



## **VOLUNTEER APPLICANT PACKAGE**

Thank you for your interest in volunteer opportunities with The Dorothy Ley Hospice (TDLH). If you have not as yet visited our website [www.dlhospice.org](http://www.dlhospice.org) we encourage you to do so to learn more about our programs and services.

You have expressed interest in the role of Palliative Care Volunteer (PCV) and so included is the Position Description for you to review. The Dorothy Ley Hospice serves the catchment area of Etobicoke from Humber River to Etobicoke Creek, Steeles Ave. to the Lakeshore. Ideally volunteers have a flexible schedule with availability during the weekday, evenings and on weekends. We ask for a commitment of a minimum 1 year with an average of 4 hours per week.

All volunteers who will provide any direct care are required to complete a minimum 30 hours of training per standards set by The Hospice Association of Ontario. Training is provided by TDLH and a Palliative Care Volunteer Training certificate is issued upon successful completion. After training is completed, a second interview is held at which time you will be required to sign Confidentiality and Volunteer Service Agreements.

To become a Palliative Care Volunteer, the following are the steps that will be required:

1. Attend a TDLH Volunteer Orientation Session: These are held monthly and registration is required. Please contact the office for dates.
2. Volunteer Application: an application form is enclosed. Please complete and return by email at your convenience.
3. References: you are asked to provide three (3) references – a combination of personal (not relatives) and professional ones. You are encouraged to discuss your interest in becoming a PCV with your Referee. Refer below to pg 5 for instructions on obtaining your references. We will provide you with a cover letter and the actual reference document with questions. Your referee must send the completed forms directly to the Volunteer Services Coordinator so that confidentiality is maintained.
4. Interview – upon receipt of the application and all references, you will be invited to a formal interview to explore your interest in volunteering, and to help us identify your suitability to this unique and specialized role. The interview normally takes 30 to 60 minutes.
5. Police Reference Check - at the time of the interview you will be asked to complete the Toronto Police Services Reference Check form. All prospective volunteers seeking a role in direct care are required to have a police clearance. Currently TDLH covers the cost for processing this search.

We have provided you with a lot of information and the process of becoming a volunteer may at first seem a bit lengthy. Given the vulnerable population which we serve, we have a responsibility to be thorough in the selection process of volunteers; we also believe it is important that the prospective volunteer have a very clear understanding of the role.

To assist in your self-evaluation for suitability to the role of a Palliative Care Volunteer we ask that you reflect on the following:

## **A Personal Inventory for Prospective Hospice Volunteers**

### **Things to Consider When Applying to be a Palliative Care Volunteer**

- You have an interest in the Hospice concept, and have the desire to help others. You have some awareness of what is drawing you to Hospice work, and are willing to explore this in depth.
- You are sensitive to the special needs of dying patients and their families, and have chosen to work to support them.
- You are aware of the losses you have experienced, and your way of grieving, and have a sense of perspective about life and death, loss and grief.
- You are open to others who may have different values, beliefs, and ways of living. You are able to listen well, and to validate others where they are, rather than where you might believe they should be.
- As you may be called on to work in a variety of areas and perform many different tasks, self-reliance, flexibility and adaptability are assets. Realistic awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to set limits are important.
- You like working as part of a team, and are willing to explore ways of supporting and being supported by other team members. You are dedicated to your own growth and on-going learning. Your personal strengths will likely include warmth, concern for people, sense of humour, and approachability.
- You are willing to commit yourself to the training and to the volunteer responsibilities that follow, and to gaining an understanding of the standards and policies of the Hospice program.
- You are not bringing personal agendas or “missions” to your Hospice work, and understand that our work is not to change people, but to be with them where they are.
- If you have experienced a significant personal loss within the past year, one that you are still actively grieving, please consider carefully your present ability to take on a demanding training program. This work can intensify your own grief. We will review each applicant individually in this regard.
- Since working as a Palliative Care Volunteer for The Dorothy Ley Hospice can be stressful at times, it is important that you have good supports and ways of taking care of yourself, meeting change and the unexpected with ease.

### VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	<b>Palliative Care Volunteer</b>
Position Needs:	Active and available complement of approximately 100-125 volunteers for the Community Program
Program areas:	In-Home Support and Residential Hospice Programs
Location:	Visiting individuals accessing service(s) in their homes, local hospitals, long-term care facilities or the Care Suites in The Dorothy Ley Hospice Palliative Care Center.
Purpose:	To establish supportive relationships with the individual accessing service(s) and his/her family. To actively contribute to their physical, emotional, psychosocial & spiritual well-being.
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will have attended TDLH Orientation and interviewed with the Volunteer Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Will have successfully fulfilled screening requirements, including an application, personal references and Police Reference Check</li> <li>• Will have successfully completed and received certification in Palliative Care Volunteer Training</li> <li>• Willing to practice within the scope (limitations) of the volunteer role; abiding hospice policies &amp; procedures</li> <li>• Ability to maintain confidentiality</li> <li>• Ability to be accepting of individual reactions, values, &amp; beliefs related to death and dying</li> <li>• Projects a warm, caring, empathetic attitude; ability to remain calm and centered and convey that to individuals accessing services</li> <li>• Comfortable being in the presence of strong emotions related to serious illness, end-of-life and bereavement situations</li> <li>• Ability to physically and psychologically meet the demands of the role, including comfort with body fluids, strong odours, naked parts</li> <li>• Ability to adapt to changing client needs, and ability to provide support to whole family, each individuals different needs</li> <li>• Ability to honour an individual's experience without imposing a personal agenda</li> <li>• Have a healthy personal lifestyle and effective support system</li> <li>• Belief and commitment to self-care and maintain balance so that care can be given to others</li> <li>• Confident yet aware of own limitations and receptive to guidance as situations require in order to best serve the client</li> <li>• Committed to ongoing skill development by participating in educational opportunities related to Hospice Palliative Care</li> <li>• Have come to terms with all significant personal losses and not be newly bereaved within past 12 months</li> </ul>

<p>Competencies: See <i>TDLH Competency Dictionary</i> for descriptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of The Dorothy Ley Hospice</li> <li>• Awareness</li> <li>• Boundaries</li> <li>• Cultural Humility</li> <li>• Ethics</li> <li>• Individual Focus/Person Centered</li> <li>• Communication and Listening Skills</li> <li>• Decision Making/Judgment</li> <li>• Open Mindedness</li> <li>• Sensitivity and Compassion</li> <li>• Hands-On Care</li> <li>• Self-Control/Self-Management</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Administrative Responsibilities</li> </ul>
<p>Duties &amp; Responsibilities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as an Ambassador for The Dorothy Ley Hospice</li> <li>• Attend team support &amp; debriefing meetings as needed/required</li> <li>• Submit monthly report of volunteer hours served</li> <li>• Report any unusual incidents or situations to the hospice office immediately</li> <li>• When actively working with an individual in the community, notify the Care Coordinator/Program Coordinator when it is necessary to miss a visit</li> <li>• Advise Volunteer Services Coordinator or Team Leader as assigned of vacations, absences and leaves giving as much notice as possible</li> <li>• Attend training as required to maintain competencies or when there is a change in program participation</li> <li>• Participate in an annual review and volunteer satisfaction survey</li> </ul>
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Volunteer Services Coordinator and Care Coordinator, Bereavement Support Coordinator, Integrative Wellness Coordinator or Spiritual Care Coordinator as assigned.</p>
<p>Commitment:</p>	<p>A program rotation minimum of 6 months. May require working a flexible schedule and/or hours.</p>
<p>Benefits and Opportunities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced training for specific volunteer service roles</li> <li>• Continued education</li> <li>• Resume reference available after completion of probationary period</li> <li>• Personal satisfaction from making a difference</li> <li>• Volunteer recognition</li> <li>• Monthly Volunteer meetings</li> <li>• Relationships with individuals accessing services &amp; their families</li> <li>• Greater self-knowledge</li> <li>• Spiritual growth</li> <li>• Develop new friendships and renew old ones while helping those in need</li> </ul>

## **Reference Process:**

As part of the screening process to become a Palliative Care Volunteer with TDLH you are asked to provide 3 character references. These references are to be a combination of **personal** (other than relatives) and **professional** associations, from individuals over 20 years of age and who have known you for more than 2 years. References could come from a previous volunteer coordinator, employer/colleague, religious leader, neighbour or friend.

Essentially what we are seeking is the perspective of people in your life who know you well and will offer their feedback on your suitability to be a Palliative Care Volunteer. Please give due consideration to who you approach for a reference ~ Does this person know you well enough to speak to your potential as a hospice volunteer. You are encouraged to engage them in a dialogue informing them of:

- The Dorothy Ley Hospice - who we serve and what are our programs
- The role of a Palliative Care Volunteer – what volunteering in this role would require of you
- Your interest and motivation for volunteering in this capacity

Generally, reference checks are done by the organization attempting to contact the individuals indicated and asking them to answer a series of questions. At TDLH we have chosen a different approach as we believe that engaging in dialogue with your chosen references will be a benefit to you. We feel it is important that all prospective volunteers:

- have a clear understanding of our organization and services
- are familiar with and able to relate to others the role of a Palliative Care Volunteer
- have given appropriate reflection on their motivation to seek such a volunteer role

You will be provided with the Reference Questionnaire. Please give a copy to each person of whom you are asking for a character reference. Individuals have the choice of completing the form and submitting it to the hospice office directly (they should not be collected by you in order to encourage the individual to be candid in their responses) or they may phone our office and provide their feedback verbally. A cover letter explaining this process to your referee is also provided.

We ask that you take responsibility to ensure that your references are completed and received within a timely fashion. You may inquire with the Volunteer Services Coordinator as to whether any remain outstanding. Once all references have been received and reviewed you will be contacted and advised on the next step of your application.

**Thank you for pursuing volunteer opportunities with us.**

**The Dorothy Ley Hospice Team**