

Administrative Manual

Volunteer Visitation Program

Policy & Procedure



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What is policy?

A Principle in which a position is taken

A plan of action which states specific steps and procedures

A rule that states a boundary – applicable to everyone in the program

A rule that implies consequences if broken

“The matter of policy development for volunteer services has become urgent. The formula is quite simple: the greater the degree of responsibility of volunteer work itself, the greater the need for guidelines to ensure safety; the greater the need for policies.” Graff, *Management of Volunteer Services in Canada*, 1999.



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TITLE: Diversity

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Cumberland Hospice Society is committed to establishing a diverse network of volunteers to serve the diverse groups of individuals that make up our beautiful county.

POLICY

1. Cumberland Hospice Society is committed to working with a diverse network of individuals to provide quality Palliative Care for our patients and families of Cumberland County.
2. Cumberland Volunteer Visitation Program strives to reflect its value of diversity in the program.
3. All individuals associated with Cumberland Hospice Society are expected to show non-discriminatory practise and behaviour.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will ensure that:
 - a. All recruits are welcomed into a respectful environment.
 - b. All volunteers are regularly monitored to identify and remove any discriminatory practices/behaviours to ensure a sound program of equality.
 - c. All job descriptions within the program include a statement specific to the value of diversity in its recruitment process.
 - d. All recruits are made aware of their right to receive reasonable accommodation in order to carry out their duties.
 - e. Efforts are made to develop initiatives within the program to attract and retain priority populations.
2. Review of the program will be conducted annually to identify areas needing improvement or barriers needing to be removed in order to appeal to diverse populations.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Diversity in Employment



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TITLE: Respectful Environment

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Cumberland Hospice Society is committed to nurturing a community of equality, and does not tolerate harassment or discrimination from or against a person/persons associated with the society. Respect is a value that underlies the interactions between all staff and patients.

POLICY

1. Cumberland Hospice Society is committed to fostering a respectful environment that values diversity and equality.
2. All staff and patients are expected to share responsibility in promoting a respectful environment.
3. This policy does not deny an individual's right to pursue a complaint or file a grievance, nor is it meant to discourage an individual from doing so.
4. In accordance with Workplace rights set out under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, every paid/unpaid staff has the right to be free from harassment and discrimination on the following protected grounds:
 - Age
 - Race
 - Colour
 - Religion
 - Creed
 - Sex (includes pregnancy)
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Gender Identity
 - Gender Expression
 - Individual's Association With Another individual or Class of Individuals Having Characteristics of One or More of the Protected Grounds
 - Physical Disability
 - Mental Disability
 - An Irrational Fear of Contracting an Illness or Disease
 - Ethnic, National or Aboriginal Origin
 - Family Status
 - Marital Status
 - Source of Income
 - Political Belief, Affiliation or Activity
5. All staff have the right to bring forward allegations of disrespectful or offensive behaviour.
 - a. Staff are expected to report any instances of offensive or disrespectful behaviour they witness while on placement.
 - b. Complaints are expected to be made as soon as reasonably possible.

- c. Complaints are to be directed to the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program.
- d. All complaints are taken seriously. Each is addressed individually and within a timely manner. Discipline for failing to maintain a respectful environment will be given at the discretion of the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program.
- 6. Complaints must be made in good faith. A complaint that is found to be frivolous or malicious in nature and/or is knowingly false will result in termination of the individual's role within Cumberland Hospice.
- 7. This policy does not deny the Cumberland Hospice Society the right to take any immediate action deemed necessary to ensure a safe, non-discriminatory, and respectful environment.
- 8. All staff, whether paid or unpaid, are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of all parties involved in any incident of disrespectful or offensive behaviour.

PROCEDURE

- 1. Upon the decision to engage an applicant as a volunteer, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Inform the individual of the expectation to promote and maintain a respectful environment.
 - b. Ensure the individual is aware that there is a "zero tolerance" policy for discriminatory and disrespectful behaviour.
 - c. Make the individual aware of the steps to take should they witness a discriminatory or disrespectful offence or become subject to one themselves.
- 2. When faced with offensive or disrespectful behaviour:
 - a. If appropriate, the complainant will attempt a conversation with the respondent to calmly inform them of the impact of their behaviour and asks that it not be repeated.
 - b. The complainant must document a detailed recollection of the offensive behaviour and the attempt made to resolve the situation.
 - c. The complainant should seek advice from the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program, should the offensive behaviour continue.
 - d. Together, the complainant and the Supervisor, will make an attempt to resolve the matter through advice or mediation.
 - e. If advice and mediation are unsuccessful, alternative steps will be discussed in consultation with the Coordinator or Cumberland Hospice, with the health, safety and well-being of all individuals involved being of utmost importance.
- 3. Documentation of discriminatory or disrespectful offences is as follows:
 - a. If a complaint is unfounded, no documentation will be made on either the complainant or respondent's confidential volunteer file.
 - b. If a complainant's intentions were found to be malicious or frivolous, documentation of the resulting discipline will be retained on the complainant's confidential volunteer file.
 - c. If a complaint is founded, documentation of the resulting discipline will be retained on the respondent's confidential volunteer file.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Respectful Workplace

Nova Scotia Human Rights Act



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TITLE: Volunteer Recordkeeping

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Cumberland Hospice holds confidentiality with the highest regard. All volunteer information gathered is necessary to ensure a safe and accountable Volunteer Visitation Program. This personal information is securely maintained.

POLICY

1. Information that is necessary for Cumberland Hospice to obtain during the course of the volunteer's affiliation with the Visitation Program will be securely held and remain confidential.
2. Documents will be secured in a locked cabinet in the Hospice Office, while online information will be held in a secured online database.
3. Only authorized staff will have access to the confidential information.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will ensure that all personal information pertaining to volunteers are securely filed in the appropriate areas.
2. Volunteers may access their files by contacting the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program. The file may be viewed in the presence of the Supervisor but cannot be removed from the Hospice Office.

REFERENCES

Cumberland Health Authority, Department Specific/Clinical Policy, Volunteer Recordkeeping



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TITLE: Confidentiality

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Hospice Visitation Volunteers have an ethical and professional obligation to maintain confidentiality of any and all information gathered through the course of a placement and to disclose this information only as required for their duties. It is the right of every individual within this program to have their information held in confidence, even after death.

POLICY

1. All information regarding placement, patients, patient support networks, and other staff are considered confidential. It is expected that volunteers will comply with this at all times.
2. Volunteers are not permitted to take pictures or videos of a patient or patients' family with their own device.
3. Failure to maintain confidentiality can result in disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the program.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will review the Confidentiality Policy and Procedures with successful applicants prior to receiving placement.
2. Successful applicants will sign an official Pledge of Confidentiality prior to receiving placement. (See Appendix A).
3. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will revisit the Confidentiality Policy with all volunteers annually.
4. Should a volunteer breach confidentiality, they are expected to inform the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program as soon as possible.
5. If a volunteer is found to have breached confidentiality, corrective action will take place according to *Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program, Policy and Procedures Corrective Action Policy*.
6. Should a breach of confidentiality be suspected, it is essential that the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program be informed as soon as possible.

REFERENCE

Nova Scotia Health Authority Pledge of Confidentiality



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TITLE: Criminal Record Check

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Criminal Record Checks serve as one of the security measures taken by Cumberland Hospice to protect patients, families, staff, and volunteers within the program.

POLICY

1. A Criminal Record Check (CRC), including the Vulnerable Sector Search (VSS), is a required component of the selection criteria for all new volunteers within this program.
2. Cumberland Hospice undertakes comprehensive screening of all successful applicants no matter their age, sex, ethnicity, employment status or level of education.
3. Cumberland Hospice will provide a successful applicant with a letter of request for the completion of a Criminal Record Check for the purpose of volunteering within Cumberland Hospice. (See Appendix B)
4. It is solely the responsibility of the successful applicant to follow through with the completion of the Criminal Record Check, and ensure it has been received by the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program.
5. Cumberland Hospice requires all successful applicants to provide a recent (completed within 6 months) Criminal Record Check as a pre-requisite prior to placement within the program.
6. All information obtained through the Criminal Record Check is for the sole purpose of decision-making as it pertains to a volunteer placement within the program. All information will be kept confidential.
7. Individuals with a criminal record will not necessarily be withheld a placement based solely on information obtained through the Criminal Record Check.
8. The Criminal Record Check results are securely held within the individual's confidential volunteer file.
9. Should an individual, while volunteering within the program, be charged with any criminal offense, he/she must inform the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program within a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, a recent criminal offense may affect the individual's ability to follow through with a volunteer placement within the program. The course of action to be determined will be at the discretion of the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation and Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice.

PROCEDURE

1. Upon the decision to engage an applicant as a volunteer, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Inform the individual of the requirement for the completion of a Criminal Record Check.
 - b. Ensure the individual is aware that placement as a volunteer is contingent on the results of the Criminal Record Check.
 - c. Advise the individual that all information obtained from a Criminal Record Check is confidential, whether the individual receives a placement or is declined a volunteer position.
 - d. Present the individual with a letter from Cumberland Hospice requesting a recent (within 6 months) Criminal Record Check to be completed.
 - e. Advise the individual of their responsibility to arrange to have the Criminal Record Check completed by the proper authorities, and returned to the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program within a timely manner.
 - f. Advise the individual that they have an obligation to disclose if they are charged with a criminal act during the time of placement as a volunteer, and that failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
2. If a Criminal Record Check discloses a criminal record:
 - a. Both the applicant and supervisor can meet to discuss the results of the Criminal Record Check and the possible impact on volunteer placement within the program.
 - b. The Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation, along with the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice will determine if information of a criminal record obtained, warrants the immediate dismissal of the application of that individual or if another cautious approach to placement is appropriate.
 - c. The applicant may voluntarily withdraw their application.
3. In the event that an applicant with a criminal record is allowed to receive a volunteer placement within the program, it is to be acknowledged that the decision to do so was at the discretion of Cumberland Hospice and the following factors were considered:
 - a. The nature of the criminal act.
 - b. The position and respective duties for which the applicant is considered.
 - c. The date in which the criminal act was committed.
 - d. Circumstances surrounding the conviction as described by the applicant (when appropriate).
 - e. The quality of references for that individual.
 - f. Rehabilitative efforts made by the applicant (when appropriate).
 - g. The ability to continue to provide a safe and secure environment for patients, families, staff, and other volunteers within the program.
4. Cumberland Hospice will ensure that all personal information, including Criminal Record Checks will be maintained in the confidential volunteer's file.
5. If an existing Volunteer is charged with a Criminal Offense:
 - a. The volunteer will notify the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program in confidence, and provide details of the nature of the charge.
 - b. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will notify the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice of the offense. Together, they will determine whether the charge has potential to jeopardize safety, negatively impact operations, or affect confidence of the public in Cumberland Hospice.

- c. Where Cumberland Hospice determines the potential for negative impact, the volunteer may be temporarily or permanently dismissed from all duties within the volunteer program.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Criminal Records Check

Volunteers in Palliative Care Initiative, Advocacy Piece



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TITLE: Dress Standards

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Cumberland Hospice Society takes pride in its work and appearance. Maintaining a professional appearance, encourages trust and confidence in our individual volunteers, in our programs, and in our Society as a whole. Clothing and accessories considered appropriate will not impede safety nor cause distress for clients, families or fellow volunteers.

POLICY

1. All Hospice Visitation Volunteers are required to maintain standards of dress, conduct, and hygiene that is reflective of a professional appearance in a public service environment.
2. Volunteers must wear official Hospice Volunteer Identification at all times when with a client. Identification must be visibly displayed between the waist and shoulder.
3. Cumberland Hospice recognizes and respects cultural diversity and social inclusion. Accommodation for particular dress related to religious and cultural beliefs and/or practices is approved as long as the guiding principles of this policy are adhered and clothing is deemed safe for the activity in which the volunteer is engaged.
4. All volunteers should ensure that footwear is safe, clean, and in good repair. Volunteers should not be barefoot at any time while engaged in placement. It is highly recommended that volunteers carry a change of footwear with them to wear inside a client's personal residence when appropriate.
5. All volunteers should style hair in such a way that it does not come into contact with the client and does not obscure vision.
6. Volunteers must ensure that loose clothing and jewellery do not impede client care or safety.
7. All visible body piercings must be kept clean.
8. Tattoos that, within reason, would be considered offensive, must be covered.
9. Fingernails must be kept clean.
10. Volunteers must refrain from the use of scented items, including but not limited to, after shave, perfumes, scented oils and cologne, prior to visiting a client. Volunteers must be aware that second hand smoke, tobacco and cannabis would be considered "scented" items.

PROCEDURE

1. Upon the decision to engage an applicant as a volunteer, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Provide orientation for Hospice Volunteers to the dress standards of the program and monitor for compliance.
 - b. Address complaints and inappropriate standards of dress or hygiene in an appropriate and timely manner with the individual of interest.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Dress Standards

Nova Scotia Health Authority Policy and Procedures, Scent Awareness



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TITLE: Corrective Action for Patients

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: The safety and well-being of our staff and patients are one of the highest priorities of Cumberland Hospice Society. Inappropriate conduct must be identified and addressed so that safety and well-being are maintained. The Society does recognize an individual's attempt to correct behaviour, but under no circumstance is willing to compromise safety in order to allow the individual to do so.

POLICY

1. In the event of inappropriate conduct, violation of policies, or negligence, Cumberland Hospice Society reserves the right to terminate Volunteer Visitation Services for that individual.
2. The decision regarding what constitutes inappropriate conduct and which action should be taken to correct it, is at the discretion of the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation in consultation with the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice Society.
3. When appropriate, Cumberland Hospice will make every effort to educate and increase awareness regarding appropriate conduct expectations, prior to further corrective action.
4. In each case of inappropriate conduct, consideration will be given to whether there is a requirement to report conduct to an alternative organization for investigation or disciplinary action.

PROCEDURE

1. Upon the assessment of a patient for the program, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Ensure the individual has read and signed the Patient & Volunteer Agreement (Appendix C).
 - b. Inform the individual of what constitutes inappropriate conduct.
 - c. Ensure the individual is aware that there is a "zero tolerance" policy for inappropriate conduct that compromises the safety and well-being of staff, and themselves.
2. Upon receiving a report of inappropriate conduct, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program must:
 - a. Gather information in a timely manner and with as much confidentiality as possible.
 - b. Inform the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice of the incident in a timely manner.
 - c. Provide the individual addressed in the report with an opportunity to explain their actions, and provide clarity of expected conduct within their role.

- d. Decide, in consultation with the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice, what course of corrective action is needed.
- e. Discuss with the individual addressed in the report, the impact of their inappropriate conduct and the corrective action that has been determined.
- f. Document the incident and the steps taken to address it in the patient's file.
- g. Inform the referral source of the incident and corrective action taken.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Corrective Action



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TITLE: Pre-Placement Screening Assessment

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: The health and safety of our patients and volunteers are one of the highest priorities. We believe that a Pre-Placement Screening assessment can help to increase safety awareness and limit the risks of harm.

POLICY

1. A Pre-Placement Screening Assessment must be completed prior to approval for the Volunteer Visitation Program.
2. All patients and/or caregivers must honestly answer each question to the best of their ability.
3. If a residence or environment is determined by the Supervisor to be unsafe at any point before or during a placement, Hospice Volunteer Visitation services will be withdrawn from that individual while in that setting.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will conduct the Pre-Placement Screening Assessment with the patient and/or caregiver during the initial assessment for the program. (Appendix D).
2. If a residence/environment is determined to be unsafe, the Supervisor will inform the individual of the concerns and allow the opportunity for the individual to make adjustments. A second assessment can then take place.
3. If at any point, a volunteer feels unsafe or has concerns about a patient or environment that led to a sense of insecurity, the volunteer should inform the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Services as soon as possible, and appropriate action be taken.
4. If Hospice Volunteer Visitation Services are withdrawn or denied for a patient, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will inform the patient and source of referral within a timely manner.
5. Volunteers are advised to be more aware of their surroundings and given some instruction on how to monitor for and avoid potentially dangerous encounters while on placements within the community. Volunteers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with safety recommendations during each placement. (Appendix E)

REFERENCES

Hospice Colchester East Hants, Pre-Visit Risk Screening Tool

Hospice Colchester East Hants, Safety Working In The Community



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TITLE: Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Volunteer job description and recruitment are developed to align with the values, mission and vision of Cumberland Hospice. A standardized approach to volunteer recruitment involves an interview process, reference check, Criminal Record screening, as well as imparting a sufficient amount of information regarding the role of visitation volunteers in the program. The selection of volunteers for placement will be based on screening measures, the needs of patients, and the interests and needs of the volunteers.

POLICY

1. All volunteers will undergo a strict assessment process including an application, in person interview, Criminal Record Check, reference check, as well as observation during in-person training. This process is standard for every individual.
2. Cumberland Hospice values diversity and does not discriminate on the basis of any of the characteristics protected under the Human Rights Legislation.

PROCEDURE

1. Recruitment for volunteers for the visitation program will be advertised through multiple avenues including, but not limited to: public flyers, newspaper advertisements, community presentations, social media and word of mouth. Recruitment methods will be revised and revisited accordingly.
2. Interested individuals will complete an application.
3. Applications will be received and screened by the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program. Screening criteria will be applied to all applicants equally.
4. Selected applicants will be scheduled for an in-person interview and given letter(s) requesting a Criminal Record Check, and parental consent, if appropriate. (Appendix F)
5. If screening is negative to this point, the Supervisor will continue with the screening process and check references.
6. When screening is complete and the individual has screened negative, an invitation to training will be offered to the individual. If an individual has screened positive, their future involvement within the program will be discussed between the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program and the Hospice Coordinator.

7. As a part of the screening process, individuals will be given a volunteer job description and be advised of their expectations and roles as a Visitation Volunteer. This is to ensure that a prospective volunteer has sufficient information to screen themselves out of this role prior to an investment in training.
8. Applicants will then undergo training and be observed for an assessment of personality traits and skill sets.
9. Trained volunteers will receive placement based on current need with patients, and appropriate compatibility with patients.

REFERENCES

Cumberland Hospice Mission, Vision & Values

Nova Scotia Health Authority, Policy and Procedure, Volunteer Recruitment, Screening, and Selection.

Human Rights Legislation



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TITLE: Volunteer Training

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Volunteer training is essential to ensure a quality performance within the role of a visitation volunteer. In order to ensure a thorough, detailed, yet flexible training component to the requirement for this role, Cumberland Hospice has adopted a partial online/partial in-person training approach.

POLICY

1. The Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program requires that all volunteers that provide direct service to patients and/or families, must complete training as determined by the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program.
2. Cumberland Hospice provides a complete and comprehensive training program to all volunteers at no cost to the individual.
3. The training modules include, but are not limited to such topics as:
 - a. Developing and implementing good communication skills
 - b. How to have difficult conversations
 - c. Bedside skills
 - d. How to cope with loss & bereavement
 - e. Pain
 - f. Spirituality/Psychosocial issues

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation is responsible to:
 - a. Equip each volunteer with an account, username, and password within volunteer software so that training material can be accessed.
 - b. Secure facility and resources to hold in-person training sessions.
 - c. Inform all volunteers of the date and time of the in-person training sessions.
 - d. Oversee and facilitate in-person training sessions.
2. Volunteers must:
 - a. Attend all mandatory in person training sessions.
 - b. Provide proof of completion of online training modules.

REFERENCES

Volunteers In Palliative Care Initiative, Training, pages 67-68



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TITLE: Volunteer Orientation

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Volunteer Orientation is necessary to ensure individuals have an understanding of their role and are equipped to deal with situations that may arise while on placement. Volunteer Orientation provides awareness, support, and knowledge to the volunteer.

POLICY

1. Cumberland Hospice provides orientation for all Visitation Volunteers.
2. Orientation includes:
 - a. An overview of the Mission, Values and Vision, policies and procedures, organizational structure, job description and expectations.
 - b. An opportunity to ask questions and address concerns.
 - c. Video or personal tours of Hospital and local LTC facilities.
 - d. A review of safe work practices, Public Health requirements, and emergency protocols.
 - e. A review of volunteer software tool and the requirements of inputting information.
3. Orientation is revisited and revised frequently in order to ensure volunteers are equipped sufficiently for their role.

PROCEDURE

1. Orientation is an ongoing process of supporting volunteers to understand their responsibility and perform their role effectively. It begins upon the acceptance of a volunteer application and follows through to a mentorship program in which the volunteer receives placement under the direct care of a supervisor.
2. Volunteers must:
 - a. Attend all mandatory in person training modules.
 - b. Provide proof of completion of online training modules.
3. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program must:
 - a. Compile resources for orientation.
 - b. Ensure that volunteers have access to all orientation material.

- c. Provide answers to any questions that may be posed by volunteers and bring awareness to any concerns that may be raised.
- d. Ensure that volunteers are aware of how to access support.

REFERENCES

Nova Scotia Health Authority, Policy and Procedure, General Orientation and Onboarding



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TITLE: Volunteer Supervision

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Proper supervision provides volunteers with confidence, guidance, direction, support and discipline as needed to be the most effective in their role.

POLICY

1. All Visitation Volunteers will be assigned a supervisor. As the program develops it may be possible that experienced, veteran volunteers will be asked to take on a supervisory role for novice volunteers within the program.

PROCEDURE

1. Visitation Volunteers agree to follow the direction of their supervisor.
2. Supervisors will support the development of an open dialogue between themselves and volunteers.
3. Volunteers have the right to address concerns with their supervisors.
4. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will regularly monitor the work of volunteers and provide an annual evaluation of their performance.
5. If a situation arises in which a volunteer undergoes correction action, the supervisor will serve as an encourager and will monitor the improvement(s) made in the required areas.

REFERENCES

Cumberland Health Authority, Department Specific/Clinical Policy, Volunteer Supervision



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TITLE: Vulnerability Amongst Volunteers

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: It is important to recognize areas of personal vulnerability before engaging in volunteer work within an organization. By doing so, we create a framework in which the program operates, ensuring that care given is unhindered, unbiased, non-personal and non-judgemental.

POLICY

1. The Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program requires that any individual who has experienced a significant loss of a loved one, refrain from volunteering during their time of grieving.
2. The Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program requires that a volunteer disclose any factors of personal vulnerability that may, whether directly or indirectly, impact the care given to a patient or care given within a certain environment. Such factors include, but are not limited to:
 - a. A diagnosis of a life-threatening illness for oneself or loved one.
 - b. An unsettled grievance with a healthcare professional or healthcare facility.
 - c. Significant socioeconomic crisis (i.e., Loss of marriage, loss of job).
 - d. History of significant mental health illness.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation is responsible to ensure that all volunteers are given ample opportunity to disclose any factors of personal vulnerability, prior to starting a placement.
2. The decision of what factors will preclude individuals from participating in the Volunteer Visitation Program will be at the discretion of the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program in conjunction with the Hospice Coordinator.



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TITLE: Volunteer Expectations & Limitations

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Expectations and limitations aid to clearly define the role of a volunteer and the expectations of the program.

POLICY

1. A Hospice Visitation Volunteer is expected to:
 - a. Provide care and support to patients and families of individuals living with a life-threatening illness.
 - b. Complete a Palliative Care training course.
 - c. Follow home safety guidelines.
 - d. Independently schedule visits with patients, once an initial placement has commenced.
 - e. Be punctual.
 - f. Document all visits with patients.
 - g. Report any issues, unsafe conditions or concerns, to the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation within a timely manner.
 - h. Comply with Public Health Policies, Procedures and Orders.
 - i. Regularly review the volunteer experience with the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation.
2. A Hospice Visitation Volunteer is **not** permitted to:
 - a. Give medications or other therapies.
 - b. Offer advice regarding medical, financial, spiritual, family or legal issues.
 - c. Provide personal care.
 - d. Transport patient or family members within a vehicle.
 - e. Discuss confidential patient information with anyone outside of the patient's care team.
 - f. Act as a replacement for paid professional workers.
 - g. Accept gifts or compensation.
 - h. Lift or physical feed patients.
 - i. Conduct banking on behalf of the individual or family.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation is responsible to:

- a. Educate volunteers and patients of expectations and limitations regarding the volunteer position.
- b. Enforce corrective action for situations in which limitations have not been adhered.

REFERENCES

Nova Scotia Health Authority, Palliative Care, Volunteer Position Description.

Nova Scotia Health Authority, Hospice Palliative Care Volunteers.



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TITLE: Volunteer Liability

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Every organization and every volunteer have legal responsibilities and duties. Failure to meet these responsibilities and duties may result in liability for damages or injuries incurred.

POLICY

1. Appropriate insurance is in place for volunteers of the Cumberland Hospice Society who are undertaking activities on the organization's behalf.
2. There is no guarantee that coverage will be applicable or sufficient in any situation in which damage or injury has resulted.
3. Cumberland Hospice Society will not be held liable for any costs associated with damages or injuries occurred that are not deemed appropriate for insurance coverage.

PROCEDURE

1. In the event of patient injury, the volunteer will:
 - a. Contact the appropriate Emergency Service, as deemed necessary.
 - b. Contact the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation, as soon as possible to relay the incident.
 - c. Document the incident in reports.
2. In the event of patient injury, the Cumberland Hospice Insurance policy would respond if there was negligence on the behalf of the volunteer pending certain criteria.
3. In the event of volunteer injury, the volunteer will:
 - a. Contact the appropriate Emergency Service, as deemed necessary.
 - b. Contact the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation, as soon as possible to relay the incident.
 - c. Document the incident in reports.
4. In the event of volunteer injury, the Cumberland Hospice Society insurance policy will provide limited compensation if the Cumberland Hospice Association is found to be liable and there is no other recourse for benefits. Injury must be within the policy period.
5. Volunteers are encouraged to seek consult with their own insurance carrier for further information.

REFERENCES

Cumberland Health Authority, Department Specific/Clinical Policy, Volunteer



Administrative Manual

Volunteer Visitation Program

Policy & Procedure

TITLE: Volunteer Evaluation & Recognition

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: Individuals who give freely of themselves to help others, deserve recognition of their gracious act. It is the responsibility of an organization to provide recognition as well as an evaluation of the work being performed under the organization's umbrella in order to achieve quality assurance.

POLICY

1. Cumberland Hospice will evaluate the performance of each volunteer on an annual basis.
2. Volunteers will receive an evaluation of their performance. This will provide:
 - a. Recognition of their contribution to Cumberland Hospice Palliative Care.
 - b. Communication of new assignments/directions of the Visitation Program.
3. Cumberland Hospice will hold an annual appreciation event for Visitation Volunteers.
4. Volunteers will be encouraged to share appropriate input into the Visitation Program, and will receive access to educational opportunities as available within the program.

PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Provide ongoing support for volunteers.
 - b. Maintain a database of volunteers.
 - c. Regularly update volunteers on educational opportunities and volunteer opportunities available within the Cumberland Hospice Visitation Program.
 - d. Establish an annual recognition event for visitation volunteers.
 - e. Provide an annual evaluation of each volunteer.

REFERENCES

Volunteers in Palliative Care Initiative, page 75



Administrative Manual

Volunteer Visitation Program

Policy & Procedure

TITLE: Corrective Action

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: The safety and well-being of our staff and patients are one of the highest priorities of Cumberland Hospice Society. Inappropriate conduct must be identified and addressed so that safety and well-being are maintained. The Society does recognize an individual's attempt to correct behaviour, but under no circumstance is willing to compromise safety in order to allow the individual to do so.

POLICY

1. In the event of inappropriate conduct, violation of policies, or negligence, Cumberland Hospice Society will take the necessary appropriate corrective approach to amend the offense and deter similar offences from occurring in the future.
2. Inappropriate conduct also includes off duty conduct that negatively impacts the individual's perception and/or ability to perform their responsibilities while on placement, or negatively impacts the reputation of Cumberland Hospice Society.
3. The decision regarding what constitutes inappropriate conduct and which action should be taken to correct it, is at the discretion of the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation in consultation with the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice Society.
4. When appropriate, Cumberland Hospice will make every effort to educate and increase awareness regarding appropriate conduct expectations, prior to further corrective action.
5. In each case of inappropriate conduct, consideration will be given to whether there is a requirement to report conduct to an alternative organization for investigation or disciplinary action.

PROCEDURE

1. Upon the decision to engage an applicant as a volunteer, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program will:
 - a. Inform the individual of what constitutes inappropriate conduct.
 - b. Ensure the individual is aware that there is a "zero tolerance" policy for inappropriate conduct that compromises the safety and well-being of staff, patients and themselves.
 - c. Make the individual aware of the steps to take should they witness inappropriate conduct of fellow staff members or patients that is believed to have the means to jeopardize the safety and well being of that individual or others.

2. Upon receiving a report of inappropriate conduct, the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program must:
 - a. Gather information in a timely manner and with as much confidentiality as possible.
 - b. Inform the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice of the incident in a timely manner.
 - c. Provide the individual addressed in the report with an opportunity to explain their actions, and provide clarity of expected conduct within their role.
 - d. Decide, in consultation with the Coordinator of Cumberland Hospice, what course of corrective action is needed.
 - e. Discuss with the individual addressed in the report, the impact of their inappropriate conduct and the corrective action that has been determined.
 - f. Document the incident and the steps taken to address it in the individual's confidential volunteer file.

REFERENCES

Capital Health Policy and Procedures, Corrective Action



Administrative Manual

Volunteer Visitation Program

Policy & Procedure

TITLE: Volunteer Dismissal

DATE ISSUED: June 2022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: In an instance in which a volunteer's performance is deemed as unacceptable, and it is found to be in the best interest of the visitation program, a volunteer may be dismissed. Such an action would be done to ensure safety and the integrity of the organization. Cumberland Hospice endorses the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (CCVI). This code clearly identifies the values of volunteer involvement, and also provides a framework for decision-making within organizations regarding the role of volunteers.

POLICY

1. Volunteers are expected to carry out their role in a mature, professional, and courteous manner. Volunteers are expected to uphold the Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation, Respectful Environment Policy.
2. Dismissal of a volunteer will happen at the discretion of the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation and Hospice Coordinator, and only after all other corrective action options have been considered.

PROCEDURE

1. Prior to a dismissal, the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation and the Hospice Coordinator will meet to discuss the situation and alternative corrective action that can be taken.
2. The Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation will draft and sign a letter of dismissal that will then be delivered to the volunteer informing them of their dismissal from the program.
3. A copy of the letter of dismissal will remain securely stored in the volunteer's file.
4. Upon dismissal, a volunteer is required to return ID as well as any other Hospice related items to the Supervisor.
5. Upon dismissal, a volunteer's access to volunteer software will be denied.
6. The Supervisor will document the incident that led to the dismissal as well as the course of action taken since and how that has been received.
7. Re-admission into the program, even after a lengthy interval, will be at the discretion of the Supervisor.

REFERENCES

Cumberland Health Authority, Department Specific/Clinical Policy, Volunteer Dismissal

Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (CCVI)

Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation, Respectful Environment Policy.



APPENDIX A

CUMBERLAND HOSPICE

VOLUNTEER VISITATION

PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I pledge to keep confidential any information obtained during my placement(s) with Cumberland Hospice. I understand that confidential information includes, but is not limited to information regarding:

- a. Patients (names, location, health information, family dynamics, etc.)
- b. Cumberland Hospice staff and other associates (disciplinary action, employee records, etc.)
- c. Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Information (memos, volunteer opportunities, reviews, etc.)

I agree that I have read, understand and comply with Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Policy on Confidentiality. As well, I understand and agree that:

- a. I will collect, use and disclose only the minimum amount of confidential information, and only as required for my role or as required by law. I will only communicate confidential information to authorized personnel within Cumberland Hospice.
- b. I am responsible for protecting my passwords to electronic information systems and I agree to not share my passwords with anyone.
- c. I will not alter, copy or destroy confidential information.
- d. I understand that photo and video taking is strictly prohibited.

I understand that failure to carry out my responsibilities in this agreement will result in disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal from the program.

I understand that by signing this agreement, I agree to keep all confidential information gathered through the course of my placement(s). I understand that this agreement is binding from the date below, even if I cease to have an association with Cumberland Hospice.

Name of Volunteer (Please Print)

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Witness



APPENDIX B

CUMBERLAND HOSPICE

VOLUNTEER VISITATION

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK REQUEST

Date:

Re: Request for Police Record Check

Applicant Name: _____

The Cumberland Hospice and Palliative Care Society requires the above applicant to provide a current Criminal Record Check as follows:

☐ Police Criminal Record Check (name based).

☐ Police Vulnerable Sector Check. (It is expected that this individual will be in a position of trust by having unsupervised access to infirm individuals at their home or another setting.)

The applicant is an:

☐ employee

☐ volunteer

with our organization.

Sincerely,

Susan Short, B. Th.

Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation



APPENDIX C

CUMBERLAND HOSPICE

VOLUNTEER VISITATION

PATIENT & VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I, _____ agree to receive services from the **Volunteer Visitation Program** within the Cumberland Hospice Society.

I understand that:

- Cumberland Hospice Society is an independent non-profit organization that provides support to individuals and their families who live with a life-threatening illness.
- The volunteers I receive work closely with the Medical Palliative Care Team and will share information about my visits that may be relevant to my care.
- Volunteers are not trained professionals and will not be able to provide assistance with personal care (washing, toileting, mobility, repositioning, etc.), dispensing medication or advise regarding medical decisions.
- Volunteers are not permitted to accept gifts or tokens of appreciation for their service. These volunteers do not give of their time to receive compensation, but rather give their service from the goodness of their heart. A simple "Thank you" is the best form of appreciation.

During visits with the volunteer, some activities I would enjoy are:

I have read or understand the above agreement and am clear on the role of volunteer visiting in the community.

Client or Substitute Decision Maker

Date

Witness

If you would like to officially recognize a volunteer, you can contact the office of the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation by calling (902)660-2310 or emailing cchpcsvs@outlook.com

If you would like to provide feedback, voice concerns or make changes to your volunteer visitation you can speak directly with the Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation by calling (902)660-2310.

I have read or understand the above agreement and am clear on the role of volunteer visiting in the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your journey,

Sincerely,

Susan Short, B.Th.

Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation

Cumberland Hospice

142 South Albion Street, PO Box 1035

Amherst, NS B4H 4E2

902-660-2310

cchpcsvs@outlook.com



APPENDIX D
CUMBERLAND HOSPICE
VOLUNTEER VISITATION

PRE-PLACEMENT SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Client's Name _____ Referral Source _____

Question for Patient/Caregiver	To your knowledge is there any reason a home visit to this client may pose a risk to staff or volunteers?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
Animals, pets	Do you have pets? <i>If so, advise client of proper handling of the pet during visitation.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
Presence of Others	Does anyone else live in your home and will they be present during the home visit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> LTC <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Comments:
Guns, other weapons	Do you have any guns or other weapons? If so are they kept in a locked location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
Smoking	Do you or others in your home smoke? <i>If so, advise the client that they and others must refrain from smoking during the visits</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
Location	Is your residence isolated? Is there cell phone coverage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX E

CUMBERLAND HOSPICE

VOLUNTEER VISITATION

WORKING SAFELY IN THE COMMUNITY

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

The following are some safety recommendations that will increase safety when working on placements.

Making Others Aware of your Plans: Ensure the Supervisor of the Volunteer Visitation Program is aware of when and where you will be working in the community and approximate duration of the visit. This can be done by logging your approximate start time in the volunteer software program prior to your visit. Ensure your supervisor has your updated information regarding your cell and home phones.

Parking: When parking your vehicle, ensure that your exit cannot be blocked. If parking in a driveway, ensure the vehicle is facing out of the driveway. Be sure to cover up or place valuables in the trunk out of sight.

Safety when Commuting: To ensure safety while travelling the following is recommended:

- Ensure you have accurate directions to your destination.
- Once you are in the car, lock all your doors.
- If you suspect you are being followed, do not drive home, indicating where you live. Drive to the police station, service station or similar place where you can call the police.
- Avoid parking near walls, high fences or vegetation which provide cover for an attacker.
- Park in a well-lit area.
- Back your car into the parking space so you can drive straight out for a quick exit if required.
- Before getting out of your car, check for suspicious individuals; if those individuals are present, drive away and park somewhere else.
- Always lock your car and cover any valuables which you must leave in the car or place in the trunk.
- As you walk toward your car, check that no one is hiding underneath. Before you re-enter your car, visually inspect the car to see that no one is inside, especially behind the front seats.
- **If your car breaks down**, use your cell phone to call for help. Sit on the passenger side of the front while waiting for help; this will give the impression you are waiting for a driver to return. Remain in your car. If someone stops to offer help, speak to them through a partially open window.
- **When commuting in the winter**, dress in clothing which would be appropriate if you became stranded. If you get stuck remain in your car. You will have better protection and a better chance of being located if you stay with your vehicle. Volunteers are encouraged to prepare and carry a "winter survival kit", including blankets, extra clothing, snow shovel, flashlights and batteries, jumper cables, candles and matches for both heat and light, an empty coffee can (to

burn candles in or use as a toilet), non-perishable food such as granola bars or dried fruit, water, lock de-icer, cell phone and batteries, sand or kitty litter for traction or weight.

Safety in other's homes: Working in people's homes may include day or evening visits. If a risk is identified, discuss with the supervisor an appropriate plan of action before visiting this location again.

If someone attempts to restrict your leaving the premises, remain calm and:

- Advise him/her that you have a prearranged appointment to keep, or you are meeting a colleague close by
- In a subtle way, let the client know that others are aware of your schedule, location and are expecting you to "check-in".
- Call 911 if necessary
- Speak with your supervisor by phone or in person immediately following the incident

If You Discover Weapons in the Home: Try and determine from a distance if firearms are secured. Do not remain in the home where there are unsecured firearms. If you believe that there are unsecured firearms in the home notify the police and your supervisor as soon as possible.

Dealing with Pets: It is the Supervisor's responsibility to inquire with the client regarding any pets in the home or the area of the home, and to inform the patient of the policy regarding maintaining pets in a secure location during visits. If upon arrival the pet is not in a secured area remain in the car until it is safe.

If Threatened by a Pet: Stop and remain completely still. Avoid eye contact with pets as they may view this as an aggressive stance. Speak gently and retreat slowly. A command such as "sit" or "stay", can be given softly. Avoid threatening or erratic gestures, such as yelling, waving your arms, rushing at the animal, or running away. Crouching to reduce your body size may relax the animal. Do this slowly and deliberately. Carefully offer an article of clothing if it appears the animal may lunge at you.

If Attacked by a Pet: Throw stones or whatever is in easy reach at the animal. If that fails, grab an object, your clipboard or briefcase and offer it to the animal, keeping it well away from your body. Do not let go of the object, as the animal will soon realize that it is not you and may attack again. Strike the animal only as a last resort as this may incite them further. Never try and kick a dog. (It is reported that they can bite ten times before we can respond.) If knocked to the ground, remain motionless in the fetal position and protect your face by crossing your arms above your head. Seek medical attention immediately with bites, or scratches from animals. Report the incident to your supervisor immediately.

Adapted from Mental Health and Addiction Services, CEHHA



APPENDIX F

CUMBERLAND HOSPICE

VOLUNTEER VISITATION

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM


Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are excited about your child's interest in volunteering with Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program! We are a new, and growing program geared toward developing a support network for individuals and their families within Cumberland County, who face a life-threatening illness.

As an interested participant, your child will complete an application process, including a request for references, Criminal Record Check, and interview. If accepted into the program, your child will undergo Palliative Care training that will consist of both in-person and online modules. As a fully trained volunteer, your child will receive a placement with a palliative patient within Cumberland County.

Placements will be made according to geographical location, interests of volunteers, needs of patients as well as personality and skill sets. Each volunteer experience will be unique. Some will try their hand at cards with patients, while others will help to weed a garden. Some will read when eyesight has failed a patient and others will serve as an assist to one last sewing project. Some will prepare snacks, while others sit and reminisce. Regardless of the duties, all will bring a smile, a presence, an energy and an enthusiasm that will serve to support a resident of our County through an extremely difficult time in their life. Your child wishes to be a part of this support network.

We welcome volunteers ages 16 and over. However, for those between 16 and 18 years of age, to become a volunteer with us, our organization requires consent for their participation.

 My signature on this form indicates that I consent to my child volunteering with Cumberland Hospice Volunteer Visitation Program. I understand that my child will be provided with the training necessary for a safe and responsible performance of their role as a Visitation Volunteer. I understand that my child will undergo training at no financial cost to them and they will give of their time freely as a volunteer, with no financial compensation for their service.

Name of Applicant

Date

Name of Parent or Guardian (Please Print)

Relationship to Applicant

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Contact Number

Thank you for your support in the development of a life changing program for those living with a life-limiting illness within our beautiful county. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this program, please don't hesitate to reach out by means of phone or email at the number or address listed below.

Sincerely,

Susan Short, B.Th.

Supervisor of Volunteer Visitation, Cumberland Hospice

902-660-2310

cchpcsvs@outlook.com