

Hospice Volunteer Training Curriculum Outline

Introduction to Hospice

History and philosophy of hospice movement

- Principals of hospice care
- The hospice interdisciplinary team
- Ethics in hospice care

Multidisciplinary Management

Team approach to health care

- Coordinating patient care leads to better outcomes
- Team members and their roles
- Plan of care
- Alternative choices

Communication Skills

Verbal and non-verbal communication

- Active listening; use of reflection
- Facilitating expression of content and feelings
- Communicating trustworthiness, competency
- Being nonjudgmental

Stages of Dying

Final weeks and days

Approaching death signs

- Physical, emotional, spiritual, and social changes

Knowing when the death has occurred

Pain & Symptom Management

Patient pain and the volunteer role

- Companionship
- Accept the patient as a unique person
- Encouragement
- Remember importance of laughter
- Reinforce relaxation

Psychological Perspectives

Types of emotions and feelings

How to support patient and family

- Not all psychological issues can be fixed
- Listening
- Support services

Family Dynamics

Household as unit of care

- Group dynamics and family dynamics
- Effect of stress on a system
- Healthy boundaries

Personal Death Awareness

Personal experience with death:

- Exercises to facilitate discussion
- Empathy for the client and family experience

Care & Comfort

Universal Precautions

Comfort measures in the home

Exposure to hands-on care by volunteers

Safety in the home

Caring for the caregivers

- Stress management and self-care

Spirituality and Hospice

Religion and spirituality

- Spiritual assessment
- Spiritual pain and comfort measures
- Rituals, music, and art in the spiritual expression
- Role of volunteer in spiritual care

Grief and Bereavement

Loss, grief, and bereavement

- Manifestations of grief
- Models of the grief process
- The role of the volunteer in bereavement support
- Complicated grief

Role of the Volunteer

Policies and procedures

- Review of volunteer assignment
- Volunteer responsibilities

The Funeral

What happens upon death

Discussion of funeral options

This training includes 12 hours of Zoom training supplemented by a manual with articles and handouts relevant to each topic. Homework may be required in addition to class time.