

Yukon Continuing Care Volunteer Handbook



On behalf of Residents, family members and staff, welcome to the Yukon Continuing Care Volunteer Services program.

You are joining an extraordinary team of dedicated volunteers who are vital to the day-to-day life in our long-term care homes. You help to make them more vibrant and enjoyable places to live.

Thank you for joining our team. We hope your volunteer experience will be a rewarding and fulfilling one.

YUKON CONTINUING CARE VISION STATEMENT

Through partnerships we lead the quest for best-practice continuing care services. We are better because of the journey.

MANDATE, PHILOSOPHY & GOAL

The mandate of Continuing Care is to provide a full range of services and programs for seniors and for people with disabilities. These can be provided in their homes, in their communities, and in long-term care homes.

Our philosophy is that all actions and decisions made by staff and volunteers are founded in respect for the Residents. This helps promote their sense of self-worth, respects their freedom of choice, and leads to an improved quality of life.

Our goal is to ensure that all Residents feel like they are at home, and that they have a sense of belonging. We do this by responding to each Resident's unique personality and circumstances.

Resident independence is very important. It helps to maintain or improve functional abilities (i.e. dressing, brushing hair) and enhances a Resident's sense of well-being.

You can assist Residents by encouraging them to do as much as they can by themselves. For example, if a Resident is able to travel independently to a program one way but requires help on the way back, offer help only where needed. Staff will work with you to discover the ways you can support Residents to be as independent as possible.

MANDATE OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers provide important services to Residents in our long-term care homes.

The mandate of the Volunteer Program is to:

- Enhance Residents' quality of life, and enrich the social environment of the care home.
- Provide increased opportunities for Resident participation in programs.
- Increase the number of activities that are available.
- Give Residents a chance to interact with people of different ages and from other cultures.
- Give volunteers the opportunity to share hobbies, skills and interests with Residents.

RESIDENT RIGHTS

We expect all volunteers to uphold Resident Rights when working in our homes. Each Resident has the right to:

- Be treated with courtesy and respect in a way that fully recognizes his or her dignity as an individual who contributes to society.
- Be provided the opportunity to continue to learn and grow.
- Be properly sheltered, fed, clothed, groomed and cared for in a manner consistent with his or her needs.
- Maintain and display in his or her room or designated resident areas, personal possessions, pictures and furnishings in keeping with Continuing Care's safety requirements and other Residents' rights, unless there is a medical reason for not allowing them..
- Be free from all forms of active or passive abuse or neglect.
- Form and enjoy consensual relationships without interference as long as his or her health and well-being is not compromised.
- Meet with others and participate in activities with social, business, religious and community groups.
- Be informed of his or her medical condition, treatment and proposed course of treatment.
- Be told who is responsible for and who is providing his or her direct care and medical care.

- Be afforded privacy in treatment and in caring for his or her personal needs.
- Manage his or her own financial affairs or to have a substitute decision-maker to do so.

If you would like more information on Resident Rights, please ask the Coordinator of Volunteer Services (CVS) for a copy of the *Bill of Rights for Residents Living in Yukon Continuing Care Homes*.

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

As a volunteer, you are entitled to be:

- Informed about Yukon Continuing Care, our philosophy, fundamental principles, programs and services.
- Thoughtfully interviewed and assigned to a volunteer position that best suits your needs and abilities.
- Given a meaningful and satisfying volunteer assignment.
- Prepared for the volunteer job – provided with orientation, training and ongoing assistance as required.
- Treated as a co-worker, not just free help. Staff and volunteers work together to achieve our mission.
- Provided with ongoing supervision, guidance and direction.
- Heard and given the opportunity to express your ideas, opinions and constructive criticism.
- Covered by the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board if you are injured during your volunteer duty.
- Listened to or supported during difficult times and provided with information about community resources, such as Hospice Yukon, to support you through the death of a Resident.
- Invited to participate in education and training sessions.
- Evaluated on your volunteer performance.
- Recognized and appreciated for your service.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES:

As a volunteer you should be prepared to:

- Accept the mission and philosophy of Continuing Care.
- Perform your volunteer assignment to the best of your ability.
- Be accountable for your actions.
- Be a team player, and cooperate with staff and other volunteers.
- Tell the CVS if you cannot keep or maintain a volunteer assignment.
- Accept direction.
- Follow the volunteer services program policies.
- Accept only as much responsibility as you can handle.
- Ensure all information about Residents is kept confidential.
- Immediately report suspected abuse to the CVS or the Team Leader.
- Be open to learning new skills and systems, accept new ideas and adapt to change.
- Restrict the use of your cell phone when you are on duty so you can fully focus on your task.
- Be a positive role model for Continuing Care in the community.

Introductory Period:

Your first three months of volunteering with Continuing Care is considered an introductory period. This is a time for you to get to know Residents, your CVS and your volunteer tasks.

This introductory period is a trial period for you, as a volunteer, and for the care home where you volunteer. At the end of this period of time you may have an informal feedback session with your CVS to discuss your volunteer experience. Feel free to talk with your CVS at any time about your volunteer experience.

Essentials of Volunteering

Confidentiality

Volunteers may never share photos or personal information (names, health details, work schedules, etc.) about residents or their family members, staff or other volunteers.

From a Health and Social Services perspective, volunteers are agents of Continuing Care. As agents, all volunteers are required to review a *Health Information Privacy and Management Act (HIPMA)* PowerPoint presentation and sign the Pledge of Confidentiality prior to beginning their volunteer work. Under HIPMA legislation, volunteers who breach confidential information are subject to dismissal and in some cases can be fined. Talk to your CVS if you have any questions.

Absent or Late

Volunteers are critical to our care homes. You are requested to be punctual and conscientious in the fulfillment of your duties. The CVS will tell you who to contact if you are unable to come for your assignment or if you will be arriving late.

Name Tag (Identification Tag)

Volunteers are provided with a name tag that identifies them as a Continuing Care volunteer. You must wear your name tag at all times when you are volunteering at the care home. The tag helps to identify volunteers to Residents, employees and visitors. Please leave your name tag in the designated area when you leave the care home at the end of your shift.

Volunteer Information

Your volunteer information is kept in the CVS office in a locked file cabinet.

Dress Code

Volunteers, like staff, are representatives of Continuing Care. We are responsible for presenting a good image to Residents and to the community. Volunteers should come to work dressed appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

- All Continuing Care homes are scent-free. Please do not wear perfumes or use scented products.
- A clean and tidy appearance with clean appropriate clothing is expected.
- Proper footwear (closed toe and heel with a non-slip sole) must be worn at all times.
- Please be careful about selecting the jewelry you wear on duty. Many Residents have thin skin that can easily tear if caught on sharp objects.

Electronics

All volunteers sign an agreement regarding the use of personal cell phone cameras and recording devices.

Cell phones equipped with cameras or voice recorders cannot be used for taking pictures, videos or recordings of any kind while in any Continuing Care home or during a community outing.

Gifts and Gratuities

Volunteers will not accept money, in any form, as a gift or a loan from Residents or family members.

Volunteers will not lend money to Residents.

Volunteers may accept gifts, as long as the value of the gift is less than \$50.

Please inform the CVS if a Resident or family member gives or attempts to give you a gift.

Witnessing Legal Documents

Volunteers can not sign or witness legal documents for Residents.

Meals

Continuing Care provides a meal to volunteers when their assignment extends into or beyond a meal period. Please ask your CVS what to do in order to receive a meal. Volunteers who go on an outing with Residents over a mealtime will have their meal paid for according to the meals expenses for Yukon Government employees.

Resignation/ Exit Interview

Any volunteer who wants to end their volunteer service is asked to notify their CVS as soon as possible. Volunteer name tags are the property of Continuing Care and we ask that you return your name tag to the CVS upon resignation.

The volunteer may be invited to complete an exit interview. During the exit interview, volunteers are invited to discuss their experience or to express any concerns regarding the volunteer program. This feedback can help us improve the program.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

As a Continuing Care volunteer, you will:

- Follow volunteer program policies.
- Report to work in a fit condition both physically and mentally.

- Conduct yourself in a manner that respects Residents, staff, other volunteers and family members.
- Respect the Residents' right to privacy, and treat all information as confidential.
- Keep to the scope of duty outlined in the position you have been assigned.
- Refer questions concerning Resident care or volunteer policies to the appropriate staff person for clarification.
- Report to the Team Leader when you arrive to the house to visit with Residents. The Team Leader will give you current information (as needed) about the Resident you are visiting.
- Immediately inform the Team Leader if the Resident you are visiting becomes ill.
- Inform staff if the Resident needs to use the bathroom.
- Call staff to assist you with requests from the Resident such as putting bed rails up or down.
- Use the designated sign-out procedure before taking a Resident out of a care home.
- Follow the smoking policies for the care home.
- Report incidents to the Team Leader or the Coordinator of Volunteer Services.
- Ask for a change of assignment if needed.
- Ask if you have questions or concerns.

Volunteers will not:

- Borrow a Resident's possessions or use their bathroom or telephone.
- Become involved in a Resident's financial affairs.
- Feed Residents, unless staff have given you specific directions.
- Make purchases on behalf of a Resident.
- Use alcohol or unauthorized drugs or medications while volunteering, or volunteer while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Give any medication, alcohol, cigarettes or food from outside the care home to Residents.
- Pressure Residents to accept personal opinions or religious beliefs.
- Lift or transfer Residents at any time.

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS & UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATIONS

Volunteers are responsible for reporting complaints or concerns involving Resident Care to the Team Leader or the CVS.

If the complaint involves the Team Leader, the volunteer may request to speak to the Program Manager.

If the complaint involves the CVS, the volunteer may speak to the Program Manager or a Continuing Care Director.

What to do in an uncomfortable situation

On occasion, a Resident may involve you in a conversation of a personal nature. Conversations may be centered on the Resident's personal concerns (finance, religion, sexual concerns etc.), or the Resident may ask you personal questions about yourself which may make you feel uncomfortable.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable with a Resident, try the following steps:

- Re-direct the conversation to another topic.
- Be honest and tell the Resident you are not comfortable discussing the topic.
- Politely excuse yourself from the conversation.

If you have concerns about the conversation, please report your concerns to a staff member as the Resident may need additional support.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Safe Environment

Ensuring safety requires a collaborative approach and is of the utmost importance to Continuing Care. You are an integral part of maintaining a safe environment for yourself, Residents, staff and family members.

Timely communication is a key element of safety, so we ask you to report any situations or conditions that you believe are unsafe as soon as you become aware of them.

The following are examples of unsafe conditions, or situations that should be brought to the attention of the Team Leader or Coordinator of Volunteer Services immediately:

- You notice something needs to be fixed in the building, for example sharp edges, spills on the floor, rolled up carpet or

other floor hazards that may cause tripping.

- You see someone behaving in a suspicious manner or acting like they do not belong in the care home – for example, someone going from room to room without talking to anyone.
- A Resident follows you outside and there is no staff accompanying them.

If you see a Resident fall down:

- Do not attempt to catch them or interfere with the fall.
- Immediately call for a staff member.
- Stay with the Resident, provide comfort and reassurance until a staff member arrives.
- Do not move the Resident if they are on the ground, even if you are someone with medical experience. Remember, you are in the role of a volunteer.

Disaster Planning

(Fire, Earthquake, Missing Person, Flood)

Your CVS will provide you with information regarding the disaster plan for the care home you are volunteering in. In the event of any emergency or an alarm indicating an emergency, stay where you are. You will be directed by staff what to do.

Hand Hygiene

Residents in Continuing Care are at a greater risk for contracting infection. They generally have a weakened immune system due to age, disease and other health complications.

You can help to keep Residents healthy by practicing good hand hygiene. All volunteers are expected to perform hand hygiene before and after interacting with Residents, to prevent illness and the potential spread of disease.

Hand hygiene is the best way to prevent and control illness and infections. Hand sanitizer dispensers are distributed throughout all Continuing Care homes.

You must perform good hand hygiene when you enter and exit the care home and before and after you spend time with Residents. This will decrease the possibility of passing infection onto other Residents, and will also protect you and your family.

If there is an outbreak of illness in your care home, please follow the direction of staff.

Please do not come in for your scheduled visit or volunteer hours if you have symptoms such as:

- **Coughing**
- **Fever**
- **Sneezing**
- **Nausea**
- **Vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**

Thank you for helping to keep Residents safe from infections.

OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS FOR INTERACTING WITH RESIDENTS

Some Residents are unable to communicate clearly because of hearing loss, stroke, brain injury, dementia, memory loss, vision loss or aging.

Here are some tips to help effective communication with Residents:

- Always introduce yourself.
- Knock before entering a bedroom.
- Get the Resident's attention before you begin speaking.
- Keep your language and message simple.
- If needed, speak slowly in short, simple sentences.
- Talk about familiar topics (i.e. family, past jobs, interests).
- Reduce noise or distractions – turn off the TV or radio, or move to a quieter space.
- Ensure hearing aids and/or glasses are in place before you begin a conversation.
- If a Resident's hearing or sight is better on one side, approach them from that side.
- Consider using body language, gestures and visual aids when communicating.
- Use any special aids, such as communication boards, specific to the Resident.
- Open-ended questions can be challenging. Consider providing a clear choice. For example: "Do you want peanut butter or jam

on your toast?” instead of “What do you want on your toast?”

- The Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) is always available to answer any questions.

Activities

Try different activities and interactions to engage Residents (depending on Resident interests and abilities):

- Play a game – cribbage, Scrabble, cards.
- Work on a puzzle – crossword, Sudoku, word search, jigsaw.
- Go for a walk (depending on mobility status and weather).
- Read the newspaper, a book, or a magazine.
- Colour together.
- Look at photos.

Wheelchairs

Tips for assisting Residents who use wheelchairs:

- Always approach the Resident from the front at eye level.
- Introduce yourself and explain what you are doing.
- Keep an appropriate distance (arm’s length) to respect their personal space.
- Ask the Resident if they want your assistance.
- If applicable, ensure the footrests are on and the seat belt is fastened.
- When you park a wheelchair, ask or show the Resident how to apply the brakes.
- Remember each Resident’s wheelchair is different.
- If you have questions about how a wheelchair operates ask therapies staff.

Thank you for volunteering.



