

A Glimpse of Hope: A new initiative to bring comfort and joy to those going through cancer treatment

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A new initiative has begun to help bring cheer to those going through cancer treatment.

A Glimpse of Hope was started to bring care packages to those going through cancer treatment. The idea came from 21-year-old Founder and Executive Director Olivia Sinisi who made a basket for her own mother who was going through treatment.

“It began with my mom. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2023 and then, unfortunately, her cancer came back this year. I just remember it being so scary and so overwhelming for us and having already been through that experience as a family, I had a better understanding of how difficult chemotherapy sessions could be,” says Sinisi. “I just wanted to make her experience this time around a little bit more comfortable.

“I also wanted to take something that was very frightening for all of us and find a small way to make it feel a little bit more positive and a little bit less frightening. I made her a care package with one blanket, a colouring book, and a card telling her that she's got this and it made me really happy to be able to do something for her, even when so much of the situation was beyond my control.”

Just the simple act of giving the basket turned into a brand-new idea after Sinisi saw the reaction her mom had to the basket.

“Seeing her reaction, it stayed with me, and I began thinking about other people who were going through chemotherapy, and how much they might appreciate a small gesture like this,” says Sinisi.

Since then, Sinisi has started A Glimpse of Hope and has begun working with William Osler Health System to prepare the first baskets for donation.

“We reached out to William Osler and they provided us with a wish list of comfort care items and it consists of items of Tim Horton's gift cards, unscented moisturizers, lip bombs, tissues, mouthwash, toothbrushes, toothpaste, the blankets, non-flip socks, shirty beanies, peppermint tea bags, journals, and pens, colouring books, and hand sanitizers,” says Sinisi.

The first 25 packages will be donated on November 5 at Brampton Civic Hospital and will mark the first milestone for A Glimpse of Hope.

Once those comfort baskets have been delivered, A Glimpse of Hope will begin working to create more baskets and collaborating with other treatment centres.

“We do have plans to work with Wellspring Chinguacousy, another cancer facility in Brampton. We have a tour with them on November 6 and, from there, we'll figure out what they need, what their patients need? [and] how many more gift bags we can make,” says Sinisi.

To Sinisi, this initiative represents more than just providing items to those going through treatment.

“I just really wanted people to remember that there's so much more than a cancer diagnosis and a cancer patient. I think it's so easy to get caught up in the medical side of things that, and it becomes so frightening that I really just wanted people to remember that they're human first, and that people are thinking about them, people are rooting for them, and that they've got this,” says Sinisi.

Looking back on how this all started with one simple care package to now, Sinisi says she is proud of all the hard work that has been accomplished and is thankful for all those that have helped along the way.

?It means a lot. This started off as just one singular package for my mom. I had the idea of maybe other people would appreciate this, and I didn't realize how, big this could be, and how much people genuinely care about things like this, says Sinisi. ?It really does mean a lot, because the more people that receive these packages, for me, it's more people that I'm helping or bringing some comfort or joy to. I think that's important.?