

*The Vancouver Home Hospice Palliative Care Service helps people who are dying, and their families. The program treats every person with support, kindness and dignity. It also helps the family after the death of a family member.*

*The service includes the family doctor, community health nurses, and a team of hospice palliative care specialists. They help the dying person to stay at home as long as possible. The Home Hospice volunteers are a valuable part of this team. They give practical and emotional support to the dying person and their family.*

## Different kinds of Home Hospice volunteers:

**Visiting Volunteers** help the dying person and their family at home. The volunteer and the family decide together what times are good for visiting. If the dying person is in a long-term care home, the volunteer may be asked to visit there.

**Bereavement Phone Volunteers** are part of a team of volunteers who give support to the family and friends of someone who has died. They do this by telephone, or writing cards.

**Resource Volunteers** are people who give out information about the Home Hospice Palliative Care Service at community health fairs.

If you have any questions or would like more information about volunteering with Hospice services please contact the Vancouver Home Hospice Palliative Care Service.

**Coordinator of Volunteers**  
604-742-4019  
(for information in English)

**Vancouver Home Hospice  
Palliative Care Service**  
300-999 West Broadway  
604-742-4010

**Palliative Access Line**  
604-263-7255

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# Volunteer Program

Vancouver Home Hospice  
Palliative Care Service

## **What do hospice volunteers do?**

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Home Hospice volunteers do the same things a friend would do.

A volunteer is:

- someone to talk to
- someone who may do therapeutic or healing touch
- someone to do things with such as walking, lunch, shopping, driving
- someone who will help with practical things like writing letters
- someone who will share some quiet time
- someone who will listen without judging
- someone who can spend time with the dying person so that family members have some time off

Volunteers do not replace nurses, home support services or family.

Volunteers cannot give legal, financial or family advice.

## **How much time do volunteers give?**

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Volunteers give about four hours per week. This can be done in one or two visits. Volunteers also have to go to training sessions, and to regular meetings.

## **What are we looking for in our volunteers?**

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Home Hospice volunteers have to:

- be emotionally mature
- have a real wish to give of themselves and their time
- communicate well
- deal with personal loss
- be self-aware and be able to evaluate themselves
- be open to different beliefs, customs and cultures
- accept program directions and decisions
- take part in education and support sessions

## **How can you become a volunteer?**

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- If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please call the Hospice Coordinator of Volunteers.
- You need to fill out a form, have an interview, and also pass the volunteer training course in English.
- You need to pass a criminal record check.
- There is a training course for volunteers twice a year. It teaches communication, what the volunteer can do, and provides an understanding of illness and dying, loss and grief.
- You have to commit to the program for at least one year.

## **Who asks for volunteers?**

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- Community health staff, hospital staff, friends, family and the dying person can call the Hospice Coordinator of Volunteers to ask for a volunteer.
- The Coordinator will then visit the dying person and the family to talk about what a volunteer could do. The volunteer then meets the dying person and the family. The Coordinator keeps in regular touch with the volunteer and the family.

## **Who do hospice volunteers report to?**

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- Volunteers report to the Hospice Coordinator of Volunteers.
- They work as part of a team and are in touch with the community health nurse, who has the first responsibility for the dying person.