



## Volunteer Role Description Hospice Care Companion (Virtual and/or In Person home visiting)

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

Hospice Toronto enables 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. We achieve this through our culture of caring and discovery, which is fueled by passionate, dedicated volunteers, imaginative partnerships, and a focus on research and innovation.

### Purpose:

Hospice Care Companions provide social, emotional, and practical support in the home, for people living with a life-limiting illness, their caregivers, families and friends.

### Essential Requirements:

- 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
- Ideally have **daytime availability Monday to Friday** to serve clients
- We are especially, but not exclusively, in need of volunteers who **speak more than one language** in addition to English, especially: Arabic, Bengali, Burmese (and related dialects), Cantonese, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Rohingya, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese.

### Responsibilities:

- To uphold the client's right to dignity, comfort, self-determination, and quality of life, and where appropriate, to provide client-directed advocacy
- 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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## **Duties:**

- As part of an inter-disciplinary team working with someone with a life-limiting illness, their caregivers, family and friends, hospice care companions provide emotional, social, and spiritual care and practical assistance (non-medical support)
- Serving the client and caregiver(s), volunteers may be asked to provide in person or virtual services such as:
  - companionship, caregiver respite, reading out loud, playing board games, doing arts and crafts, watching movies, assisting with writing, scrapbooking, story-telling and other legacy work, outings, walks, running errands or accompanying someone to the store, an appointment, religious/faith service etc.
  - practical tasks related to mobility, light meal preparation and household tasks
  - providing comfort measures such as assistance with eating, bed changing, personal hygiene, assists and transfers, mouth care, light massage
  - complementary therapies such as Reiki and Therapeutic Touch (if certified)
  - supporting other self-care routines such as meditation and relaxation.
- If consent is given by client, reviewing the chart for nursing updates or in-home logbook for any recent entries from the inter-disciplinary team at the beginning of each shift.
- **Entering a note in the Volunteer Portal after each visit** or calling the Client Services Coordinator to provide an update on how the client/caregiver is doing and how the overall match is going.

## **Limitations:**

- Volunteers must follow the policies and procedures of Hospice Toronto and work within the scope of their volunteer role
- Volunteers spend the agreed upon amount of time with the client/caregiver
- Volunteers may not administer medication (prescription or non-prescriptions) to hospice clients
- Volunteers may not perform medical procedures such as inserting or maintaining catheters, inhalers, or oxygen
- Volunteers may not drive clients in their vehicle, except under pre-arranged conditions and with the completed documentation on file

## **Key Relationships:**

Client Services Coordinators, Manager of Volunteer Services

## **Supports for Success:**

HPCO online education program, Hospice Palliative Care Core 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 a suitable replacement can be provided to the family if requested.