



St. Patrick's Home of Ottawa Inc.  
**VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

**DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION**

**Position:** **FRIENDLY VISITOR**

**Purpose:** To visit residents on a regular basis in order to provide friendship and companionship.

**Tasks and Responsibilities:**

1. Introduce yourself to the resident every time you visit
2. Ask their permission to come in their room and verify it is a good time to visit. If resident doesn't want a visit, respect his wishes
3. Provide emotional support and companionship as necessary. Be positive.
4. Accompany resident to activities, go for a walk, to the coffee shop, read, assist with letter writing, etc.
5. Encourage resident to socialize with peer residents
6. Prior to leaving, ask Resident if he/she needs anything. Tell them when you will be back.
7. Report any concerns to the nurse on unit immediately
8. Familiarize yourself with St. Patrick's Home rules and regulations by reading and signing the Volunteer Services and Emergency procedure manuals.

**Time Commitment:** Flexible

**Skills and Qualifications:**

- Good listener, patient, good social skills
- Strong sense of commitment
- Sensitive to the needs of the elderly
- Respectful of the need for confidentiality
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to project a positive/friendly, caring attitude

**Orientation and Training:**

- A general orientation to the Home will be provided prior to beginning your responsibilities
- Wheelchair safety and etiquette
- Familiarization with the Emergency Codes and procedures
- Review of the information available in the Volunteer Handbook
- Attendance to Fire & Safety, Infection Control, Abuse Prevention and Values Covenant Inservices is compulsory as soon as possible following the start of your assignment, yearly thereafter.
- Professional educational opportunities are provided as appropriate.

### **Health and Safety:**

- The safety of the resident, staff/volunteers is inherent in all aspects of each person's responsibilities. Vigilance to safety includes delivery of direct resident care as well as the living environment of each resident and working conditions for all staff/volunteers and visitors.
- All workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act have the responsibility to observe safe work practices, avoid risks and to use common sense. Any hazardous conditions or accidents, whether anyone is hurt or not, should be reported immediately to your supervisor, unit nurse and/or Coordinator of Volunteer Services.
- Volunteers should not come to work if they are ill, have a rash, cold or other infectious disease
- Handwashing is the best infection control.
- Influenza immunization is strongly recommended

### **Limits and Boundaries:**

- Avoid over-tiring the resident. Short, meaningful visits are appreciated more.
- Don't make any promises you can't or will not keep
- If you experience a personality clash which cannot be resolved, report situation to Volunteer Coordinator
- Do not disburse medical advice or recommendations to residents/family members even though you may possess personal/educational knowledge
- Do not feel you must bring gifts to a resident. The best gift you give will be the gift of your friendship
- Do not seek favours or accept gifts or tips from residents. If a resident insists on giving you something, check with your immediate supervisor

### **Accountability:**

- Responsible to Coordinator of Volunteer Services or Unit nursing staff.

### **Benefits:**

- Exposure to the field of gerontology and agency operation
- Opportunity to develop friendship
- Increased knowledge and experience working with the elderly
- Self satisfaction of offering quality time to residents
- Beverage tickets are issued to volunteers who spend more than 2 hours with residents
- Free parking is provided to all volunteers
- Recognition events throughout the year
- References can be obtained upon termination if a volunteer has been engaged for more than 40 hours