



Volunteer Package



Ivy Meadows Volunteer Package

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Ivy Meadows. We would very much like to have you volunteer with us and enjoy your experience. ***Volunteering***... It's a way of giving and receiving. In order to properly screen our volunteers and provide them with the best support possible, we need to obtain certain information and provide information. This information package will help you get started in your volunteer experience. We look forward to working with you.

Ivy Meadows embraces a broad definition of care that recognizes the strengths and abilities of individuals and families. We care for the whole person including the physical, emotional, spiritual and cognitive aspects of their health. For this reason the mission of Ivy Meadows is:

Celebrating the freedom and uniqueness of each individual while ministering to their spirit, mind & body.

Ivy Meadows has 50 nursing care beds, & 1 adult protection bed, all of which offer care to residents requiring Level II nursing care. Services are provided from a holistic perspective to address social, psychological, spiritual and health needs. The facility consists of four units or neighbourhoods: Nightingale Hall, Secords Way, Mances Garden and Jacob's Walk.

As a volunteer you will make a unique contribution to our residents. Volunteers represent the community to our residents, a touch of the world outside the facility. By offering your friendship you can help our residents have the opportunities for increased interactions, being social, spiritual, cognitive, etc.

Application for Volunteer Services

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (W) _____ (H) _____

Related Training-Past Experience: _____

Skills/Interests/Hobbies that you want to share with the residents:

Languages Spoken: _____ Written: _____

Volunteer Availability: Mornings _____ Days _____ Evenings _____

What days of the week are you available? _____

Do you prefer one-on-ones _____ or assist with groups _____

Please list two references:

Name: _____

Telephone _____

Relationship: _____

Name: _____

Telephone _____

Relationship: _____

I, _____ acknowledge that the above information is true and authorize Ivy Meadows contact my references.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

As a volunteer YOU will gain in various ways, a few examples are:

- ✓ Inter-personal skills
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Organizational skills
- ✓ Fundraising experience
- ✓ Technical support
- ✓ Enhanced knowledge of health
- ✓ Giving of ones self
- ✓ Relationship building

If at any time, a volunteer is not satisfied with either the nature of his/her assignment or the progress being made please do not hesitate to discuss it with the Recreation/Volunteer Coordinator. We value the services provided by our volunteers, therefore we try to accommodate the needs of both the resident and volunteer.

If a resident is promised a visit on a certain day, at a certain time, it is most important that this commitment be met. The resident will be waiting with great anticipation. If for some unforeseen reason it is not possible for the volunteer to come as planned, we should be notified prior to the appointment time so an explanation can be given to the resident.

A volunteer should introduce him/herself to the resident,,often in turn they will introduce themselves. Residents and volunteers are encouraged to respect each other's space.

A handshake is the favorable greeting gesture or a side hug. You should note that it is good practice to state your name every time you visit a resident, this will take the pressure off the resident to remember your name and put them at ease right away.



Pledge of Confidentiality

I understand and agree that I will hold in strict confidence any client, employee and organizational data and information to which I have access during my association with Ivy Meadows Continuing Care Centre. Further, I understand that violation of this pledge of confidentiality may result in dismissal, discontinuation of the clinical experience or discontinued access to the Home.

Signature

Date

Witness

Date

Alzheimer Care

Daily Living

Communication

The brain is extraordinarily complex. It is made up of several distinct parts, each with its own function. While these parts are separate, they must work together to complete the simplest task. As Alzheimer's disease affects each area of the brain, certain functions or abilities can be lost. One link in the chain of events may be missing and the person will need help or a coping mechanism to complete the task. It is important for caregivers to remember that changes in a person's behavior and ability to communicate may be related to the disease process.

How we communicate

Communication is the way we share information or exchange ideas. When one person conveys a message, the other expects a response. When we think of communication we usually think of language and Alzheimer's disease has a profound effect on language. The disease affects speech and the use of words, as well as the understanding of the words heard. As the disease progresses, language as a means of communicating becomes less effective. Caregivers need to use different ways of getting the message across and staying in touch. Communicating with a person with Alzheimer's disease requires belief, creativity, understanding, patience and skill.

Getting a message across

Set the stage

Communicating is always easier if other things are not happening at the same time. When trying to get your message across, make sure that there are few distractions. For example, if the TV or radio is distracting the person, turn it off.

Get the person's attention

Approach the person slowly and from the front. Gently touch a hand or arm to help get attention. Wait until she seems ready to listen before talking.

Make eye contact

Sit facing or standing in front of her, if possible. Keeping eye contact (if culturally appropriate) will help the person know who is speaking and may assist the person in concentrating on the message.

Speak slowly and clearly

Use simple words and short sentences to make the message clear. If the person has hearing problems, lowering the pitch of your voice is often better than increasing its volume.

Give one message at a time

Keep a conversation simple. Too many thoughts or ideas at one time can be confusing. Limit choices.

Pay attention

The person's reaction to what you say can give you some idea of how much is understood. Watch facial expressions and body movements. Respond to moods and emotions especially when the words don't make sense or are inappropriate.

Repeat important information

If you are uncertain the message was understood the first time, repeat it using the same words.

Show and talk

Use actions as well as words. For example, if it is time to go for a walk, point to the door or bring the person's coat or sweater to illustrate what you mean.

Take time

Allow the person time to respond. Interrupting can discourage further communication.

Getting a conversation started

You may not be sure if the person remembers who you are. Rather than "test the waters", here are some possibilities:

- "Hi, Mary, I came to visit you. Is this a good time?"
- "Hi, Bob, it's me, Jane! Okay if I stay and talk for a while?"

If the person says, "I don't know you," you can say, "I'm glad to meet you, my name is Jane. I enjoy spending time with you."

Questions to ask

It is usually better to ask close-ended questions rather than open-ended questions. Close-ended questions can be answered with "yes", "no", "maybe" or "I don't know" or "I don't remember." Here are some examples:

- "Do you like to watch television?"
- "Would you like to go for a walk with me?"
- "Does the sandwich taste good?"
- "I like hearing the story of your first job. Do you feel like telling me now?"

Some open-ended questions might work, such as:

- "How did your day go?"
- "How are you?"

When you can't understand what the person is saying

Sometimes a person will start a sentence and will not be able to finish it or the words don't make sense. One approach is to acknowledge what is happening: "It's frustrating for us, isn't it? You can't find the words you want and I'm having trouble guessing what you mean. I'm sorry." This approach maintains respect for the person in showing that you understand the situation. If the person doesn't want to continue, re-assure the person with a hug and suggest doing something in the meantime, "We can figure it out later, let's walk the dog."

Ways to indicate you are listening

Here are some suggestions to continue the conversation:

- "How interesting!"
- "Thanks for telling me that."
- "I see what you mean."
- "I didn't know that."
- "Is that so?"
- "How nice."
- "Okay."

Ways to say "no"

Sometimes you have to say "no". Here are a variety of ways to say it:

- "I wish I could."
- "That's an idea, but this isn't a good time."
- "I think it is too cold/hot today."
- "Did you notice it is raining/snowing today? How about we try another time?"

Ways to encourage involvement in an activity

Sometimes a person might be more interested in getting involved in an activity if it is an opportunity for the person to be independent. Here are some suggestions:

- "I'm looking forward to it. Would you like to come along?"
- "I'd enjoy it more if you kept me company."
- "I'm pretty hungry. Would you mind if I joined you?"
- "It's great to do things together."

Ways to end a conversation

Ending a conversation might mean that a meaningful time together has to come to an end. The person might feel lost or lonely. Remind the person how much you have enjoyed her company and that you will be back soon. Here are some suggestions:

- "I always feel good after talking to you."
- "It's so much fun talking to you. You tell great stories."
- "Seeing you is the best part of my day."

Things to keep in mind

- Feelings remain despite the losses caused by Alzheimer's disease. Feelings may be the only way a person understands what is going on.
- We all communicate by emotion, expression and touch. Holding a hand, or smiling when talking can convey more than any words.
- We should always be aware of our body language and of our facial expressions. Harsh glances can be just as negative as harsh words.
- The person must be included in conversations. It is painful to be talked about as if one isn't there.

Quality of life for people with Alzheimer's disease is largely dependent on their interactions and relationships with others. Maintaining a connection can be a complex and challenging process. Some days it may seem that nothing is understood, while on others much is exchanged and felt. Try to make the most of the good days. Let the person help you through the tough ones. Keep trying. It is important to remember that you are doing the best you can.

In addition

We are learning more about Alzheimer's disease and its care everyday -- much of it from caregivers like yourself who find solutions to problems and share them with others. You can call your [local Alzheimer Society](#) to find resources in your community. You can also exchange ideas by visiting the [Forums](#). There is information. There is help. You are not alone.

Resources:

1. The Alzheimer Journey, Module 4, *Understanding Alzheimer Disease: The link between brain and behaviour*, video and workbook series, the Alzheimer Society of Canada, 2002.
2. *Talking to Alzheimer's: Simple ways to connect when you visit with a family member or friend*, Claudia J. Strauss, New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2001, ISBN 1-57224-270-1.

Wheelchair Etiquette...

- Always ask the person using the wheelchair if he or she would like assistance BEFORE you help. It may not be needed or wanted.
- Don't hang or lean on a person's wheelchair because it is part of that person's personal body space.
- Speak directly to the person in the wheelchair, not to someone nearby as if the person in the wheelchair did not exist.
- If conversation lasts more than a few minutes, consider sitting down or kneeling to get yourself on the same level.
- Don't demean or patronize the person by patting them on the head.
- Give clear directions, including distance, weather conditions and physical obstacles that may hinder the person's travel.
- Don't classify persons who use wheelchairs as sick. Wheelchairs are used for a variety of non-contagious disabilities.
- When a person using a wheelchair "transfers" out of the wheelchair to a chair, toilet, car or bed, do not move the wheelchair out of reaching distance.
- Be aware of the person's capabilities. Some users can walk with aid and use wheelchairs to save energy and move quickly.
- It is ok to use terms like "running along" when speaking to a person who uses a wheelchair. The person is likely to express things the same way.
- Don't discourage children from asking questions about the wheelchair.
- Don't assume that using a wheelchair is in itself a tragedy. It is a means of freedom that allows the person to move about independently.

Robin Kettle