



## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION PACKAGE

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Doane House Hospice (DHH) and Margaret Bahen Hospice (MBH).

Hospice palliative care seeks to relieve suffering, improve the quality of life for persons who are living with, or dying from, a life limiting, terminal illness, and support their families/loved ones. Hospice care is offered from time of diagnosis continuing until end of life and beyond through bereavement.

Doane House Hospice, a community hospice, and Margaret Bahen Hospice, a residential hospice, are partners working together to ensure a seamless continuum of hospice palliative care services to meet the needs of individuals and their loved ones.

### Margaret Bahen Hospice

Margaret Bahen Hospice is a residential hospice with 10 suites providing palliative care support in a home-like environment to York Region residents at the "end of life" at no cost. It provides 24/7 nursing-medical care, social work services, spiritual support, pharmacy & complimentary therapies to care for residents and their families.

### Doane House Hospice

Doane House Hospice is a community-based hospice offering compassionate care to people who have a life-limiting diagnosis/illness, caregivers, and those who are bereaved by the death of a family member or friend living in north Aurora, Newmarket, Bradford, and East Gwillimbury. Non-medical support is offered through programs both on-site and within the community designed to support our clients' physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs as they navigate their illness and treatment journey. All services are offered free of charge.

While services are offered free of charge at both Hospices, we rely on the generosity of the community to make donations to cover our essential cost each year.

### Volunteers are our Greatest Strength

Margaret Bahen Hospice and Doane House Hospice rely on a dedicated team of volunteers. Currently over 150 volunteers provide support to clients and residents; assist with fundraising and events; help with administration and promote community awareness. Many of our programs and services are primarily delivered by trained volunteers who are supported and supervised by our professional staff.

As essential members of our team, volunteers enable the hospices to provide the best quality care with dignity, respect and kindness to residents and clients. Their gift of time and empathetic support makes a positive, meaningful impact every day and enriches the hospice experience for our clients, residents, and their families/loved ones.

Hospice volunteers come from all walks of life. They vary in age, ethnicity, faith, gender, and professional background. Some people volunteer because they want to do something meaningful, some just like to help people; some people have experienced the loss of a loved one and the experience has changed their lives. Each volunteer plays a key role in the provision of service, whether directly or indirectly to clients and residents. We believe that their passion, commitment, and new ideas help us achieve our mission: to provide the best care.

## Client Service Volunteer Opportunities

Client service volunteers provide direct support to clients, residents and caregivers.

The process to become a Client Service Volunteer is extensive and requires great commitment. Successful volunteers can explain why they are drawn to this type of work, have some knowledge of loss, and are aware of the different ways people experience grief.

Successful volunteers are able to listen. They understand that volunteer work is not a place to share their own opinions and understand the difference they are making in people's lives.

Client Service Volunteers must be 18 years or older. If you have experienced the death of a significant person in your life, we ask that you wait one year to apply to be a client service volunteer.

### Client Service Volunteer Roles at Doane House Hospice

- **Visiting Volunteers** Visit clients with a life-threatening illness in their home weekly to offer companionship, support, and caregiver relief. Commitment: 2-4 hours per week
- **Oasis Program Volunteers** The Oasis program provides support to individuals living with a life-threatening illness allowing them to get out of the house. Volunteers interact with clients to provide support with activities and lunch. Commitment: 4 ½ hours once a month.
- **Caregiver Support Group Facilitators** Facilitate weekly support groups for caregivers. The facilitators create a safe place for caregivers to share their experiences, learn new skills, and engage in self-care. Volunteers must complete additional training or have an appropriate background. Commitment: 3-4 hours per week
- **Bereavement Volunteers** Support bereaved individuals on an individual basis or by facilitating a closed bereavement support group. Volunteers must have supported our clients for a year or more and must complete bereavement training or have appropriate background. Commitment: 3-5 hours per week for 6-to-8-week groups. Groups run 4-5 times per year. 1-2 hours weekly for individualized support

### Client Service Volunteer Roles at Margaret Bahen Hospice

- **Complementary Therapy Volunteers** Individuals qualified in Reiki, massage, therapeutic touch and other complementary therapies offer their services free of charge to residents and caregivers. Their services support residents in managing physical discomfort and pain related to their illness and support caregivers to manage their stress. Commitment: Flexible to fit volunteer schedule

- **Companionship Volunteers** Provide one-to-one support to residents at their bedside by offering a listening ear. Their support helps the resident cope with their situation and anticipatory grief. They also support family members and visitors, assisting them to cope with losing a loved one. Commitment: 4 hours a week
- **Reception Volunteers** Welcome and support visitors and family members providing information to orient people to the hospice. Commitment: 4 hours a week
- **Kitchen Volunteers** Bake treats and prepare light meals for residents, their families, and visitors as well as assist with the daily maintenance of the kitchen. Safe food handling training is provided. Commitment: 4 hours a week
- **Therapy Dog Volunteers** Visit with their trained therapy dogs to provide comfort and companionship to residents, family members, and visitors. Dogs must be trained and tested through the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program or Partner Dogs of Canada. Commitment: 1 hour per week

### Administrative, Community Awareness & Event Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers in administrative, community awareness and event roles provide necessary support behind the scenes that is crucial for the operations of the hospices.

- **Administrative Volunteers** Assist staff with daily administrative responsibilities including reception work, filing, data entry, internet research, assistance with social media, and program-related responsibilities. Commitment: 3-4 hours per week
- **Gardening Volunteers** Assist in maintaining the gardens and outdoor space including planting, weeding, and raking leaves. Commitment: May to October, 2-4 hours per week
- **Newsletter Volunteers** Plan and produce the monthly e-newsletter for volunteer services. This includes researching, interviewing, writing articles, providing content, and assisting with layout and graphic content. Commitment: 4-6 hours per month
- **Death Café Volunteers** Plan and facilitate an informal discussion group to increase awareness of death. Volunteers complete additional training or have appropriate background experience. Commitment: approx. 8-10 hours per month 4 times per year
- **Social Media Volunteers** Assist with the management and maintenance of our social media accounts and websites. Commitment: 4-6 hours per month
- **Hospice Ambassadors** Educate people about hospice care and hospice services. Volunteers represent our hospices at community events and as speakers at community groups to recruit new volunteers and raise funds for the hospice. Commitment: 4 hours per month

- **Seamstress Volunteers** People with sewing experience are entrusted to create a Memory Bear using the clothing of a loved one who has died. Memory bears are precious keepsakes. The pattern and material are provided. Commitment: 4 hours per month
- **Volunteer Services Assistant** Supports the running of volunteer services. Responsibilities include data entry, filing, and program-related responsibilities. Commitment: 4 hours per week
- **Event Volunteers** Assist with fundraising and awareness events including Hike for Hospice, and Tee Off for Hospice as both committee members and on the day of the events. Commitment: Seasonal for committee work, must be flexible
- **Entertainment Volunteers** People with musical talent who entertain residents, families, and visitors. Commitment: Flexible to fit volunteer schedule

\* For High School Student volunteering visit [www.doanehospice.org](http://www.doanehospice.org) or email [volunteers@myhospice.ca](mailto:volunteers@myhospice.ca)

## Process to Become a Volunteer

Our hospices strive to offer excellent hospice palliative care and an exceptional hospice experience to clients, residents, and their loved ones. Our rigorous onboarding and training process prepares potential volunteers to be successful in their roles.



**Please note that the process of becoming a volunteer takes anywhere from 3-5 months**

## Things to Consider When Applying to be a Hospice Volunteer

Volunteer services are an integral part of our hospice program. In considering whether hospice volunteering is what you wish to do, please think about these ideas.

- You have an interest in the hospice concept and have the desire to help others. You have an awareness of what is drawing you to hospice work and are willing to explore this in depth
- You are sensitive to the special needs of dying people and their families and have chosen to work to support them.
- You are aware of the losses that you have experienced and your way of grieving, and you have a perspective about life and death, loss and grief. If you have experienced a significant personal loss within the past year, one which you are still actively grieving, please consider carefully your present ability to take on a demanding training program. This work can intensify your own grief. Each applicant will be reviewed individually in this regard.
- Working at Hospice can be stressful at times. It is important that you have a good support system and ways to take care of yourself, meeting change, and the unexpected with ease.
- You are open to others who may have different values, beliefs, and ways of living. You are able to listen well and to validate others where they are, rather than where you might believe they should be.
- As you may be called on to work in a variety of areas and perform many different tasks, self-reliance, flexibility, and adaptability are assets. Realistic awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses and the ability to set limits are important.
- You will be working as part of a team, and be willing to explore ways of supporting and being supported by other team members. You are dedicated to your own growth and on-going learning. Your personal strengths will likely include warmth, concern for other people, sense of humour, and approachability.
- You are willing to commit yourself to the training and to the volunteer responsibilities and to gaining an understanding of the standards and policies of hospice care.
- You are not bringing personal agendas or missions to your hospice work and understand that our work is not to change people but to be with them where they are.

## Hospice Palliative Care Training for Client Service Volunteers

Endorsed by Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, Introduction to Core Concepts in Hospice Palliative care is a required 24-hour training course for all hospice volunteers providing direct client support. The program offers an excellent overview of the role of a volunteer as well as many aspects of providing hospice palliative care to both the person facing illness and the care provider. Volunteers in administrative and community outreach roles are highly encouraged to enroll in the training.

**Course Certificate Requirements:** 100% attendance, active participation, and coursework completion.

The course is offered 4 times per year through Palcare, one of our family of organizations.

## Course Outline

### Introduction to Hospice Palliative Care

- Identify the definition, values, philosophy, and principles of hospice palliative care while recognizing the continuum and different models of care
- Understanding common fears, different methods of coping, and common needs of death and illness for both the individuals and family

### Culture and Ethical Issues in Palliative Care

- Core components of culture and diversity, how culture can impact the care of others, and the importance it holds to the process of dying and grief
- Basic principles and the framework for ethical decision making
- The importance of respecting decisions and the dilemmas that may occur during hospice palliative care

### Spiritual Issues in Palliative Care

- Understand the difference between religion and spirituality; while being aware of personal concepts and attitudes towards spirituality, and identifying the spiritual needs of clients
- The impact of illness, grief, and death on both clients' and family members' spirituality and religious beliefs

### Complementary Therapies and Care for the Caregiver

- Identify the different types of caregivers, the physical and psychological signs and symptoms of stress; and factors that influence stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue
- Identifying ways to cope with stressors and self-care resources
- Learn about the benefits of relaxation through complementary therapies

### Infection Prevention and Delegated Acts

- Identify the parts of the chain of infection, and methods of prevention
- Learn about the importance of hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, and the basics of general cleaning

### Family

- Understanding of the family system and how roles in the family may change in the response to illness and death
- The challenges and impact of a life-threatening illness on the family
- Identifying the scope of support you can offer the family as a volunteer

### Pain and Symptom Management

- Recognize the unique experience of pain, the impact of pain on the client and the family, and the importance of pain management
- Importance of assessments and each team member's role in assessing pain and the various comfort measures

### Personal Perspectives

- Explore personal attitudes and feelings about illness, death, dying, and loss and recognize potential individual biases
- Understand common needs, challenges, and issues that clients and families face, how you can provide support while being aware of your own emotional and psychosocial issues related to the matter
- Identifying common ways illness impacts families and the most common illnesses that would be encountered with some basic treatments both traditional and complementary

### Communication and Listening Skills

- Using active listening skills and identifying the elements that interfere with good communication and the importance of using sensitive and effective ways of communication
- Recognize personal values, beliefs, and attitudes toward death and loss
- The importance of maintaining confidentiality, the value, and use of silence and boundaries

### Advance Care Planning

- Recognize dying as a holistic natural process, the common signs and symptoms that occur when death occurs, and the importance of Do Not Resuscitate
- The difference between a medical emergency and imminent death, and the scope of support a volunteer can provide

### Grief and Bereavement

- Identify and recognize anticipatory, responsive, resilient, and complicated patterns of grief and the tasks of mourning as well as the different factors of the grieving process
- Recognize how your own experiences impact interactions with others who are grieving and the scope of grief support a volunteer can provide



**IS THIS YOU?**

I value life. I want to help people live their fullest possible life. I believe that people with life-limiting illnesses are not defined by their illness. Everyone has a story to tell, memories to share and new memories to make. I accept people where they are and respect the choices they have made. I have been through some things in my life that have helped me become emotionally mature and comfortable with the phases of life's journey. Moments count and I would love to share some real quality time with someone who might be facing end-of-life challenges and wants to stay in the comfort of their own home. I know how stressful and emotional this time can be for caregivers too. And I would like to offer some time-off for a family member to take care of themselves. I can give someone 3 or 4 hours of my time each week knowing it would be valuable to me and to the individual and their family. I am in a place in my own life, where I have the time and I want to use it in a meaningful way. I am excited about participating in the hospice/palliative care training program and know that will prepare me even more to be present and compassionate during someone else's journey.

**ARE YOU A HOSPICE VOLUNTEER?**

For more information visit [www.doanehospice.org](http://www.doanehospice.org) and [www.myhospice.ca](http://www.myhospice.ca) or contact us: Email [volunteers@myhospice.ca](mailto:volunteers@myhospice.ca) Phone: (905) 967-1500 ext. 137

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Doane House Hospice & Margaret Bahen Hospice are part of the Better Living family of organizations

