

Utilizing Volunteers and Interns in Bereavement Services

April 3 – Bereavement Professional Chat Box Transcript

Marie Sharp: I also use recruitment letters to survivors. I have not received any volunteer from them. Does anyone have the perfect letter they would share?

Kristine Ryan: I was wondering what the ROI on that is, too Marie.

Donna Baranyay: I haven't gotten any response from the letters I have sent to survivors either. I think the idea of the flyer. I am going to try that. I am the Bereavement Coordinator and as the Volunteer Coordinator.

Amanda Fields: We have not received response from letters either.

Virginia Florence: I have had more ROI with the phone calls at discharge... I am both Volunteer and Bereavement Coordinator as well.

Marty Carr: I add recruitment flyers to all of our 13-month letters, but I've only gotten one volunteer in 5 years of doing this.

Tammy Thomas-Mahaney: I have found that during patient's time with hospice, caregivers say they want to give back, then the patient dies, and they are grieving too hard even after a year.

Debra McLane: What bereavement tasks do your volunteers do? Enter mailing dates into System of Record? Complete the mailings?

Kristine Ryan: How do you document the socialization groups? We don't typically count this as volunteer time.

Nikkie Ellis: Could you share the script that you use?

Kelly Tate: Can you share the script used for the TAP calls?

Melisa Haddix: I have not heard of Bereavement Telephone Assurance support calls. Is this a fairly new term? What exactly is this referring to?

Donna Baranyay: With caregiver schedules, I think I might get more response with a phone call vs a meeting. Has anyone had this experience?

Kristine Ryan: No, it is not. TAP is used by other hospices.

Cindy Gourley: We used to call our follow up program, TAP calls as well.

Kelly Tate: Do you have challenges getting the call sheets back when they are made from home?

Becky Wilder: Are interns required to complete the standard hospice training for vols?

Melisa Haddix: Can you give some examples of socialization groups and how you have implemented them in the community?

Patricia Hinrichs: What is the bereavement bear program?

Cathy Anhalt: Sample of bereavement bear?

Andrea Shirley: Can the time the bereavement bears were made, count towards the 5% per the regs?

Marty Carr: @kellytate, I encourage sending log sheets back via email. I provide a writable document to the volunteer, and I've had a lot of success with that. I had to teach them how to encrypt the emails, which took some time, but it works really well.

Rachel Coleman: NHPCO notes that sewing, stitching, quilting etc. cannot be used towards the 5% volunteer hours - would quilted/sewed bereavement bears be different? Or creating lap blankets for dementia patients be different?

Nikkie Ellis: @Martycarr how did you teach them to encrypt the emails?

Kelly Tate: Thank you!

Becky Wilder: You mentioned evaluations for bereavement volunteers. I don't see samples in the NHPCO volunteer manual, only for patient and office. Are there any templates, samples, etc. that can be shared for bereavement evals?

Colette Johns: We give an option called Personal Treasures: Bear or Pillow made from a piece of clothing.

Penny Lenzen: We make memory pillows, and these are very easy to sew.

Kristine Ryan: There are some patterns that have less pieces, which is easier for some sewing volunteers.

Patty Cooper: Hi! If a direct care volunteer helps with a bereavement mailing and has not had any kind of specific bereavement training, should those hours fall under bereavement hours or regular admin hours?

Cindy Clark: We have started doing "Memory Pillows." They are much easier to sew, obviously. We can also get the whole front of a shirt, etc. on the front of the pillow. They have been a HUGE hit!

Alex Walker: If we don't have enough material or it would otherwise destroy the design/pattern of the material, our volunteers will turn those items into pillows rather than bears.

Brenda Clark: Memory bears count toward our volunteer hours, but a bereavement care plan **MUST** be opened for it!

Marie Sharp: Mom also received a rice neck pillow made out of the sleeve of my dad's shirt. She feels he has his arm around her.

Kristine Ryan: One of our volunteers makes AMAZING bears out of regular fabric and uses the garments for the clothes.

Patricia Brodie: There's a Simplicity Pattern 5461 on Pinterest. A google search will bring up other links to patterns.

Diane Snyder Cowan to Becky Wilder and all: Our interns do.

Rachel Moyemont: Can we count the hours if the bereavement volunteer is calling the family to see if they would like to have the memory bears made?

Kristine Ryan: @Rachel - yes.

Rachel Moyemont: Thank you!

Brent Adams: Yes, it is the competency issues!!

Sherri Brown: Who pays for the pillows or bear stuffing?

Penny Lenzen: Loved ones provide their own pillow. Usually one from a couch or something along that size. Bears made, we pay for the stuffing.

Andrea Shirley: to Sherri, our Hospice offers the first pillow for free, we have a small bereavement budget.

Marie Sharp: A fund raiser for costs of stuffing or donation. My Boise group gets seconds or open packages.

Veronica Ibarra: Is the question about wanting bereavement support done at admission or after the death?

Becky Wilder: Do volunteers or counselors do bereavement assessments on clients?

Caitlin Jesse: Thank you!!

Virginia Florence: Thank you.

Valerie Payton: Thank you!

Kristine Ryan: Thank you so much!

Yolanda Riley: Thank you!

Marie Sharp: Thank you all.

Mmjones: Great Bereavement Chat! Thanks Robin!!!

John Edwards: Thank you!

Kelly Tate: This was really helpful - thank you!

Ryana Goldberger: Great to hear your voice again, Robin!!