



## **Volunteer Ward Companion Role Description**

St. Raphael's Hospice Mission Statement clearly states that we value the contribution made by each member of Staff and **Volunteer**. Without volunteers we would not be able to offer the high standard of service to our patients that we are able to offer at this time. Volunteers' contribution cannot be over emphasised.

### **ROLE PROFILE**

Ward Companions support our patients and those important to them on our In-Patient Unit (IPU) The ward companion can offer 'a listening ear', company and practical support. The volunteers in this role support the nurses, nursing associates and healthcare assistants. No specialist skills are needed but a volunteer must have an ability to get on with people, be happy to chat and a desire to help. St Raphael's Hospice will provide a full induction to the role as well as regular support. As a ward companion you will be sensitive to the needs of terminally ill patients and have an ability to share time with them as directed by them and at their pace, taking in to account their energy levels and limitations.

### **TIME COMMITMENT**

Volunteer Ward Companions support the IPU morning, afternoon and evening (a twilight cover from 745pm onwards) usually for 3 hours at a time and are given the information required to fulfil this role i.e. name and age of patients, nutritional information; any sensory impairment and any additional appropriate information at the beginning of each session either by the Ward Clerk or by one of the members of the clinical team. Volunteers are not informed of a patient's diagnosis but are given sufficient information in order to provide appropriate support to the patients.

The Ward Companion has a responsibility towards the patients and those close to them to ensure that she/he does not carry out any delegated duty for which she/he does not have the necessary skill and/or knowledge.

### **SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES**

- Have a genuine interest in other people and an understanding of palliative and end of life care.
- Be a good active listener and possess good communication skills
- Have a non-judgemental attitude and a sensitive empathic manner
- Enjoy working as a member of a team
- Be respectful and maintain confidentiality at all times both inside and outside the hospice
- Be resilient and have an ability to cope with an emotionally challenging environment
- Demonstrate commitment to our values and framework of behaviours

## **TASKS/ACTIVITIES**

- Interaction with patients to include sitting with, talking to ,reading to etc.
- Interaction with those important to the patients as needed especially on admission
- Help patients and/or those important to them with our In-Patient Survey when needed.
- Report any observed patient changes or voiced concerns/anxieties to clinical staff
- Offer drinks to patients adhering to any nutritional or cultural requirements as indicated on the handover sheet given to the Ward Companion at the beginning of each session.
- Check flowers in patients' rooms changing the water every 48 hours as according to the date stickers on the vases and discarding flowers when needed. The date stickers should be made available to the ward companion when they are on the ward to ensure timely changes are made and for information for the next colleague to update if needed.

## **DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress for the role to reflect the professional image of the hospice. A volunteer badge and access control pass must be worn.

## **VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT:**

- Give out their personal details
- Give any medical or financial advice
- Witness any documents
- Administer medication

## **VOLUNTEER ARE EXPECTED TO**

- Complete the St Raphael's mandatory training modules via Blue Steam Training appropriate to this role
- Attend any bespoke additional training sessions offered and support meetings
- Inform the hospice if there are any hazards or health or safety issues detected.
- Be familiar with the relevant policies needed for this role e.g. Infection Control, Information Governance ,Problem solving Policy.
- Understand the boundaries of the role requesting assistance and advice where appropriate.

The Ward Companion Volunteer Role Description does not intend to cover all aspects of the role. There may be other duties you will be asked to perform. If any Volunteer is asked to perform a task about which they feel unhappy, they must feel free to say so.