Caring Communities Program Project Details

Organisation: Blue Care Brisbane Central Region (Volunteer Services)

Name of Project: Palliative Care Volunteer Program

Length of Project: 2 years

Project Summary:
The purpose of the Project is to explore the provision of volunteer palliative care services within the community with the purpose of providing social support and practical assistance to complement existing professional services in the area of palliative care.

Partners in this initiative include the Blue Care Brisbane Central Region Volunteer Program, Blue Care Specialist Centre, the Wesley Hospital, Mt. Olivet, Princess Alexandra Hospital, and the Centre of Palliative Care Research and Education.

The project seeks to:

- identify the special needs of persons with a terminal illness wishing to remain at home and the support that can be provided through appropriate volunteer services.
- develop resources and training materials for volunteers, whose care may be extended to grooming, massage, music therapy and overnight respite.
- The development of a model of interagency service delivery where a pool of volunteers can be recruited, trained and shared among partner agencies facilitating support to patients and their families as they move between hospital and home.

A project officer would be recruited for the project.

Project Objectives:

1. Establish a model of service delivery which would support a partnership approach to the provision of volunteer palliative care support, the objective being to better coordinate and utilise volunteers to meet the individual needs of consumers.

2. Establish guidelines to ensure the provision of uniform, quality volunteer palliative care support services.

3. Develop training materials to more effectively prepare and educate volunteers in the area of palliative care support.

4. Expand the scope of volunteer activity to include companionship; overnight respite options; escorted transport to medical and other appointments, grooming, music therapy, massage, outings and recreational activities.

5. To offer consumers a range and choice of volunteer services which complements professional services currently provided and which would support them in remaining at home and maintaining their independence.

Project Activities:

1. Meeting with partner organisations to schedule Steering Committee meeting dates.
2. Advertisement and recruitment of a project officer.
3. The Project Officer in consultation with the Steering Committee to establish a Reference Group which include partners, other key stakeholders, representatives from community agencies, volunteers and clients.
4. The Project Officer in consultation with the Reference group to:

a) Develop guidelines for the utilisation of volunteers in the area of palliative care support.

b) Establish policies, protocols and procedures for palliative care support volunteers including rights and responsibilities; role / activity descriptions; and a Volunteer Handbook for Palliative Care Support in line with the National Standards on Volunteering.
c) Develop accredited training, materials and resources.
d) Promote the Volunteer Palliative Care Support Network Initiative within the partner Volunteer Programs; other Service Providers; and the community.
e) Recruit suitable volunteers

5. Develop a model of interagency palliative care support volunteer services which allows volunteers to move with consumers as they access services through partner organisations.