



Volunteer Role Description Peer Bereavement Care Facilitator (virtual and telephone)

“When you cannot add days to life, add life to days.”

Hospice Toronto facilitates access to appropriate care and support for those living with a life-limiting illness and their caregivers when and where they need it, whoever they are, including post-death bereavement care. We achieve this through our culture of caring and discovery, which is fuelled by passionate, dedicated volunteers, imaginative partnerships, and a focus on research and innovation.

Purpose:

Peer Bereavement Care Facilitators offer companionship to people on their unique grief journey. Group-based and one to one support.

Essential Requirements:

- Lived experience of grieving the death of spouse/partner, parent, sibling, infant, child of any age or chosen family member or other close connection
- Excellent listening, interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to listen and support someone without trying to fix or give advice
- Empathetic, compassionate, mature, reliable, responsible
- Attentiveness and observation skills, particularly for virtual programming
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Committed to ensuring services are confidential, holistic, inclusive, and accessible
- Willingness to grow in self-awareness around judgment, unconscious bias and assumptions that may impact the volunteer / client service relationship
- Able to stay grounded in situations of heightened emotion, crisis, or emergency
- Completion of mandatory HPCO online education course and additional program-specific, Hospice Toronto training as required (certificate provided)
- Able to provide a clear Vulnerable Sector Police Reference Check

Responsibilities:

- Provide peer support, companionship, and information to bereaved individuals through one-on-one peer meetings (telephone or online)
- Plan and co-facilitate peer-led, mutual support bereavement groups which are small groups of 8-10 people who meet once a week for two hours for up to ten weeks (telephone or online)
- To uphold the client's right to dignity, respect, self-determination, and quality of life
- To adhere to Hospice Toronto's policies and procedures
- To advise Hospice Toronto staff and the client in a timely manner if unable to fulfill duties
- Ensure that you are in regular communication with staff, respond to requests for support in a timely manner, and make sure that necessary documentation (i.e.: monthly volunteer hours report) is submitted
- Complete all required training and participate in ongoing education and professional development
- Maintain safe boundaries, work within the scope of the volunteer role and commit to developing and maintaining ongoing self-care practices
- Report any concerns immediately to appropriate staff and provide adequate notice of changes in volunteer availability and status
- Volunteers will sign and comply with the policies, procedures, tasks, responsibilities, and practices of their assigned role.

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Limitations:

- Volunteers must follow the policies and procedures of Hospice Toronto and work within the scope of their volunteer role
- Peer support volunteers must not represent themselves as counsellors or therapists
- Volunteers spend the agreed upon amount of time providing peer support to bereaved service users and are not to develop personal relationships for the duration of the time they are matched or are facilitating a group
- Understanding the nature of peer support, and how shared experiences can create powerful connections (especially between people who have experienced a similar loss) volunteers are encouraged to speak with their supervisor about a desire to pursue a friendship once the client relationship has been completed

Key Relationships:

Client Services Coordinators, Manager of Volunteer Services

Supports for Success:

HPCO online education program, Hospice Palliative Care volunteer training and skills development, educational opportunities at Hospice Toronto and in the community, individual support & supervision, ongoing communication with and appreciation of volunteers, Volunteer Mutual Support gatherings.

Commitment:

3-5 hours per week for **one full year**. Onboarding and training are available online at any time. Ideally, volunteers visit/engage with their clients once a week on the same day and at the same time to ensure consistent, effective service. Arrangements must be made in advance for holidays so that suitable replacement can be provided to the family if requested.