

Abbotsford Hospice Society Grief Support Training

This course will provide you with the opportunity to understand the role of volunteers in a hospice palliative care facility. It aims to provide you with the relevant knowledge and experience to thrive in your role as a hospice palliative care volunteer.

Chapter One - Introduction: The Caregiver and the Client

- Understand the history of hospice palliative care, both globally and in Canada
- Understand the local context of hospice palliative care
- Connect your expectations of volunteer caregiving to your personal capacity

Chapter Two - Hospice Companion Volunteer

- Outline hospice's philosophy of grief and dying
- Understand bereavement and grief, include acute and complicated grief
- Understand the "companion" volunteer's role in hospice
- Recognize the importance and role of boundaries for the "companion" volunteer
- Differentiate between "friend" and "volunteer" in the hospice setting
- Characterize the qualities of opening and closing support sessions

Chapter Three – Communications Skills:

Empathetic Listening

- Understand the value of strong communication skills in the hospice setting
- Review the foundations of showing up to support clients
- Review the role of listening in the hospice setting
- Understand what empathy means and learn how to listen empathetically
- Understand why empathy is important and why it works
- Review some barriers to empathetic listening
- Review some cultural considerations related to empathetic listening

Chapter Four – Communication Skills:

Effective Strategies

- Recognize different ways we communicate
- Understand the role of silence in communication
- Understand how to appropriately ask questions in the hospice setting
- Recognize when it is appropriate to share information about yourself in the hospice setting
- Understand effective communication strategies in the hospice setting
- Recognize how layers of support are mobilized
- Understand the value of, and limits of, confidentiality in the hospice setting

Chapter Five – Palliative Client Support:

The Dying Process

- Introduce the various roles in the palliative care team
- Review the palliative care model
- Understand pain in palliative care
- Introduce the Palliative Performance Scale (PPS)
- Review the dying process
- Examine the phases of and adjustment to terminal illness
- Understand ways of supporting someone at the end of life

Chapter Six – Palliative Client Support: The Needs of the Dying

- Understand the needs of the dying and their family
- Recognize some of the fears the dying person may have
- Learn how to support hope at the end of life
- Understand the therapeutic value of life review interventions and legacy work
- Explore the importance of cultural sensitivity, cultural competence, and cultural accessibility
- Review a typology of hospice volunteer roles

Chapter Seven – Bereavement and Client Support

- Understand approaches to grief and bereavement support
- Recognize five common myths about grief
- Understand different responses to grief and loss
- Recognize the connection between grief and depression
- Learn how to assist others in validating the grief they are experiencing
- Explore the Grievers' Bill of Rights
- Learn how to provide grief support through non-traditional methods

Chapter Eight - Child and Youth Bereavement

- Understand the ways children and youth experience death and dying
- Understand the different ways that children and youth experience grief in comparison to adults
- Learn strategies to use and avoid in assisting children and youth dealing with grief

Chapter Nine – Spiritual Care

- Understand the nature and provision of spiritual care
- Understand the difference among religion, ethics and spirituality
- Explore the construction of death in Western society
- Explore different cultural beliefs and attitudes towards death
- Understand elements of emotional and spiritual preparation for end of life
- Review the role of death rituals, including their psychological, social, spiritual, and social benefits

Chapter Ten – A Journey through Self-Care

- Understand the dynamics of anticipatory grief
- Understand experiences of burnout and compassion fatigue
- Review the value and practices of self-care in the context of hospice work
- Recognize self-care strategies that work for you

