every step.

We recognize that applicants are actively navigating challenges, so we thrive to make the process compassionate, low-barrier, and trauma-informed as possible. Therefore, our application forms are designed to be clear, straightforward, and time efficient. We also prioritize respectful, and compassionate communication with each applicant, and genuine understanding of their situation. Seeking support should be a dignified experience, where people feel heard, respected, and empowered—not overlooked or left behind.

How Women Accessed Our Supports

Between April to June 2025, the women and gender-diverse people who connected with the Empowering Care Program shared a wide range of lived experiences and barriers that impacted their access to basic needs and stability.

Many were navigating one or more of the following realities:

- 01** Unemployment or underemployment
- 02** Precarious housing or experiences of being unhoused
- 03** Low or unstable income
- 04** Recent arrival or newcomer status in Canada
- 05** Ongoing or chronic medical conditions
- 06** Experiences of gender-based violence or sexual exploitation
- 07** Difficulty accessing essential social supports like healthcare, income assistance, or legal aid

Applicants primarily ranged from 25 to 55+ years old, with many identifying as White, Black, Indigenous, or South Asian, primarily from Ontario, and British Columbia. Participants included both newcomers and long-time residents or citizens navigating systemic barriers.

This demographic snapshot highlights the diversity within our community, while also underscoring the shared and ongoing challenges many face in meeting their basic needs. Despite different backgrounds and circumstances, the common thread remains clear: access to care, stability, and opportunity continues to be shaped by inequities that require collective, equity-driven responses.

Applicants generally requested financial support to cover a range of urgent needs due to unemployment challenges, being unhoused/homelessness, and the responsibility of supporting dependents on a low income.

These include transportation costs such as bus fare or ride-share services like Uber, healthy food, and personal hygiene products. Some applicants have also requested help paying for their internet as well as housing-related utility bills or rental.

Our team's analysis of these requests shows a clear pattern: many individuals are contending with multiple, overlapping costs that are essential to everyday survival but often fall through the cracks of formal support systems. These patterns continue to guide how we adapt our program criteria, resource referrals, and outreach efforts to better meet the real and evolving needs of our community.

We supported a number of applicants with care packages that contain menstrual products, Lucky Iron Fish, baby and children supplies, personal care items, and other essentials that support day to day living and well-being. Others have reached out for 1:1 support to connect with resources for housing, legal support, emotional support and as well as free activities and programs for their families and children. Some applicants have also chosen to join our Peer Support Groups, seeking a space to strengthen their communication and interpersonal skills, build community, and receive care-centered support for their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Meeting Women Where They Are

The *Empowering Care Program* provides timely, wraparound support for women and gender-diverse individuals who are navigating urgent needs and systemic barriers.

These supports help address basic necessities, safety concerns, and emergent situations that may not be adequately covered by existing social systems—offering relief, dignity, and solidarity when it's needed most.

To date, the program has delivered the following forms of care:

100% Assistance with rent or housing expenses, food, and utilities

100% Wellness care packages, offering a selection of toiletries and clothes designed to promote well-being.

50% Resource Support and Referrals to community agencies and programs, connecting program participants to further local services and support networks.

100% Free access to GOOD TO BE GOOD's Peer Support Services such as further 1:1 case management and care and access to monthly groups

Stand with us in advancing gender equity by sharing this program within your networks and community—together we can extend vital support and create lasting change

Every voice, action, and contribution helps to ensure more women and gender-diverse people across Canada from marginalized communities can access the care, dignity, and support they need and deserve.

Take action and get involved:

www.globalgiving.org/projects/empoweringcareforwomenandgirls

Learn more about our programs:

www.goodtobegood.ca/programsandresources



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