



Making Life Easier, More Enjoyable and Efficient with an E-Bike

Catherine Payne, a Pharmacy Operations Supervisor at Ontario's Woodstock Hospital, recently became a proud e-bike enthusiast. Both she and her husband purchased their e-bikes in September 2022 from Rad Power Bikes of Vancouver, BC with hers being a Rad Power 6 model affectionately named 'Swanee.' Since being purchased in 2022, Payne has been using her e-bike as a reliable form of transit to commute to and from work as well as travel for leisure activities, such as a quick trip to the store or across town to visit her mother.

Benefits & Drawbacks

Payne used to regularly ride her non-electric bike, but due to arthritis and a hilly commute, she became unable to ride her bike as often as she would have liked. She knew with the assistance provided by an e-bike she would be able to continue riding as often as the weather would permit and for many years to come.

While being easier on her body, Payne points out she can still get the benefits of exercise by determining how much battery assistance she uses while riding. This is an especially important feature of e-bikes for people like Payne who have health and mobility challenges. "If I am having a flare up (of arthritis) or a particularly bad day," says Payne, "that's the time to ramp up the assistance. Or if you are having a good day and want a work-out, you can lower the assistance level."

Riding her e-bike also makes her arrival at work more pleasant. Since her commute can be less exertive, she is able to ride in her work clothes

and no longer has to account for the time it would take to shower and change.

Like many people, after spending a long day indoors, Payne prefers being out in nature rather than sitting in a bus or car. While being more pleasant, Payne has found riding her e-bike has brought benefits for her mental health. She loves being able to see the "beauty of the morning" on her commute to work and after a busy day in the pharmacy department it helps her to "decompress" on the way home.

"I knew by purchasing an e-bike that it would just be easier on my body and it 100% is."

Payne's primary complaint about e-bike travel is that her rides are highly weather-dependent. For safety's sake, she has adopted a daily routine of checking the weather before her ride to ensure there is no thunder or lightning on the



horizon and chooses not to ride during the winter months when there are more dangers on the road.

Another drawback Payne and her husband have found is the weight of the e-bikes. One bike, for example, is over 36 kilograms (80 pounds) making it too heavy to easily load into the back of their truck and take on new adventures.

They have also had challenges getting their bikes serviced because there are no local bike shops with the knowledge and expertise to properly service and tune-up the bikes.

Future Directions

Looking to the future, Payne says cities need to be implementing additional infrastructure to encourage people to ride their micro-mobility devices. This includes more bike lanes and secure places to lock up devices.

She hopes Canadians will continue to see the prices of e-bikes come down and the availability of better rebate programs increase in order to make micro-mobility devices more accessible.

As for workplaces, Payne says she is lucky Woodstock Hospital provides a bike lock-up area that is clean, dry, and secure, especially for the e-bikes. She suggests organisations that already have supportive infrastructure in place promote what is available so staff are

"Riding my e-bike make me happy. I think people must enjoy seeing me bike by them because I would think I am smiling the whole time, it's just such a great feeling."



Catherine Payne's Rad Power 6, 'Swanee'.

made aware and can take advantage. Knowing there is secure storage for micro-mobility devices will hopefully encourage more people to use them for their commutes.

In addition, Payne shared how the Woodstock Hospital's green team had the local bike shop bring out a number of different e-bikes to show the range of options for staff to ride to work.

By showcasing and bringing awareness to the different types of devices that are available, Payne hopes for an increase in the number of people purchasing e-bikes.

Advice for Potential Users

For those considering an e-bike purchase, Payne suggests testing out devices before you buy and doing lots of research to make sure you find the e-bike best suited to your desired usage.

With recent growth of the market, there are now multiple types of battery-powered micro-mobility devices with a range of features providing plenty of variety for future buyers. Payne also recommends paying particular attention to the safety and convenience items

you may need to make your ride or commute as safe and enjoyable as possible.

For example, she purchased a cargo basket for the front of her bike and a bag that fits inside to securely carry everything she needs for work. She also purchased a helmet with a back light and a rear-view mirror so she can see vehicular traffic behind her. These items are particularly important as she frequently rides to work early in the morning when it is sometimes still dark.

While some people may be afraid of these devices because they are electric, Payne says “they just need to know it’s something you may need to get used to, but there is no reason to be scared. Just give it a try!”

“I look forward to riding my e-bike every day. It’s just a wonderful addition to my life!”

Reflection

What type of infrastructure does your organisation have available to support micro-mobility users?

How can you support the micro-mobility movement at your organisation?

Visit our website [HERE](#) and access our BPMM Champion slide-deck (COMING SOON).

About Us: The Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care is Canada’s premier green health care resource network and is leading the evolution of green in Canada’s health sector as a national voice and catalyst for environmental change. Collaboratively, we strive to reduce health care’s ecological impact from compassionate care delivery while providing a platform upon which to discuss and promote best practices, innovation, environmental responsibility and climate change resiliency. www.greenhealthcare.ca

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Written and reviewed by Kent Waddington, Communications Director, Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care and Autumn Sypus, Marketing & Outreach Coordinator, Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care. Design/layout by Autumn Sypus.

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