

Teresa Dellar, M.S.C., MSW, PSW, FT



Teresa Dellar co-founded the West Island Palliative Care Residence with then MNA Russell Williams in 1998; she was its Executive Director until 2019. The need for the Residence grew out of her concern for terminally ill patients who had to be transferred downtown in their final days, away from their community and loved ones.

Thanks to her incredible leadership and vision, the West Island Palliative Care Residence grew over the years from 9 to 23-beds on two sites, thereby making it the largest community based palliative care residence in Canada. Teresa also piloted the creation of the Montreal Institute for Palliative Care, a branch of the Residence, which officially launched in May 2018. The Institute's mission is to extend the benefits of best-in-class palliative care to as many patients and families as possible through education, knowledge exchange and research. Her relentless passion and indomitable spirit was behind the Residence's 2018-2020 Capital Campaign to consolidate the two sites under one roof.

Immediately prior to establishing the Residence, Teresa was a Human Relations Agent, with a specialty in Oncology Social Work at the Lakeshore General Hospital. From 2007 to 2014 she taught as a sessional professor at McGill University's School of Social Work. She also worked as an adult education teacher of Social Work and Gerontology at Collège Marie-Victorin from 1991 to 1994. Teresa was a member of the McGill University Palliative Care Council and was on the Executive of the Board of the *Alliance des Maisons de soins palliatifs du Québec*. She was also active with the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association and the International Hospice Association. Teresa other volunteer activities included being a trustee of the Montreal St. Patrick's Foundation and a member of the board of the Jean Cameron Palliative Care Foundation, which wound down its activities in 2017.

Teresa had been celebrated for her many achievements over the course of her professional life, including "Personality of the Year" Award – *Cités Nouvelles*, 1999, "West Islander of the Year" Award – *The Chronicle*, 2002 and 2012, The Montreal Council of Women "Woman of the Year Award" in 2005, the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 and the Loyola Hall of Merit in 2016. In November 2016, Teresa was awarded the Meritorious Service Cross by then Governor General of Canada David Johnston, recognizing her contribution to palliative care in the West Island community, as well as her acknowledged leadership role in the field throughout Canada. In 2017, together with other prominent members of the West Island community she was awarded the Canada 150 Community Service Award.

Teresa graduated with a Bachelor's ('83) and Master's degree ('90) in Social Work from McGill University. She earned a Specialization Certificate as a Bereavement Facilitator (NCBF) in 1995 from the American Academy of Bereavement. She was certified as a Fellow in Thanatology in 2012 and by the Association for Death Education and Counseling in 2009.

Teresa died on August 19, 2019, after a brief but courageous battle with cancer.