

COMMUNITY PARTNER DESCRIPTION:

Brigadoon Village is a non-profit organization located on Aylesford Lake, Kings County, Nova Scotia. Brigadoon offers year-round and summer programming, providing overnight summer camp opportunities for children and youth with medical conditions and other life challenges. Camps are run in partnership with many organizations, including our internal philanthropic efforts to ensure that cost is not a barrier to those campers who need it most. Brigadoon has a robust healthcare team in partnership with the IWK and community partners, offering high-quality pediatric care to our diverse camper population.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project aims to explore how participation in Brigadoon Village's Summer Staff Team influences resilience among healthcare providers and camp staff during Summer 2025. We are seeking a partner who can help us conduct a mixed-methods study. We hope to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, reflecting stakeholder preference for evidence-based decision-making. The study will account for diversity among participants, representing a broad range of health professionals, and will use validated measures of resilience.

PROJECTED BENEFITS:

Healthcare providers in Canada are facing an escalating crisis of burnout, stress, and attrition. Recent data from the World Health Organization (2024), the Montreal Economic Institute (2024), and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (2024) indicate that nearly one-quarter of healthcare workers reported symptoms of anxiety, depression, or burnout between 2020 and 2022, with little to no improvement in subsequent years. Alarming, the number of nurses leaving the profession before the age of 35 rose from 32% in 2013 to 40% in 2022. This growing mental health burden is not only a threat to individual well-being but also to the sustainability of the healthcare workforce.

At the same time, leading organizations such as UNICEF, Children's Healthcare Canada, and the U.S. National Academies have emphasized the urgent need for innovative, community-based approaches to pediatric care. Pediatric medical camps like Brigadoon Village represent one such model, combining high-quality care with immersive, nature-based experiences that foster connection, recovery, and holistic

wellbeing. While existing research has shown the benefits of nature exposure on stress reduction, immune function, and resilience (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Ulrich et al., 1991; White et al., 2023), there is a critical gap in understanding how these benefits extend to the healthcare professionals working in these environments

This research project aims to generate the first empirical evidence on how participation in a pediatric medical camp influences resilience among healthcare providers. The findings will support Brigadoon Village in demonstrating its broader impact—not only on campers and families but also on the professionals who make the programs possible. This data will be instrumental in strengthening the organization's advocacy, guiding future program development, and informing strategic partnerships. Moreover, the study will offer insights that could support recruitment and retention strategies in pediatric care, particularly in rural or high-stress healthcare settings. By contributing to the emerging field of community-based health innovation, the research also holds potential for replication at similar camp programs across Canada.