

Volunteer Link Spring 07

Education session focuses on how to use volunteer support better

Volunteer Resources has developed a new staff information session to enhance how staff engage and work with volunteers at Toronto Rehab. The focus is on effective management and supervision of volunteers within our organization. It is an important session, as the work of volunteers is an important component of care. Yet not all staff in volunteer supervisory roles have had training on how to effectively utilize volunteers.

Research has shown that a key indicator in the retention of volunteers is the relationship between the volunteers and their direct supervisors; therefore, it is critical that staff understand the significance and impact they have on a volunteer's experience here. We believe if staff members participate in effective volunteer supervision and feedback, then volunteer retention and satisfaction rates will continue to grow.

The first information session was held in the Spinal Cord Rehab Program in the fall and is in the process of being evaluated and enhanced. We hope to introduce the orientation to other departments at Toronto Rehab shortly.

"It is my expectation that staff will demonstrate their commitment daily by welcoming and engaging volunteers,"

– Karima Velji, Vice President, Patient Care and Chief Nursing Executive.



SCR Unit Support Volunteer Pilot Project; volunteer Natalie Danilov (left), Nurse Denise Anderson and patient Ron Ginger share a special moment.

New volunteer position in the Spinal Cord Rehab Program offers great opportunity to improve patient care

In December, we introduced a new unit support volunteer position in the Spinal Cord Rehabilitation Program at the Lyndhurst Centre to support the nursing staff and to promote direct interaction between volunteers and patients on a daily basis.

Dr. Gaetan Tardif, Vice President, Patient Care and Chief Medical Officer, said he supports the placement of unit support volunteers in the Spinal Cord Rehab (SCR) Program because this position "provides an opportunity for us to utilize volunteers in support of patient care goals and improvement initiatives."

Introducing this new role also opens up to 45 new volunteer positions in the program that had been operating at full capacity and unable to accept any

more volunteers. It was critical to look for creative volunteer opportunities as health care professionals in the program had identified a need for more volunteer support to provide "soft skills" to address non-patient care needs, allowing nurses to focus their attention on delivery of patient care.

The unit support volunteer position is currently in the pilot phase on Unit 1A in the SCR program. The model is being fine-tuned and will be rolled out to the rest of the program as well as to the Neuro Rehab — ABI unit at University Centre and one unit of the Complex Continuing Care Program at Queen Elizabeth Centre by the end of 2007.

– Karen Sacke

Increasing levels of coordinator support in an effort to provide more volunteer support at the unit level

Volunteer Resources will be increasing the coordinator presence at the Queen Elizabeth Centre and University Centre to improve service delivery to the staff, volunteers and volunteer applicants at these sites. This increase in coordinator support was made possible as a result of a change in our recruitment strategy.

Our current recruiter, Shannon Tebb, identified that the volume and demographics of applicants to Volunteer Resources has changed significantly since the development of the recruiter position in 2003. Successfully, we are now receiving over 600 applications annually; however, we are currently only receiving applications from students and adults who are in career transition. These two groups donate fewer hours, are shorter term, and are usually unavailable during normal business hours when the majority of our volunteering occurs. This is in no way negating the value of their contributions; however, we need to balance the numbers from these groups with retirees so that our programs and services can provide a consistent and reliable service to patients and staff. We have identified the need to focus our recruitment on the newly retired/baby boomer

population. (*See recruitment side bar.*)

With this change in recruitment strategy, there is a need to develop volunteer positions that will support program goals and provide a meaningful experience for the professional retiree. We need to increase coordinator presence so that they can dedicate time to the development of volunteer placements within their programs.

To help achieve our strategic goals, we will increase the coordinator presence at the Queen Elizabeth Centre by two days (from four to six days a month), with Christina Halladay supporting the work of Lucy McIntosh, and increase coordinator Lynda Watson's position at the University Centre to five days a week. The coordinators at all sites (i.e. Karen Sacke at Lyndhurst/Rumsey Centres) will be supported with increased volunteer administrative support to the volunteer resources department. Volunteers will be recruited to assist with orientating and training volunteers, etc.

We will evaluate these changes over the next year and make any adjustments identified as necessary. These changes are effective April 1, 2007.

– Alison Caird

Recruitment Update

In the months of September, October and November 2006, we received 170 volunteer applications of which 118 were rejected due to incompatible availability (e.g. they wanted to work in physiotherapy; however, they were only available in the evening when there are no openings for physiotherapy volunteers). Further, our current applicant demographics are consistently students and adults in career transition: two groups that donate fewer hours for shorter periods of time.

There is an identified need for Monday to Friday daytime volunteers at Toronto Rehab. With the recruitment of additional daytime volunteers, we are hoping to spread the workload and have the capacity to develop new programs and services in support of program improvement initiatives.

Clearly, there is a need for Volunteer Resources to focus our limited recruitment resources on developing partnerships with those organizations that will become a conduit to the early retiree/baby boomer population. With this in mind, we have identified key organizations that we will focus our recruitment attention on. Effective April 1st, recruitment will be led by the manager and appropriate site coordinator, volunteer resources.



◆ Supervisor of the year Craig Miller (second from left) shows off his Supervisor of Volunteer award to (from left) Richard Khoo, Acting Manager ABI Neuro – Cognitive Stream, Mark Bayley, Medical Director Neuro Rehab Program, Kim Lenahan Executive Director Patient Care for Geriatric, MSK and Neuro Rehab Programs and Lynda Watson, Volunteer Resources, HC/UC coordinator.

Volunteers may be asked questions about their work at Toronto Rehab

Preparations continue for Toronto Rehab's third Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) survey now that the first draft of the Self Assessment is complete. Surveyors will be onsite to interview staff, patients and volunteers on April 23 – 26, 2007.

What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a national system for assessing quality and safety in health care organizations.

As a volunteer, what do I need to know?

You may be asked questions about the organization by a surveyor. Some questions you may be asked are:

1. How satisfied are you in your volunteer work?
2. Do you feel you were adequately orientated and trained for your volunteer work?

3. Have you had your flu shot?
4. How does your volunteer work here contribute to patient safety?
5. What suggestions do you have on areas to improve?

How does accreditation work?

The accreditation process is voluntary. An organization will complete a self-assessment using standards that the CCHSA has predetermined. This assessment is submitted, and then surveyors attend on-site to meet with patients, families, community partners and staff. Afterward, the organization receives a detailed report that recognizes significant achievements and makes suggestions for improvement and future development.

Are accreditation surveys always successful?

If the CCHSA has concerns about the quality of services or safety of patients at an organization, it will not

automatically grant an award of achievement. Instead, the CCHSA will make recommendations and work with the organization to help it implement improvements.

What about Volunteer Resources?

Volunteer Resources' standards are incorporated into the human resource standards that deal specifically with planning, recruitment, selection, orientation, retention, job design, communication, on-going education, healthy work relationships and environment, and evaluation for the volunteer program.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the accreditation process, please connect with your coordinator, volunteer resources.

– Alison Caird and Susan Burns

Volunteer Profile: Julia Carew



How long have you been with Toronto Rehab?

I have been volunteering at the Toronto Rehab for about two months.

What do you do at Toronto Rehab?

I am a physiotherapy support volunteer at Hillcrest Centre. I assist and offer support to staff and patients participating in therapeutic activities in the Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation Program.

What is a typical day for you at Toronto Rehab?

I arrive at 8:45 am and obtain the weekend Rehab list of patients to receive physiotherapy. I then assist staff with preparing ice for patients, retrieving equipment and bringing patients to the physiotherapy gym. When patients have completed their therapeutic activities at about 11:00 a.m., I help clean up and return equipment to appropriate rooms.

What is the best part about your volunteer work?

The best part of the volunteer work is meeting the patients and learning how the physiotherapy is helping them. I often get the chance to discuss the various activities the patients participate in and the impact these activities have on rehabilitation.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I am a fourth-year chemical engineering

student at the University of Toronto. I am currently working on a thesis project involving investigating the effect of functional electrical stimulation on muscle fatigue. This method of rehabilitation is used for spinal cord injury and stroke patients. My experience as a volunteer at Toronto Rehab has been helpful in increasing my understandings of MSK rehab.

Any hobbies/interests?

My main hobbies include track and field, tennis, skating, and rollerblading. I have a strong interest in environmental issues and I hope to work towards contributing to a more sustainable environment as I develop my career.

What is something most people don't know about you?

I used to do ballet.



Notices:

National Volunteer Week – April 15-21, 2007

April 15, 2007 marks the kick off for 2007 National Volunteer Week, the time when Volunteer Resources formally thanks one of Toronto Rehab's most valuable assets — its volunteers. Toronto Rehab volunteers dedicate their time, talents and energy to making a positive impact in the lives of Toronto Rehab's patients, and they support several improvement initiatives throughout the hospital.

In order to celebrate their achievements, Volunteer Resources has decided to carry over its theme

from this year's Volunteer Recognition Dinner (*"Night of the Stars"*) and portray many of our shining stars around the hospital during National Volunteer Week. We may not have every volunteer's picture up; however, we want you to know we think of every volunteer as a star.

As Winston Churchill once said, *"We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give."*

– Thanks to all of our volunteers for giving.

– Karen Sacke

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Have a great idea you would like to share for our next newsletter? Please submit your ideas to: Lynda Watson, Coordinator, Volunteer Resources HC/UC (416) 597-3422 ext. 3058 or email: watson.lynda@torontorehab.on.ca

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Welcome to our New Volunteers:

Juvy Alix (LC)	Sergio Correia (QEC)	Alison Muir (UC)
Busaina Amijee (LC)	Sara Dumais (QEC)	Sayed Nasser (QEC)
Chris Barkley (QEC)	Sarah Ehsani (QEC)	Beverley Norris (LC)
Brittany Behar (LC)	Daniel Goyes (LC)	Sheryl Perocho (LC)
Nancy Bent (QEC)	Helena Gutierrez (LC)	James Regan (LC)
Olive Ann Carey (UC)	Arman Hamidian (LC)	Elizabeth Reske (LC)
Kathryn Carmichael (LC)	Lisa Huncar (UC)	Helen Santos (QEC)
Anna Marie Casem (LC)	Antonia Issa (LC)	Jamie Sifton (UC)
Rosemary Chackery (HC)	Dolma Lhakyi (QEC)	Pearl Ann Tabaloc (HC)
Ann-Lynn Chang (UC)	Wayne MacDonald (LC)	Jim Tait (UC)
Queenie Cheung (UC)	Larry Melton (LC)	Lev Vaisman (LC)
Albert Cho (LC)	Paul Menard (QEC)	Mary Ann Vella (QEC)
Jenna Cohen (QEC)	Jennifer Mo (LC)	Clare Whitehead (UC)
	James Moon (QEC)	Susannah Wong (LC)



Garden Party – QEC

Theme: 1950's Party!

Saturday, June 23, 2007

All are welcome