

Regulatory Citation(s): 42 CFR 418.78
L-Tag(s): 641, 642

POLICY: The Volunteer Program is designed to meet Federal regulations for the provision of volunteer services to hospice patients and their caregivers. The Volunteer Program is monitored on a continuous basis to ensure it is functioning as intended and meeting the needs of the hospice program and its patients.

PROCEDURE:

1. Volunteers are supervised by the Volunteer Coordinator and are used in prescribed roles including, but not limited to:
 - a. providing emotional and practical support to patients and families;
 - b. providing respite for the patient’s caregiver;
 - c. assisting in bereavement education and support services;
 - d. offering specialty services such as music, pet therapy, massage therapy following respective policies to patient/caregiver;
 - e. assisting with program administration and development; and
 - f. assisting with office duties.

2. Recruitment efforts are sufficient to ensure that the hospice has enough volunteers to meet the needs of patients and families and the requirements of Federal regulations. All recruitment efforts are documented in the volunteer program binder.

3. Volunteers are selected regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, religious creed, sexual orientation, or disability.

4. Applicants for volunteer positions are carefully screened and are required to complete an application form and interview process.

5. Volunteers are required to complete an orientation and training program prior to assignment to patients and caregivers. All volunteers must complete all pre-employment screening and background checks that are required for all employees.

6. A personnel file is maintained for each volunteer.

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7. Volunteers are assigned to patients and their caregivers based on assessed needs and appropriateness.
8. Volunteers report to and are supervised by the Volunteer Coordinator and are provided with ongoing support and continuing education.
9. Volunteers are required to document all contact with patients and their families and meet the documentation requirements of Lifesong Hospice and Palliative Care.
10. The Volunteer Coordinator maintains records of volunteer activity and records levels of volunteer participation and cost savings on a monthly and annual basis. The volunteer program data is reported at QAPI meetings.
11. Ongoing efforts to retain volunteers include, but are not limited to:
 - a. regular and consistent contact with the Volunteer Coordinator and other members of hospice's IDG;
 - b. attendance at IDG meetings, when possible; and
 - c. notification of and invitation to in-services provided to hospice staff and/or specifically for volunteers.
12. The Volunteer Coordinator completes an annual performance evaluation for each "active" volunteer.
13. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for organizing and updating the "Volunteer Program Binder" which includes all information on Volunteer Recruitment, Breakdown of Volunteer Hours, Outstanding Volunteer Requests, Volunteer Appreciation Efforts, Volunteer Appreciation, and a current Volunteer Roster

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