

# Volunteer Standards for Hospice Palliative Care In British Columbia



## Acknowledgements



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### **A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT November 2016**

Welcome to the 'BCHPCA Hospice Palliative Volunteer Standards' and revised 'Facilitator's Guide for Hospice Palliative Volunteer Training.' The 'Volunteer Standards' were originally developed in 2008 working with external consultants through a collaborative process involving BCHPCA hospice society members and stakeholders and a comprehensive literature search. Upon recent review, the 'BCHPCA Hospice Palliative Volunteer Standards' remain current therefore have not been revised; only its introductory pages have been updated. These Standards are based on international best practice for volunteers working in the area of hospice and end-of-life care and support of those dying and in bereavement.

The 'Facilitator's Guide,' originally penned in 2009 and now revised, is the result of a collaborative effort of many experts. It has been led by the BC Hospice Palliative Care Association and was really made possible by the caring insight and active involvement of those from hospice organizations across BC. We are grateful for the contributions offered by the participating hospice palliative care stakeholders involved in this project. Over the years we have monitored the usage and usefulness of the 'Facilitator's Guide' and we are pleased to update and refresh the included resources.

The Guide is intended to support those who are responsible for designing and delivering hospice palliative volunteer training in BC. It has become apparent that across Canada, BC is progressive and unique in its use of volunteers in the area of end-of-life care and bereavement support. The 'Facilitator's Guide' has been developed to augment the high quality volunteer training that is being provided by the various hospice societies and organizations across the province. It is intended to provide a more level knowledge threshold for all hospice organizations in the province in an attempt to ensure that a minimum level of training is either met or exceeded.

Another goal of the 'Volunteer Standards' and 'Facilitator's Guide' is to allow transferable knowledge and expectations of a volunteer working anywhere in the province. In other words, if a citizen at end-of-life and/or their loved ones receive volunteer care and/or support in various locations or communities in BC, the volunteer could be expected to provide services based on the provincial 'Volunteer Standards.'

BCHPCA is committed to ensuring quality hospice care in BC by providing strategic leadership in the field and by supporting the capacity of the hospice palliative care community in the province. The 'Volunteer Standards' and 'Facilitator's Guide' have portrayed a definitive step forward in this endeavor. Consistent with its values, aims and purposes, BCHPCA is proud to have led the province into the era of valuing and formalizing the volunteer sector of hospice palliative care. The continued use of the provincial 'Volunteer Standards' and revised 'Facilitator's Guide' will support and honour the ongoing valuable contributions of the countless volunteers offering support and care to those at end-of-life and those grieving in BC.



## Introduction

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT cont'd

The Volunteer Standards and Facilitator's Guide are based on and support BCHPCA's mission and values which are:

BCHPCA Mission is to lead in:

- providing responsive, quality hospice palliative care in British Columbia
- advocating for equitable access to responsive quality care.

BCHPCA Values include:

- respecting its relationships and partnerships
- is compassionate and caring
- is progressive and focussed
- is trustworthy.

Historically, BC has long been a leader in the hospice palliative care movement. We were one of the earliest provincial organizations to be established and in fact were in existence seven years prior to the development of the national organization. We continue to be leaders in the country with the majority of hospice non-profit organizations existing in BC and most of those are registered members of BCHPCA, therefore also members of CHPCA. As an advocate and resource, BCHPCA is proud to provide the 'Volunteer Standards' and 'Facilitator's Guide' to all hospice society and other stakeholder members across the province.

The original development of the standards and facilitator's guide involved focus groups, surveys and one-to-one and small group discussions of over one hundred individuals. These original documents were sent out in 'draft' for all to use and evaluate. The ongoing positive comments over the years allowed BCHPCA to leave them as is until it seemed timely to formally review and revise the documents by involving all hospice society members and stakeholders through a call for resources and/or revision comments. We have now taken the resources again generously shared by members and refreshed the 'Facilitator's Guide.' We are grateful for the support and freely shared resources which will hopefully lead to an improved resource tool for all those developing and presenting volunteer training programs in hospice palliative care across BC.

And finally, I must honour and humbly thank all of you who provide volunteer service and care to those at end-of-life and their loved ones across British Columbia. I trust these resources will help prepare and support you in the valuable and vital work that you do. Thank you.

Sincerely

*Margaret Milner*

Margaret (Meg) Milner RN BSN MA

President BCHPCA



### BRITISH COLUMBIA HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN

#### **Societal Vision**

Dying and grieving are part of life.

Every British Columbian will have a personal advance care plan and access to responsive, quality care when dying or grieving.

#### **Mission**

BCHPCA leads in

- Promoting responsive, quality hospice palliative care in British Columbia
- Educating British Columbians on personal advance care planning
- Advocating for equitable access to responsive, quality care.

#### **Organizational Vision**

Every British Columbian adult will have a personal advance care plan in a secure provincial registry accessible to their care providers

#### **Strategic Goals**

BCHPCA will

- Engage and educate British Columbians, including public leaders, about responsive, quality care and advance care planning
- Develop resources with its partners for British Columbians to discuss, document, and register their advance care plans
- Increase and diversify sustainable revenue and other resources, and recruit effective people to implement its strategic plan.

#### **Values**

BCHPCA

- Respects its relationships and partnerships
- Is Compassionate and caring
- Is progressive and focused
- Is trustworthy



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## Standard One: Competence

**As a hospice palliative care volunteer, you feel safe, supported and competent in carrying out your responsibilities.**

**A. Training:** The training you receive is current and comprehensive and supports you at your level of responsibility.

1. Trainers are competent in their ability to design and deliver volunteer training.
2. Your training has prepared you to offer and support a choice of care options for the people you serve.
3. The organization orients their trainers to the BCHPCA volunteer training manual and supports the integration of their own organization's training material into the BCHPCA modules.
4. The organization provides basic volunteer training that includes: a minimum of 30 hours similar to the format and content of the BCHPCA volunteer training manual; the integration of existing and new materials into the BCHPCA training modules.
5. The organization provides ongoing learning opportunities for volunteers. To refresh or advance their knowledge, volunteers are given opportunities to participate in seminars, workshops, courses, etc. throughout the year.
6. Mentorship is considered a valuable support to volunteers and recommended for hospice organizations.
7. Volunteers will have access to resources in a variety of forms including: literature, video, web-based information, etc. Volunteers are supported to participate in informal sessions that provide opportunities for networking, team building and learning.

**B. Self-Care:** In your work as a hospice palliative care volunteer you understand the importance of self-care and feel secure in the knowledge that personal support is available when you need it. The hospice organization prepares volunteers to support and assist clients and families who are dealing with illness, death and bereavement by:

1. Supporting volunteers to explore their own feelings and behaviour around illness, death and bereavement;
2. Having safeguards in place to support volunteers if a crisis should arise;
3. Making volunteers aware of counsellors, ministers, mentors and resources they may wish to access for support;
4. Providing time for volunteers to process their experiences with a client who has died before being assigned to a new client/family.



## Standard One: Competence

- C. Ethics:** You are confident that you are carrying out your responsibilities within the ethical guide lines of your organization and the setting in which you volunteer. Volunteers are oriented to and understand all ethical guidelines related to hospice palliative care including:
1. Confidentiality and privacy;
  2. Boundaries to the relationship between volunteer and client/family;
  3. Ethical guidelines specific to each of the settings in which they volunteer.
- D. Acknowledgement, Recognition, Experience:** You feel valued for the experience you bring and contribution you make to hospice palliative care in your community.
1. The hospice organization promotes the value of the volunteer component within the hospice palliative care team.
  2. The organization values the experience and skills of its volunteers by encouraging and supporting them to:
    - be participating members of their hospice palliative care team;
    - share previous and new skills and experience;
    - share ideas for training and resource material.
  3. The organization formally acknowledges volunteers, individually and collectively, for the contributions they make to hospice palliative care.
- E. Supervision:** The supervision you receive is adequate, reassuring and constructive.
1. Staff have the qualifications, experience and ongoing training to effectively supervise volunteers.
  2. Volunteer coordinators, supervisors and facility staff encourage volunteers to ask questions and feedback is provided in a constructive way.
  3. There is a formal mechanism in place for volunteers to express concerns about their supervision or issues related to their responsibilities.





## Standard One: Competence

**F. Confirmation/Evaluation:** You are reassured that you are volunteering for an organization that continually strives to remain current and improve in all areas of its organization. Formal and informal evaluation of the volunteer program is built into the organization's planning and includes:

1. Volunteer participation in evaluation of the volunteer program;
2. Evaluation of individual volunteers including self-evaluation;
3. Opportunities for palliative care team members to provide feedback to individual volunteers;
4. Supports for volunteers to participate, whenever possible, in evaluation of programs and procedures in the settings where they volunteer;
5. Mechanisms for clients and their families to participate in evaluation of hospice palliative care volunteer programs;
6. Welcoming informal feedback from clients and their families.

**G. Governance:** The hospice organization for which you volunteer is governed by a competent board of directors. The organization's board members are familiar with and support:

1. The organization's volunteer management plan that includes recruitment, training and support;
2. The hospice palliative care volunteer standards adopted by BCHPCA.



## Standard Two: Accessibility

**As a hospice palliative care volunteer you are confident that your organization has a reasonable community profile based on a reputable history of quality care.**

- A. Availability:** Hospice services are readily available in the community and are adequately resourced with knowledgeable staff and trained volunteers.
  - 1. Prospective clients and referring agents have reasonable access to accurate information about hospice services.
  - 2. The hospice organization has systems in place to receive and process incoming inquiries and referrals in a timely manner.
  - 3. A reasonable number of volunteers are available and ready for placement proportionate to service demands.
  - 4. The hospice organization for which you volunteer allows you to encourage and support the clients you serve and to advocate on their behalf within the advocacy policy guidelines of the organization.
- B. Public Awareness:** The hospice organization maintains an ongoing public awareness campaign and keeps other agencies informed about its services and programs.
  - 1. Reasonable resources are applied to an ongoing public awareness campaign including the use of brochures, service notices, public service announcements and other means of promotion.
  - 2. Referral agencies and hospice palliative care partners are kept current on program and service developments.
- C. Accommodation:** Cultural minorities and marginalized individuals and groups in your community are reasonably accommodated. The hospice organization:
  - 1. Provides for religious and cultural differences in its programs and services;
  - 2. Ensures that volunteers are trained to be sensitive to religious and cultural differences, to those with disabilities and other special needs;
  - 3. Makes provision for multi-lingual or interpretive services where numbers warrant.



## Standard Three: Client/Family Perspective

**As a hospice palliative care volunteer, you are confident in your ability to respect and respond to the concerns and needs of the clients and families you support.**

- A. Assessment:** You are supported to be involved in and/or receive information about client needs. The hospice organization ensures that:
1. The role of the volunteer in client/family assessment is considered and included;
  2. Volunteers receive appropriate information about the clients and/or families they are helping;
  3. Volunteers are competent in their ability to participate and respond to the needs of the clients and/or family they are helping.

- B. Boundaries:** You understand the importance of being attentive to the clients' needs while respecting their individual preferences.

The hospice organization ensures that in their relationships with clients and families, volunteers:

1. Understand and respect the concept of boundaries;
2. Respect the client's and family's need for privacy;
3. Become comfortable just "being with" the client, knowing their role is not to "fix";
4. Are confident in their ability to support the client's family;
5. Have access to training and/or resources on how to support families dealing with illness, grief and loss.

- C. Client/family participation:** You are able to support **full** participation of the clients and their families in planning and decision-making around the client's needs.

The hospice organization prepares volunteers to be capable and comfortable in their capacity to:

1. Listen;
2. Hear and respond to feedback from the client and family;
3. Communicate client/family feedback to their supervisors and staff;
4. Acknowledge and support the caregiver's role;
5. Respond to cultural differences and the needs of those clients who are marginalized;
6. Support both children who face life-limiting illnesses and children who are dealing with illness, grief and loss;
7. Share information with client/family about programs, services and resources available to them within and beyond their community and, when required, advocate on their behalf within the advocacy policy guidelines of the hospice organization.



## Standard Four: Continuity of Care

**As a hospice palliative care volunteer you participate as a member of an inter-disciplinary team which is focused on meeting the overall care needs of the people you serve.**

- A. Teamwork:** The hospice organization works collaboratively with other service providers to meet the comprehensive needs of the clients you serve.
1. The hospice palliative care team is developed to best meet the needs of client/family within the limitations of available resources including hospice volunteers.
  2. The hospice organization is engaged early in the intake process to ensure the best allocation of resources.
  3. A common intake process provides easy access for the people being served.
- B. Access to Information:** The organization with which you work is actively engaged as a member of the case management team and has adequate access to information on the clients to whom you are assigned.
1. While ensuring confidentiality and protection of private information, all members of the hospice palliative care team are provided with the information they need to fully meet the needs of those being served.
  2. As a hospice palliative care volunteer you are familiar with the requirements for confidentiality and the protection of sensitive information.
- C. Communication:** Adequate lines of communication exist to allow for the sharing of appropriate information needed to meet the needs of the clients and their families/loved ones.
1. An individualized intake assessment is completed to include the client's personal, medical and service information and the individual's program plans.
  2. The hospice organization will support the volunteer in having access to the information needed to provide care at an acceptable level.
  3. As a hospice palliative care volunteer you have sufficient information to feel engaged and involved in supporting the people you serve and you have sufficient opportunity to share pertinent information to other members of the care team.
- D. Joint Evaluation:** The service partners have developed ways to evaluate the combined effects of the services they provide.
1. As a hospice palliative care volunteer you participate in the evaluation of the team's overall effectiveness in meeting the needs of the people you serve.
  2. The people being served are given ample opportunity to have their questions answered and to give and receive information.
  3. The people being served are provided with an opportunity to share their views on the services they have received or expected to receive.



## Standard Five: Safeguards

**As a hospice palliative care volunteer, you feel confident that the policies, procedures and practices in place provide you and the people you serve with a blanket of security and safety.**

- A. Screening:** You and your volunteer colleagues have been thoroughly screened and selected based on clearly understood criteria that reflect the needs of the clients you serve.
1. Prospective volunteers are provided with comprehensive information about the organization and the nature and scope of volunteer responsibilities.
  2. Answers to the questions of prospective volunteers are readily available.
  3. A structured screening process is in place to ensure that volunteers are suited to the hospice environment and are appropriately placed.
  4. A probationary period provides both the organization and the volunteer an opportunity to determine whether or not hospice palliative care is the right fit for the volunteer.
  5. The recruitment, screening and selection process is positive and affirming for all concerned.
- B. Confidentiality:** Your personal information and that of your clients and their families is adequately protected by a written confidentiality policy that is easily shared and understood.
1. Confidential information is shared only on a need-to-know basis and even then information is released only with informed consent.
  2. Confidential information is stored in a secure manner and is retained only for the required period of retention before being securely destroyed.
- C. Scope:** You fully understand the scope of your role as a hospice palliative care volunteer and are familiar with the limitations of your involvement.
1. As a hospice palliative care volunteer you have confidence that your training has prepared you for what you are required to do and has informed you about what you are not to do.
  2. You know whom to contact if you are in doubt about how to respond to certain situations and any guidance you might require is reasonably available when you need it.
  3. The lines of communication are clearly established between you and other members of the hospice palliative care team.
  4. The hospice organization ensures that staff within all settings are made aware of the volunteers' roles and the limitations of their involvement.



## Standard Five: Safeguards

- D. Safety:** Adequate measures are in place to provide for the physical and emotional safety for you and the people you serve in whichever setting you are engaged.
1. As a hospice palliative care volunteer you have ready access to supervision and support as required.
  2. If a mentor program is in place, you have frequent contact with your mentor with whom you enjoy a positive and supportive relationship.
  3. A report mechanism is in place for incidents of harassment or abuse.
  4. You have ready access to written policies and procedures designed to protect the people you serve from physical and other hazards.
- E. Risk Management:** The organization for which you volunteer has adopted risk management policies and practices which protect you and the people you serve.
1. The hospice organization for which you volunteer has written policies and procedures in place to identify, prevent and reduce the incidents and impact of risk from a variety of sources.
  2. You are made aware of those risks which are tolerable and those which must be either eliminated or assumed by another agency or organization.



- 1.. *Client Service Standards for the Volunteer Hospice Visiting Service*. Hospice Association of Ontario
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5. *Voice in Health Policy: The Role of Informal Caregivers in Hospice Palliative and End-of-Life care in Canada: A Discussion of Legal, Ethical and Moral Challenges*; CHPCA, April 2004.