



# National Council for Hospice and Palliative Professionals

**BEREAVEMENT PROFESSIONAL SECTION  
AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2016**

**BEREAVEMENT VOLUNTEERS:  
SCREENING, TRAINING AND  
UTILIZING**

# NCHPP: What is it?



- NCHPP is a collaborative of 15 discipline specific professional sections advancing end-of-life care within their disciplines.
- NCHCPP's on-line resources, forums and networking will help you grow professionally, find new solutions, contribute to the field, and elevate the national profile of your program.

# My.NHPCO



- Professional communities
- Discussion Posts
- Monthly Chats
- Library entries
- Blog

# Please contact us...



- if you have questions about membership
- if you have topics you would like us to discuss
- if you would like a mentor
- if you would like to become a section committee member

# FYI



- Please know that this discussion is just that, a discussion. We will present ideas and solicit input, questions, and comments from the audience. Our hope is that this can be an informative exchange of ideas. Please feel free to add your questions in the chat feature online. We welcome your participation.

# Today's Chat: BR Volunteers



- We all know that volunteers are a vital part of the hospice team. They can also help bereavement in a multitude of ways and the Medicare COPs require that volunteer utilization. This call will explore various points to consider when choosing candidates to assist with the bereavement team to contribute to a stronger bereavement and volunteer partnership.



- Facilitated by Sarah Layton, MSW, LCSW and co-facilitated by Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA
  - Special guest star: Libby Jones (Comfort Care Hospice) from the Volunteer Management Steering Committee

# Where do we find BR volunteers?



- **Volunteermatch.com**-very specific description
  - **LinkedIn, Craigslist**
- College fairs, practicum fairs, community fairs, church bulletins, word of mouth
- Partnerships with schools of social work, chaplaincy or closely related field
- Families of past patients (special considerations)
- Other ideas?



# We found a potential volunteer, now what?



- **The importance of an interview**
  - What are their motivations for volunteering?
  - What is their attitude about death and dying?
  - What is their personal experience with death and dying?
  - What is their comfort level?
  - What is their educational background?
  - Do they come across as calm and comforting?
  - What is your general impression of this individual?
- **The importance of references:**
  - How would the reference describe this person?
  - Would they recommend them for this type of sensitive assignment?
  - Is the potential volunteer reliable and trustworthy?



## Next steps:



- Be sure to have a discussion with your volunteer coordinator to make sure that you are in agreement about the appropriateness of the volunteer. Also make sure that all paperwork is in order to ensure compliance with the volunteer department.
- After the interview, reference and background check, schedule a training with the volunteer in conjunction with your volunteer coordinator



# Training



- In addition to a core volunteer training, it is considered best practice to conduct bereavement specific training, ideally by the BC
- A suggested outline from the Hospice Volunteer Program Resource Manual follows:
  - Role of the Bereavement Volunteer
  - Advanced Grief and Loss Intervention
  - Advanced Communication Skills
  - Bereavement Services
  - **Bereavement competency**

## Other considerations:

- When to refer
- When to be concerned
- Job description, who volunteer reports to
- Bereavement documentation



# Appropriate Assignments



- **Administrative tasks:**

- (counts towards the %5 calculation)
- Filing
- Mailings
- Auditing
- Data entry
- Copying
- Others?

- **Direct Care tasks:**

- (counts towards the %5 calculation)
- Phone calls to low risk families
- Social visits to bereaved individuals
- Support group assistance
- Others?

**Non-direct/Administrative Tasks:**

(cannot be included in 5%)

- speak at a memorial service
- community outreach
- assisting with gifts for the bereaved

# Working alongside the VC



- Communication is a must when using bereavement volunteers
- Communication begins the moment a bereavement volunteer referral comes in
- The BC is in charge of assigning BR activities, but the VC is responsible for volunteer record keeping and is the ultimate manager of that volunteer
  - A co-management situation (can be helpful when it comes to annual evals)
- Concerns about the appropriateness should be discussed between departments as soon as possible

# Questions or Comments?





[www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org)



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