**Hospice Volunteers- Recruiting, Retaining, Rewarding**

Presented by the Hospice Foundation of America
Supported by a grant from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

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**Hospice...**

- Is a special form of medical care
- Is provided by a team of professionals and volunteers
- Addresses all symptoms of a disease
- Deals with the emotional, social, and spiritual impact of the disease
- Offers bereavement and counseling services to families

**For More Information:**

“Understanding Hospice”

- Available online at the Hospice Information Center at [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org)
Volunteers Are Vital

Hospice movement was started by volunteers

There are more than 460,000 hospice volunteers nationwide

Hospice Volunteers

“Through a compassionate connection with the dying person, their presence often becomes an important element in that person’s final journey—bearing witness to dying and death”

Becoming a Volunteer

60% of volunteers are moved by personal experience

Others are moved by stories of hospice patients or are inspired by other volunteers

Alex Silva, a Volunteer Coordinator

Started as a hospice volunteer

Hospice volunteers helped with his grandfather
What Do Hospice Volunteers Do?
- Provide emotional support and companionship
- Run errands and provide transportation
- Offer respite care for loved ones and caregivers

What Do Hospice Volunteers Do?
- Read books, write letters, play games and tell stories
- Play music or sing
- Help with light household tasks

What Do Hospice Volunteers Do?
- Prepare mailings and materials
- Help with computer and website
- Fundraising

Gail, a Volunteer in Maryland
- Maintaining the website
- Marketing
- Getting the message out
Bereavement Volunteers
Veteran Volunteers

Spiritual Care
Complimentary therapy

Hospice Volunteers

Pet Therapy
Craft Volunteers

Vigil Care

Education and Outreach
Telephone Volunteers

Students as Volunteers

High school and college students completing community service hours

Social work, nursing, and other health students from universities and technical schools

Administrative and clerical students

Juno, a Youth Volunteer

Celebrate birthdays
Share life stories

Benefits of Being a Hospice Volunteer:

- Boosts self-esteem
- Strengthens compassion
- Increases connections
- Reinforces values
- Adds knowledge and skills
- Benefits one’s career

Research by Kovacs and Black
A Successful Hospice Volunteer Program...

- Expands the range and quality of services
- Provides team members with more time
- Offers patients and families additional support
- Allows staff to focus on clinical patient care

Medicare Volunteer Regulations

- The hospice must maintain, document and provide volunteer orientation and training
- Volunteers must be used in day-to-day administrative and/or direct patient care roles
- The hospice must document and demonstrate viable and ongoing efforts to recruit and retain volunteers
- The hospice must document the cost savings achieved through the use of volunteers

A Successful Hospice Volunteer Program...

- Demonstrates that the hospice is committed to a variety of resources
- Provides cost savings
- Provides another advocate for hospice services in the community

Medicare Volunteer Regulations

Documentation must include:

- Identification of each position
- Work time spent
- Estimation of the dollar costs
**Medicare Volunteer Regulations**

Volunteers must provide services that equal 5% of the total patient care hours of all paid hospice employees and contract staff.

**Getting Started**

- Contact a local hospice program
  - [www.hospicedirectory.org](http://www.hospicedirectory.org)
- First point of contact is the volunteer manager
- The screening process usually starts with an application and interview

**Consult the Medicare C-O-Ps online at** [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov)

**For more info on the Medicare Hospice Benefit, visit** [www.cms.gov/center/hospice](http://www.cms.gov/center/hospice)

Juno, a Hospice Volunteer

Hospice is a rewarding experience for young volunteers.
When Screening Potential Volunteers, Consider:

- Capacity for empathy, sensitivity, and unconditional acceptance
- Skills, aptitudes, and motivations
- Degree of comfort with dying, death and loss

Volunteer Orientation and Training

- Most hospices design their own orientation programs
- Prepares volunteers for their roles and instills confidence
- Medicare regulations state hospice must maintain, document and provide training that is consistent with industry standards

When Screening Potential Volunteers, Consider:

- Willingness to complete orientation and training
- Time available to provide services
- Healthy adjustment to significant losses

Training Discussion Topics:

- History and philosophy of hospice care
- Regulations and policies
- Needs of patients and families
- Communication with the hospice team
- Ethical issues
- Patient safety and self-care
Specific Compliance Areas

- Health Insurance Privacy Policy and Portability Act (HIPPA)
- Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OHSA)
- Ongoing training is needed to maintain and improve volunteer’s competence

HFA Training Resources

- The Dying Process, available at www.hospicefoundation.org

HFA Training Resources

Hospice Information Center - free videos and programs at www.hospicefoundation.org/infocenter

Volunteer Retention

Key elements in retaining volunteers:

- A belief in the hospice mission
- An opportunity for personal or professional growth
- Being able to feel needed
- Feeling supported by the hospice staff
- Being able to share death experiences
Alex Silva, Volunteer Supervisor

- Supervision
- Communication
- Recognition
- And Appreciation

Volunteer Leadership

Hospice volunteer program most effective with strong leadership

- good organization
- communication and support
- ability to positively influence and motivate others

Volunteer Managers

Tasks include

- Recruiting and screening volunteers
- Educating, supervising, and evaluating volunteers
- Identifying patient and family needs
- Advocating for the integration of volunteers to the hospice team

Volunteer Managers

Tasks include

- Showing interest in the volunteer’s personal life
- Developing a Volunteer Advocacy Board
- Encouraging ongoing retention
- Developing ongoing evaluation strategies
Volunteer Files Should Include:

- Information about the volunteer
- Copies of driver’s license or other identification
- Documents related to the volunteer assignment
- Signed copy of confidentiality statement

Volunteer Files Should Include:

- Assessment forms
- Annual evaluation and competency forms
- A minor volunteer permission form for those under 18
- Any other forms required by state law

Volunteer Files Should Include:

- Proof of ongoing recruitment and retention activities
- Proof that 5% standard required by Medicare is being met
- Proof of ongoing service trainings

Develop and Expand Your Volunteer Program

- Assess the needs of the hospice program
- Consider requests and match volunteers accordingly
- Develop recruitment tools
Where to Recruit in the Community

**Call leaders in community organizations**

**Send brochures with a letter, and follow up with a phone call**

**Place posters at community agencies or local businesses**

Where to Recruit in the Community

**Utilize internet volunteer services like www.volunteersmatch.org or www.voa.org**

**Contact media outlets**

**Provide info to support groups**

Where to Recruit in the Community

**One-on-one interaction is the best way to generate interest**

**Personal Stories have impact**

**Participate in community fairs and events**

Where to Recruit in the Community

**To reach older adults:**
- [www.seniорcorps.gov](http://www.seniорcorps.gov)
- [www.volunteer.aarp.org](http://www.volunteer.aarp.org)

**To reach students:**
- High school and college career fairs and field placement offices
- Vocational and professional schools
- Sororities and Fraternities

Facebook Causes at [www.facebook.com/causes](http://www.facebook.com/causes)
Assigning Volunteers

Have a team member contact the volunteer before the 1st visit

Volunteer preferences for serving

Provide extra support after a first visit or after attendance at a death

Offer an opportunity for the volunteer to “debrief”

Team Member and Volunteer Communication

Communication between team members and volunteer coordinators is crucial

Share stories of volunteers and patients

Team requests for volunteers should be processed quickly

Volunteer coordinator can facilitate ongoing communication

Use team meetings to:

- Inform team about volunteer availability
- Promote volunteer program
- Address concerns
Team Member and Volunteer Communication

- Identifying and referring volunteer requests
- Updating volunteers on patient’s condition
- Accompanying volunteers to their first visit
- Help the patient and family understand the volunteer’s role

Supervising and Managing Volunteers

- Review job description and performance
- Give clear instructions about tasks
- Inform volunteers of their decision making power

Team Member and Volunteer Communication

- Develop a plan of care for volunteers
- Review volunteer notes
- Provide volunteers with timely feedback

Supervising and Managing Volunteers

- Check in
- Make resources available
- Show gratitude
Managing Volunteers

Challenges

• Not timely with notes or documents
• No communication with team or leader
• Inappropriate with patients or families
• Overly involved or crosses boundaries

Consider circumstances before taking action

• was there miscommunication about assignment?
• was something missed during orientation?
• is this an especially challenging situation?
• is there disconnection with the team?

Always address concerns in a timely and appropriate manner

Evaluation

Assessing volunteers is an important way of maintaining quality

Evaluations should be upbeat and positive unless there is cause for concern

Recognition and support are important

Encourage volunteers to utilize program resources
**Recognition**

- Schedule a formal event
- Nominate volunteers for national and local recognition
- Recognize the volunteer’s birthday or anniversary
- Invite volunteers to staff and employee events
- Create an annual program to award volunteers

**Hospices across the US rely on volunteers**

- Personally gratifying
- Intellectually stimulating
- Emotionally meaningful

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**Elaine, a Hospice Volunteer**

“I know I have made a difference, at least in one person’s life at this point. And I know it’s toward the end of their life but that makes it all the more important”
Hospice Volunteers- Recruiting, retaining, rewarding was developed by:

Robin Fiorelli, LCSW, Senior Director of Bereavement and Volunteer Services for VITAS Healthcare Corporation

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Amy Tucci, President and CEO, Hospice Foundation of America

Lindsey Currin, Administrative Assistant, Hospice Foundation of America

Additional programs and resources on hospice, end-of-life care, and grief at www.hospicefoundation.org

Programs are free and can be used for hospice volunteer training

Resources:

Hospice Foundation of America
  - www.hospicefoundation.org
  - www.hospicedirectory.org
  - www.hospicefoundation.org/infocenter

AARP
  - www.volunteer.aarp.org

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
  - www.cms.gov
  - www.medicare.gov

Facebook
  - www.facebook.com/cause

Growth House
  - www.growthhouse.org

This program is provided through the support of a grant from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to support hospice and end-of-life care outreach and education. CMS funds of $371,000 with HFA in-kind services of $5,710 are funding a variety of outreach and educational programs, including this audio webinar.
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