

Information about having a community (in home) hospice volunteer

Hospice Volunteers South Tas (Hospice Volunteers) is a non-faith based, not-for-profit organisation providing compassionate care to people living with and affected by terminal illness. We also offer a bereavement support program called Walking Through Grief.

We are funded by the Tasmanian Health Service to provide volunteer support to the community of Southern Tasmania. If you would like information about volunteer support in North or North-West Tasmania, please visit our website: www.hospicevolunteers.org.au

What do hospice volunteers do?

Our volunteers have undergone training to learn how to support you and those close to you. They know that your needs may vary from visit to visit. They will provide a 'listening ear' when you want one and will be a caring, compassionate presence. They will not give advice or intrude in any way.

Your volunteer will provide:

- companionship and emotional support
- support with social activities and practical tasks
- time-out or 'respite' for family members

What don't hospice volunteers do?

Our volunteers are not permitted to perform:

- domestic duties – e.g. cleaning
- personal care – e.g. showering
- nursing tasks – e.g. giving medications

The volunteer works as part of the palliative care team in a 'non-clinical' role. If you would like to be linked to a helping professional such as a counsellor, social worker or chaplain, please let us know.

Am I eligible?

Any person of any age living with a terminal illness is eligible to be assessed for volunteer support.

Is there any cost?

No. Our services are free.

What are the benefits of having a volunteer?

Your volunteer is someone you can trust and confide in, or just enjoy spending time with. Your volunteer will be interested in getting to know you and will be guided by what you tell them is important. Having a volunteer alongside may make you feel less anxious about some aspects of what you are experiencing.

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How do I get linked to a volunteer?

A health professional involved in your care may refer you to us with your permission. Alternatively, you are welcome to get in touch with us, or have a family member or friend enquire on your behalf by phoning **(03) 6224 3808** or via our website: www.hospicevolunteers.org.au

Once we have received your referral, a member of our support team will make a time to come and visit you to find out what your needs and goals are.

Will I have a different volunteer visiting each time?

No. We will carefully match you to one volunteer who will visit you regularly. You will only be assigned a different volunteer if your regular volunteer is unable to keep visiting you.

How often can I be supported by my volunteer?

Your volunteer will usually visit once a week for up to three hours. The days and times will be negotiated when a member of our support team visits you.

What if I wish to cancel a visit?

We understand that there may be times when a visit needs to be cancelled or postponed. Just give us as much notice as you can by phoning (03) 6224 3808, so we can inform your volunteer of the change. If no-one is in the office when you call, please phone the mobile number provided on our recorded message.

What if I don't feel like talking when my volunteer visits?

You never have to entertain your volunteer or talk if you don't want to. For example, if you want to rest or sleep, your volunteer will be happy to sit quietly.

What if I don't get along with my volunteer?

It's normal to get along better with some people than others. If at any time you are not happy with how things are going with your volunteer, please let our support team know.

What if I go to hospital?

Your volunteer will continue to visit you in hospital if you wish. We also have a team of volunteers at the Royal Hobart Hospital and in the J.W. Whittle Palliative Care Unit who can support you and your family during your hospital stay. When you return home, your volunteer will resume their regular visits.

What if I no longer want a volunteer?

If you decide for any reason you no longer want to be supported by our service, please get in touch with us on (03) 6224 3808.

How is my private information protected?

We will treat your information as confidential and securely store it at all times. We can explain your privacy rights and how information is shared when we meet with you. If you have any concerns about your privacy, please get in touch with us on (03) 6224 3808.

What if I wish to make a complaint?

If you have any concerns about our service, we encourage you or your advocate to make contact with us. We will act promptly and fairly to address your concerns.