

2011 / 2012 Year in Review

Palliative and Supportive Care Volunteers

Caring for our community at end of life

Volunteers are active participants in providing compassionate care to those who are terminally ill and to their families, having dedicated more than 10,100 hours in 2011. Volunteers are carefully screened and selected, before undergoing 33 hours of initial training. Ongoing educational opportunities foster an environment of continuous learning for volunteers to continue to grow, enabling us to better support each person to live each day in comfort and dignity.

North Shore Hospice

Clients of the North Shore Hospice received 2,600 hours of volunteer support throughout 2011. 54 volunteers provided mealtime support and companionship. Many clients of the hospice and the palliative day program found comfort and stress relief in the form of hand rubs, foot rubs and energy work. Some clients have created a beautiful lasting legacy by working with a trained volunteer to record their stories.

Palliative Care Unit - Lions Gate Hospital

Clients on the Palliative Care Unit experienced 1,650 hours of mealtime support by 48 volunteers. They may have enjoyed a visit, or fresh toast, tea or perhaps a freshly brewed cup of coffee. Perhaps they savored the comfort of a warm blanket, or a wonderfully relaxing hand rub or foot rub by a trained volunteer.

Palliative Community Support

Some people on the palliative care program enjoy a weekly volunteer visit in their homes. The visit may offer respite to family caregivers, or it may provide an opportunity for companionship for the client. The client may wish to simply sit and chat, read, meet for tea, go for walks, or perhaps savor a wonderful foot rub. 18 volunteers spent more than 350 hours supporting clients in their homes.

Bereavement Support

Weekly bereavement relaxation groups are offered twice yearly providing the professional assistance of a counsellor and the support of volunteers offering relaxation techniques. Some bereaved clients participate in weekly walking groups led by volunteers. They walk along Ambleside Beach, and gather afterwards for coffee, conversation and companionship at a local coffee shop.

Plans for 2012

During 2012 we will continue to recruit and train new Palliative and Supportive Care volunteers to enable us to better support the growing needs of North Shore clients. Another new role is unfolding for volunteers with the imminent start of monthly Caregiver Support groups. Through the upcoming changes and expansion of our team, we will continue to provide support in the North Shore Hospice, on the Palliative Care Unit, in the Chemotherapy Clinic and within our community.

"It's a privilege to be able to do this work. Until you've been there, you can have no idea how rewarding it can be." - Frankie Hester, Volunteer



Family Services of the North Shore is an accredited not-for-profit community based agency that offers counselling, support and education. We also lead the provincial work in eating disorders prevention. Family Services of the North Shore has been caring for the community for over 60 years. Our high-profile, proactive presence throughout the province connects the community through a variety of programs that create an environment for all families and individuals to thrive.



We recognize the continuing contribution of the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver and the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.



Caring for our Community

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