

# Allina Hospice Volunteer Information

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## Opportunities

Allina's organizational goal is to *change the world*. Each day we are getting closer to reaching this goal because of the generous contributions and collective efforts of volunteers who provide improved and enhanced care to our patients and families. Widening the range of services offered, volunteers increase the hospice team's ability to meet specific needs.

Volunteer roles include Companion Volunteers (in facilities and home settings), Residential Hospice House Volunteers, 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Volunteers, We Honor Veterans Volunteers, Bereavement Volunteers, Pet Therapy, Hair Stylists, Legacy Projects, Musical Interactions, Massage Therapy Volunteers, Energy Work Volunteers, Comfort Shawl Program Volunteers, and Thrift Store Volunteers.

## Application Process

The eligibility process starts by submitting an on-line application and completing the following:

- Interview with a Volunteer Coordinator
- Two personal (non-family) references
- Criminal background check (a state ID or driver's license number is required, fingerprinting required)
- Health screen (this requires you to provide your social security number) including MMR/TB lab work needed, and updated vaccinations or request for exemptions.
- Complete on-line training including 11<sup>th</sup> hour, and documentation packet and quiz. Completed independently.
- Complete Volunteer Wrap up Training in person.

*Persons who have experienced a recent death of someone close are encouraged to wait 12 months before applying.*

## Training:

- Volunteers meeting face-to-face with patients or families must complete a minimum of approximately 9 hours of training (further training or professional certification(s) may be required depending on the role you choose).
- Volunteers will participate in training comprised of online segments and face-to-face classes. The training program allows for on-going enrollment; new volunteers graduate each month.
- Locations for training:
  - Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Owatonna, New Ulm, or Hutchinson offices

## Place of Volunteer Service

- We serve patients living in our service area, which includes 33 counties in Minnesota. We care for patients wherever they call home, including private homes, assisted living centers, skilled nursing homes, facilities, group homes and residential hospice facilities.

## Contact Us

We are eager to welcome more members to our volunteer team. We would love to talk with you more. Please call:

- Twin Cities metro: 612-262-7108
- Hutchinson/ Glencoe area 320-234-5031
- New Ulm area 507-217-5111
- Owatonna area 507-446-0936

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### How long until I start volunteering?

Volunteers who participate in on-line training may begin within 3-4 weeks of application.

### What kind of interaction will I have with hospice staff?

Your interaction with staff largely depends on the role you choose. Volunteers who work in residential hospice settings may have regular interactions with staff. All other volunteers will more than likely not meet other hospice staff team members or have limited interactions.

While direct volunteers are considered integral members of the patient care team, they typically work independently. Direct patient volunteers receive regular email or phone communication from Volunteer Coordinators who inform them of patient updates and pertinent information from other team members and disciplines. Therefore, it is important that direct volunteers are comfortable making visits independently, are dependable, and check their email regularly.

### Is hospice volunteering always a wondrous and riveting experience?

Yes and no. Because stories tend to be sensationalized, sometimes volunteers find that they held a *Hollywoodized* view of end-of-life. While volunteers may become a part of magnificent moments with patients and families—witnessing love, giving or receiving forgiveness, saying goodbye, or finishing unfinished business. Volunteers should also be prepared for common mundane moments, such as a patient dozing during a conversation or slowly sipping a shake.

It is also very common for some patients to suffer from some form of dementia from mild to more severe. This often limits a patients' ability to have cognitive interactions. However, with time and practice, any volunteer can cultivate and deepen skills of openness and awareness, and the ability to be in-the-moment. This can make all the difference.