



Volunteer Resources & Engagement Department  
Volunteer Assignment Description  
**Therapy Support Volunteer**

*Goal of Volunteer Programs at Island Health:*

Volunteers support Island Health's vision of 'excellent health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time' by enriching the experience of patients, residents, clients, visitors, and staff through the gifts of time, experience, and compassion.

*Purpose of this Volunteer Assignment:*

Therapy Support Volunteers support and encourage resident / patient / client participation in an individual or group therapy program. Volunteer roles are under the direction of Therapy Services (Occupational, Physical, Music, or Speech & Language Therapists). Examples include: drumming group assistant, exercise class assistant, rehabilitation unit volunteer.

*Volunteer Duties and Responsibilities:*

The role of the Therapy Support Volunteer may include any or all of the following:

- Check in with key staff contact, or their designate, at start of shift.
- Read the safety communication board (if there is one for your program area):
  - o Observe for any communication regarding violence prevention, precautions (e.g. illness), or environmental hazards / risks (e.g. toilet blocked, water spill).
- If your role includes meeting with or assisting residents / patients / clients to move from their room to a common area (walking beside or pushing their wheelchair), please be aware of the following:
  - o For safety reasons, when in a patient / resident's room always leave yourself a clear path to the exit (the bed or other furniture should not be between you and the door).
  - o Ask staff for clarification if there are any flags associated with patients / residents with whom you may interact.
  - o Follow safe wheelchair handling procedures.
- Assist staff with set-up and clean-up of the space or equipment, as needed.
- Provide encouragement and support to program participants at the direction of staff.

(site specific information added as required)

*It is important that Therapy Support Volunteers are aware of the following limits and boundaries to their role:*

- Volunteers do not deliver food or drink to anyone unless specifically instructed to do so by a responsible staff member. Often people have special dietary restrictions, so if a resident/patient/client says they are thirsty or hungry, check with staff.
- Volunteers do not lift, transfer, or position residents/patients/clients in and out of beds, wheelchairs or vehicles. Volunteers also do not bathe, toilet, or help dress. All those actions require special training and are the responsibility of staff.
- Volunteers do not roll beds up or down, or adjust bedside railings. If adjustment is needed, please let staff know.
- Unless it is specifically listed in the Assignment Description (or Assignment Manual) volunteers do not stock supplies, perform cleaning duties, or support any clerical duties. These tasks may be included in a staff job description. It is important to understand the boundary between the volunteer role and the employee role, and to respect the staff who fill that role.

***Volunteer Resources and Engagement: Trusted. Included. Valued***



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- Volunteers must not become personally involved in a patient / client / resident's care, give professional advice, or offer counselling, medical, financial or legal advice.
  - o Volunteers must not sign any legal documents for patients/ clients / residents.
- Volunteers (and staff) do not wear scented products.

(site specific information added as required)

In Volunteer Resources and Engagement our volunteers are:

*Trusted:* *Our volunteers are trusted to make good choices.*

- Always respect the confidentiality of all patients/ residents / clients.
- Follow hand hygiene procedures (when arriving, throughout your shift, and when leaving) and use any other personal protective equipment (such as masks) as directed.
- Wear Island Health Photo ID on the provided red lanyard during your shift.
- Complete all annual training renewals when requested (e.g.: Confidential Information Management e-Learning module)
- Practice good boundaries, including:
  - o Not accepting or giving gifts or money;
  - o Not offering advice or becoming involved in patient / client / resident's care;
  - o Not sharing personal information (i.e. personal phone number or email address...);
  - o Not using personal electronic devices while volunteering.

*Included:* *Our volunteers are integral to our service delivery.*

- Please notify us if you cannot attend a shift. Staff rely on volunteers for added support and will need to make accommodations if you cannot attend.
- Volunteers have equal rights to a [Respectful Workplace](#). We're all in this together.

*Valued:* *Our volunteers are appreciated and seen as part of the Island Health family.*

- Hours spent volunteering are recorded, allowing us to recognize each volunteer's time, provide references, and keep important statistics for our department.
- Letters of reference: Please see our website page [Recognition & Celebration](#) for details.
- If an accident or incident (involving you or something you have witnessed) happens while you are volunteering please see your nearest staff member for support.

*Skills and Abilities*

The following skills and abilities will benefit a Therapy Support Volunteer:

- Good listening and communication skills;
- A calm and friendly demeanour;
- Adherence to infection control, safe wheelchair handling, and other related procedures;
- Ability to engage the residents/patients/clients in general conversation and to create a great experience;
- Ability to take direction from staff;
- An interest in the therapy field.

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