

Volunteer Coordinator
POSITION DESCRIPTION
within Fraser Health Communities

Position Title: Volunteer Coordinator

The following document has been prepared by the hospice societies in the Fraser Health communities. It describes an overview of the role of hospice palliative care volunteers who have completed the core volunteer training program. This document by no means reflects all the roles that hospice palliative care volunteers fulfill, as each organization has developed additional specialized responsibilities, depending upon the community need and available resources.

Reporting / Supervision / Support

Volunteers report to a hospice society coordinator of volunteers (coordinator) or a designated staff position responsible for volunteer management. There is ongoing and consistent supervision of volunteers and all volunteers sign a code of conduct agreement. Regular support meetings are held as well as ongoing training and support. Volunteers are responsible to inform the coordinator of any concerns or problems related to patients/clients and families.

Location:

Volunteers work in many settings including homes, hospitals, assisted living and long term care facilities, hospice residences and treatment, corrections and resource centres throughout Fraser Health communities.

Function:

Volunteers are representatives of the community who companion with patient/clients and families during advanced illness, dying and bereavement.

Volunteers complement the health care team. They provide information, practical assistance, emotional and spiritual support, vigils, advocacy and caregiver support in order to enhance quality of life and dignity for patient/clients and their families and friends. In addition, they provide short term respite which refers to volunteers providing several hours of respite in the home so the caregiver can get away or rest and is not referring to overnight respite that a support worker would provide.

Their role is one of presence and they bring a richness of life experiences, skills and the gift of time to help alleviate loneliness and fears. They are often the link between the formal health care system and the family's circle of support. The volunteer may be there throughout the illness, whether a patient/client is at home, transfers into hospital, care facility, hospice residence or goes back home again.

Volunteers:

- do not replace nursing care, community health workers or family support
- do not offer medical, legal or financial advice
- do not offer family counselling.

Evaluation and Feedback

Volunteers have regular reviews and /or an exit interview when possible to determine the volunteer's satisfaction, to learn whether expectations have been met, and to allow for mutual feedback between the volunteer and the Coordinator.

Qualifications

In order to work with patient/clients and families, volunteers are carefully screened to ensure they are suitable to represent the hospice society and that they clearly understand the scope of work and time commitment.

Volunteers must have completed:

- all components of the hospice training program based on the BCHPCA Volunteer Standards
- the application form
- reference checks completed and approved
- criminal record check
- screening
- orientation
- TB test (when required)

Note: This document accompanies the hospice society advisory committee (HSAC) Data Form which is used by each hospice society to submit annual data reports to Fraser Health.