A Message from Elise Hurst, Director of Volunteer Services

Happy New Year from the volunteer department! I hope that you all had a wonderful holiday season and are enjoying 2018 so far! 2017 was an exciting year for Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region. Construction was completed on our new six bed inpatient hospice house, and we served a handful of patients there before year end. The Levine & Dickson Hospice House-Aldersgate will be a wonderful resource for patients and families on the east side of Charlotte. Our Uptown Campus on 7th Street went on the market in late 2017, as we have purchased a third office location on Little Avenue, just down the road from our south Charlotte location. We look forward to hosting volunteer events in this new location, so stay tuned for more details as the year progresses!

We do have two new policy changes in 2018 that I would like to bring to your attention. If you volunteer in South Carolina or in one of our long term care communities, you are already aware that you are required to have an annual Tuberculosis skin test. These tests were typically administered at the beginning of the calendar year. Effective January 1, all volunteers will receive their annual TB skin test on the anniversary of when you became a volunteer. For example, if you began volunteering with HPCCR in July 2017, your TB skin test will be due in July 2018 rather than in January 2018. We will notify you when it is your month to receive your TB skin test, so there is no action needed on your part at this time.

The second policy change pertains to your annual paperwork. Each year you receive a knowledge survey, volunteer evaluation and a TB screening form (if you volunteer in a home or at the hospice house and do not receive an annual TB skin test). Effective January 1, 2018, this paperwork is due by February 28, 2018. The paperwork is available on our website, www.hpccr.org, under the Volunteer Resources tab, Annual Paperwork. Please don’t hesitate to contact your Volunteer Manager if you have any difficulty accessing the paperwork, or if you have questions on which packet you should complete.

Thank you for the countless ways you continue to support the mission of Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region! Regardless of what capacity you serve in, your time and dedication contributes to the success of our organization. April 15-21, 2018, is National Volunteer Appreciation Week— please mark your calendar, as we have exciting plans in the works to honor you! We look forward to seeing you soon!

This year, you will continue to receive four volunteer newsletters—one each quarter. Volunteers must still earn twelve hours of continuing education annually, and you will continue to receive only four from these quarterly newsletters, leaving eight hours that you must earn on your own. We continue to provide in-services, book clubs, movie showings and hold two Care Retreats each year. Self-study opportunities are on the website. If you have questions regarding any of the education requirements, please feel free to reach out to your Volunteer Manager.
Safety

What do we mean when we talk about safety? Safety is defined as “the state of being safe; freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury, danger, or loss.” Organizations spend enormous amounts of time, energy and resources to ensure that staff are safe. To be successful in keeping staff and patients safe all staff must adhere to safety precautions and follow the policy and procedures set forth by the organization. It means knowing how to handle situations that may occur while volunteering in the home, long term care community or IPU. Safety is also realizing it is appropriate to contact your Volunteer Manager if you find yourself in a situation that is uncomfortable or being asked to do something that is unsafe.

Safety in the home, HART community or IPU covers many different areas. It includes traveling to the location, fire safety, the potential for natural disasters, animals, infection control, unsanitary working conditions, sexual harassment, ethnic and religious harassment, violence, and possible drug activity.

Safety Considerations
Traveling to the patient’s home/community/IPU

In patient care, we have to travel to get to our volunteer location.
- Be sure your car is reliable and that you have adequate gas
- Obey the highway rules and regulations and pay attention to road signs
- Before entering your care, check the back seat. When approaching your car, be sure to look under the car.
- Know where you are going. Keep HPCCR’s number with you in case you get lost.
- Observe windows, alleys and doorways for loiterers.
- Keep the doors locked when driving and keep the windows up.
- If you have access to a cell phone, carry it with you.

Violence/possible drug activity

Frequent activity in and out of a home may be an indicator of drug activity. Be mindful not to accuse but to simply report the facts to your Volunteer Manager or Social Worker. Signs of violent behavior include: yelling, making threats and cursing at staff. If you feel unsafe or there is impending danger, leave the home and call the office. The office will report the activity to the authorities. The Crisis Prevention Institute gives these tips for de-escalating hostile or violent behavior:
- Stay calm
- Manage your own response
- Set limits
- Prevent physical confrontation
**Infection Control**

Hospice patients are dealing with a terminal disease process. It is a priority that all staff including volunteers follows HPCCR’s infection control plan. Use appropriate personal protective equipment, including medical exam gloves and respiratory protection when required at the IPU’s. HPCCR provides these supplies. **Handwashing is your best defense** for protecting your patients and yourself from the spread of germs. Be sure to wash your hands or sanitize them before and after visiting your patients in the home, HART community or IPU.

**Fire Safety**

You can talk with your patient/family about the importance of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers. Patients and their families should change the batteries every 6 months or when the time changes. Practice these same safety precautions in your homes.

**Leave a home if a patient chooses to smoke while wearing oxygen.** Once you are out of the home call your Volunteer Manager or Social Worker. **This is a fire hazard.**

Social Workers at HPCCR complete psychosocial assessments for every patient admitted under our care. During this assessment they evaluate the appropriateness of utilizing volunteer support. Safety is one piece of the evaluation. Please notify your Volunteer Manager or Social Worker immediately if you fee unsafe for any reason in a home, facility or inpatient unit.
Congratulations!

To **Kathi and Dan Vicini** on their 50th wedding anniversary
To **Tim McAward** on the birth of his grandson
To **Gloria Council** on the birth of her first grandbaby
To **Anne and Dan McClintock** on their 40th wedding anniversary

Thinking of You...

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<th>Alice Gratz</th>
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Did you know?

In late 2017 HPCCCR opened our third inpatient facility. It is located at 1825 Eastway Drive on the Campus of the Aldersgate Retirement Community. This is a 6 bed facility. More information to come!

Volunteer Department Staff

We are finding many of our volunteers are still unaware of some staffing changes and a small reorganization within the department. Below is a list of staff members and the responsibilities they handle:

**Director of Volunteer Services—Elise Hurst**—supervises the department staff and manages the volunteers that serve Hospice & Palliative Care Palmetto Region

**Volunteer Managers:**
- **Lindsay Alger**—manages all documentation and compliance and the volunteer program at LDHH-Huntersville
- **Colleen Carter**—manages the Charlotte HART communities and the volunteer program at LDHH—Aldersgate
- **Anita gluodenis**—manages the Homecare Northeast team, tuck-in program, volunteer personnel files, to include annual education and paperwork, maintains RSVP’s for all events
- **Katie Hardin**—manages the Homecare West team as well as the volunteers that serve Hospice & Palliative Care Lincoln County
- **Cindy Spain**—manages the Homecare South team, Union County team, Kids Path and Office volunteers.
- **Stephania Sykes-Burns**—manages the volunteers that serve Hospice & Palliative Care Lake Norman and the volunteer program at LDHH—Southminster.

In 2017 approximately 500 patients and their families had a brighter holiday with 95 meals provided during the holiday season. We appreciate all that you may have also done for your patients and their families this holiday season. We ask each year for volunteers, both our own and community members, to help provide holiday meals for patients in need. We hope you’ll consider helping with a meal in 2018 if you are able.

One of our community volunteers who provided a meal wrote: I had to tell you what a joy it was to speak with Joan yesterday. Thank you for giving me the honor of cooking for her and her family this Thanksgiving! Words cannot adequately describe the joy she displayed when I told her I would be cooking for her. She was so excited she couldn’t even think of what she wanted to eat. I have not experienced such joy in my heart in a long time. The more we talked the more excited she became and it almost brought tears to my eyes. After speaking with her for only a few minutes, I was left with the impression that she is one of those remarkable people in our world who are good and sweet and kind to the very core of their souls. I cannot wait to meet her and do my best to make this holiday special for her and her loved ones. If everyone on earth was a little more like Joan, with a little more gratitude in our hearts, the world would indeed be a better place. My kids are going to help me prepare her meal and hopefully they will all help me deliver it as well.

What a wonderful gift to brighten someone’s holiday with a little something extra! All we can say is “THANK YOU” to those of you that were able to help!