



FOR PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH

To our community and colleagues,

**Statement on the Dissolution of Together: For Perinatal Mental Health Waterloo Region (Together Waterloo Inc.)**

It is with the full support of the current Board of Directors that I share the difficult news of the dissolution of Together: For Perinatal Mental Health Waterloo Region (Together Waterloo Inc.).

As Co-Founder (with former Co-Executive Director Lisette Weber, who resigned from the organization as of January 1st, 2025) and current Executive Director, I feel a deep responsibility to speak candidly about the broader systemic challenges facing non-profit organizations working in the field of perinatal mental health at regional, provincial, and national levels of service provision.

Many of us are drawn to this work because of our own lived experiences. We are individuals who have intimately known the struggles of navigating parenthood while facing mental health challenges, often in silence and isolation. These experiences shape our understanding of how vital it is to provide support that is too often inaccessible. Yet, those of us leading this work frequently do so as unpaid or underpaid care providers, operating within an economic system that undervalues care labour and makes financial sustainability increasingly difficult.

Together Waterloo Inc. was founded to be an anti-oppressive, anti-ableist, feminist and social justice-centred organisation. These guiding values have remained integral to our mission. However, implementing them within the constraints of today's non-profit landscape has revealed the harsh realities of sustaining meaningful, values-based work. The structures in place often demand compromises on time, on outcomes, and on the very values we seek to uphold.

Throughout my tenure, it has remained a personal and professional priority to honour the knowledge, expertise, and dedication of those engaged in this work. Yet, the expectations placed on non-profit organizations to operate with minimal funding, rely heavily on volunteer labour, and to compete for limited resources are simply not sustainable. These pressures contribute to workforce instability, high turnover, burnout, and ultimately threaten the longevity of the services we aim to provide, particularly those advocating for and supporting parents, whose labour in raising the next generation remains deeply undervalued.

There is a significant privilege required to build and sustain a non-profit rooted in unpaid labour. Continuing to normalize underfunding, excessive volunteerism, and competitive grant cycles perpetuates inequities and underscores the systemic devaluation of care-based, justice-driven work.



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The decision to dissolve Together Waterloo Inc. was not made lightly. It is a reflection of both the practical and ethical considerations we faced. I remain deeply grateful to all who have supported Together Waterloo Inc. and shared in our vision. As this chapter closes, I hold hope that our collective efforts will continue to inspire necessary change in how we value and resource the essential work of care and community support.

Though Together Waterloo Inc. is dissolving, I, personally, will not be ending my work in Perinatal Mental Health. My work in this field and for this cause started long before Together Waterloo Inc. and will continue long after.

With gratitude and solidarity,

Catherine Mellinger  
EXAT, CC-PMH  
Co-Founder  
Together: For Perinatal Mental Health Waterloo Region