

HOSPICE TOUCH VOLUNTEER TRAINING

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- **Contact:** Office: 608-374-0250 Serenity House: 608-374-0248
- **Hospice Office Hours:** 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Monday – Friday After these hours the Call Center will take the call and you can leave a message for the On-Call Nurse to call you back.
- **CPR:** The Volunteer Assignment Sheet will list patient's wishes as CPR: yes___ or no___. If yes, we will coach you on your responsibilities. This does not come up very often in Hospice.
- **"Gone from My Sight":** Our hospice "blue book" is given to all patients/families in their admission binder. This lists common signs/symptoms that can be expected during the dying process. At times these symptoms can cause families anxiety. If the patient or family member is experiencing anxiety or any other problems, please don't hesitate to contact hospice.
- **Active Listening:** Learn about patient's/family's needs and desires. Acknowledge and encourage caregiver's efforts, this is not an easy task they have undertaken. If you feel that they are not coping well please call Hospice and a Social Worker or Chaplain will be contacted.
- **Physical Comfort:** Repositioning, massage, cool cloths, oral care, "Imagery Exercise", are a few things that can be used to increase physical comfort. If you note during a visit that the patient is uncomfortable please call the hospice office immediately. Volunteers cannot give water or food to a patient. Volunteers cannot feed a patient. This is to protect our patients and our volunteers.
- **Medications:** Volunteers cannot administer medications to hospice patients. Only family, caregivers or hospice trained staff can give medications. Professionally licensed volunteers (MD, RN) may give medications, but only if assigned to do so. Please contact the hospice office.
- **Hand Washing:** Best defense against the spread of infections and viruses. Hands should be washed when entering or leaving a patient's home or room (if at a facility). Hand sanitizer will be provided by hospice. Gloves must be worn when in contact with blood or body fluids and then wash/sanitize after removing gloves. Always contact hospice if there is a large amount of blood or drainage of any kind.

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- **Soiled bed linens:** Should be changed and soaked as soon as possible. If in a home contact the caregiver and if at a facility, please contact the staff. Soiled dressings or briefs should be double bagged and put into garbage can.
- **Volunteer Illness:** If you are not feeling well or have had a recent cold, cough, flu, or diarrhea please call the office and we will reassign your visit. Due to lowered immune system most patients will be vulnerable to new infections.
- **Confidentiality:** All hospice assignments and information about hospice patients and their families are confidential. Friends, neighbors, and relatives cannot be confided in or be given any information. Refer to the section in your training manual on this topic. Keep patient information in a folder or safe place where it cannot be read.
- **Documentation:** Documentation of each visit needs to be sent within 2 – 3 days of visit. The form needs to be written in black ink, signed and dated. If you have any concerns during your visit call the hospice office immediately or as soon as it is safe for you to do so.
- **Safety:** Respect the patient's home and work to keep their environment safe. If safety is a concern or the patient falls, call Hospice or contact staff (if in a facility) immediately. If there is immediate danger of physical violence, tornado, fire, or flood, call 911 first and then call the hospice office.
- **Spiritual Support:** Hospice offers spiritual support through our Chaplain Services. We also encourage and utilize patient's own clergy. You are allowed to pray and talk about spiritual beliefs with patients but only if asked and you feel comfortable doing so.
- **Thank Yous:** Hospice staff and volunteers cannot accept any gifts or money from patients or families. We can, however, suggest donations to hospice.
- **Self-Care:** This is extremely important! Give yourself permission to say "no" when you need a break. Feel free to ask for help if circumstances seem difficult to handle. Please think of the hospice team as your friends and co-workers at all times.

You are a wonderful asset to our hospice team, and we appreciate all that you do!