



## 5.0 – Human Resources

### 5.11 Volunteer Resources

#### 5.11.2 Initial Screening and Registration of Volunteers

### 1.0 Definitions

#### VIHA Volunteer:

Any individual who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA).

#### Volunteer Categories

**1.1 In-Service Volunteers:** Any individual who is registered as a volunteer with a facility or program of the VIHA.

- Adult Volunteer: A volunteer over the age of 19 and/or who is out of high school.
- Teen Volunteer: A volunteer in high school – Grades 8 to 12.
- Child Volunteer: A volunteer who is in Grade 7 & under.
- Family Members: A family member of a resident/ patient becomes a volunteer when he/she participates in any activity involving residents other than the immediate family member(s).
- Staff as Volunteers: A staff member who is volunteering on their own time.
- Family Member of Staff: Those members of family who are immediately related to the staff member.

**1.2 Health Care Auxiliaries and Foundations:**

Voluntary organizations representing the communities served by the VIHA, which exist to provide financial assistance and/or voluntary service to the facilities and programs of the VIHA.

There are two categories of Auxiliaries and Foundations:

- Auxiliaries and Foundations that are legally separate organizations.
- Auxiliaries that are not legally separate and may or may not be members of BCAHA.

Auxiliaries may choose to act as Organizational Volunteers as described below.

- 1.3 Organizational Volunteers** – Volunteers who are pre-screened, trained and scheduled by other community organizations with whom VIHA has a collaborative relationship and a Memorandum of Understanding for the involvement of those volunteers.
- 1.4 Community Group Services:** Includes entertainers (individuals & groups), service clubs, schools and other organized ‘groups’ who come in on a one time or occasional basis to provide service as a group for a special event or project.
- 1.5 Spiritual Care Volunteers:** A Spiritual Care Volunteer is a part of the Spiritual Care Services team within the VIHA. The Volunteer is one who has an overall interest and empathy in the health and well being of patients, residents, family members, staff and other volunteers, particularly as it pertains to their spiritual and religious needs

## **2.0 Preamble**

There is a general principle in common law called ‘duty of care’ as well as moral and ethical obligations which require an organization to do everything it reasonably can to deliver its programs and conduct its affairs in a safe, adequate and well managed manner. Therefore, the VIHA must take reasonable steps to screen and place carefully all of the paid staff and volunteers. Based on that principle, initial screening of volunteers is a process to choose the best candidate for a volunteer assignment, and to exclude, as far as possible, those who would be unable to meet the requirements of the service or who would do harm.

The screening protocol for any given volunteer assignment is determined by:

- the vulnerability of the client;
- the nature of the position and the activities or tasks to be done;
- the setting in which the volunteer assignment will take place; and
- the nature and degree of supervision and involvement with other people.

Consistency, equity and human rights are key principles in implementing screening protocols.

## **3.0 Policies**

### **Registration**

- 3.1 All volunteer placements will be supernumerary to established positions; will not result in the lay-off of employees; and will not be used to fill established positions.
- 3.2 All Volunteers must be screened and registered according to procedures approved by the VIHA, prior to providing any service in the facilities or programs of the VIHA.

- 3.3 All members of a Healthcare Auxiliary who are providing service within a facility or program of the VIHA, and who will have contact with patients/residents/clients, visitors or staff must be registered as either In-service or Organizational Volunteers. As such they are subject to the same screening and registration process as all other volunteers. If the Healthcare Auxiliary chooses to act as an Organization, members must be screened and registered according to the standards established by the VIHA, as outlined for Organizational Volunteers.
- 3.4 An approved representative of the 'Organization' must screen all Organizational Volunteers. Screening measures will be based on the risks involved in the service provided and according to the Standards agreed upon between the VIHA and the Organization. The volunteers will be referred to a VIHA Volunteer Resources Department to complete the VIHA Volunteer Resources Organizational Volunteer Registration Form, and Confidentiality Pledge/Statement of Understanding. These volunteers will then attend a general orientation for volunteers at the facility to which they are referred.
- 3.5 Organizations, and those Auxiliaries choosing to act as Organizations, placing volunteers in VIHA facilities and programs are required to provide proof of appropriate screening measures consistent with those of the VIHA.
- 3.6 For purposes of insurance coverage, all VIHA volunteers must be registered with a VIHA Volunteer Resources Department. Legally separate Auxiliaries and Foundation and other Organizations who choose to register their volunteers as Organizational Volunteers must provide the VIHA with proof of adequate liability insurance coverage for their organization/members before engaging in activities on VIHA property.
- 3.7 Community Groups will not be required to register as individuals. A staff member of a facility department utilizing the services of Community Groups is required to record a contact name and phone number for each group.
- It is understood that members of Community Groups will not be interacting directly with individual patients/residents.
  - If the service being provided requires direct interaction, then a VIHA Volunteer Resources representative will provide a general orientation to the 'Do's and Don'ts for Volunteers' for the group.
  - If members of the group will be in direct unsupervised contact with individual patients/residents the individuals will be registered as an In-Service Volunteer.
- 3.8 Child volunteers must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or another adult volunteer while providing volunteer service. The adult accompanying the child must also be accepted as an In-Service Volunteer. Child volunteers must have written permission of the parent or guardian.

- 3.9 Special case volunteers: The VIHA also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing programs, employee volunteering programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, however, a special agreement must be in effect with the agency, school, company, or program from which the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and support of the volunteers.
- 3.10 Employees as volunteers: The VIHA accepts the services of its own staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided the volunteer service is provided without any coercive nature, involves service that is outside the scope of normal staff duties, and is provided outside usual working hours. Staff will not be assigned to a volunteer service where he/she works as a VIHA employee.
- 3.11 Family members of clients are allowed to volunteer with the organization. When family members are enrolled as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direction of or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees.
- 3.12 Clients as Volunteers: Clients will only be accepted as volunteers when the Volunteer Assignment does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provision of services to the client or others.
- 3.13 Family members of clients may also serve as volunteers but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationship to members of their family who are receiving services.
- 3.14 On occasion, VIHA staff may provide information to a client/patient who is at home, about resources available to them through other voluntary agencies. If the follow-up of that information is made by the client or their family and a volunteer is subsequently recruited, the volunteer is considered a representative of the voluntary agency, not of the VIHA. The volunteer will therefore not be registered by the VIHA and the VIHA will not be responsible for the actions of that volunteer.

### **Screening**

- 3.16 Every volunteer assignment will be outlined in a written Assignment Description. Volunteer Resources Department staff, in cooperation with the staff contact for the Assignment, shall assess each volunteer assignment for potential risk to patients/clients.
- The Assignment Description will include identification of the minimum screening procedures for the assignment. Screening tools may include, but are not limited to, personal interviews, reference checks, criminal record or driving record checks, medical tests etc.
  - Criminal record checks are required for all VIHA Volunteers whose service brings them into unsupervised contact at any time with children (under the age of 19). This includes adult volunteers who are working with teen

volunteer programs. Criminal record checks may be required, at the discretion of the individual site Manager/Coordinator of Volunteer Resources in consultation with the site Administrator, for all volunteers whose assignment includes unsupervised contact with any vulnerable client.

- A volunteer's suitability for an assignment will be determined by a match of his/her qualifications and experience with the requirements for the assignment and the results of the screening required for the assignment for which he/she is applying.

- 3.17 The prospective volunteer will not provide service without direct staff supervision until the results of the additional screening steps are received and assessed.
- 3.18 No prospective volunteer will be denied an opportunity to provide volunteer service with the VIHA based on reasons of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any other characteristic not directly related to the service the individual is offering to provide.
- 3.19 If a prospective volunteer is not accepted for service, the Volunteer Resources Department of the facility will advise the individual as to the reasons why s/he was not accepted at his/her request. Spiritual Care Volunteers who are not accepted for Assignments with Spiritual Care Services will be advised of the decision by the Chaplain of the facility.
- 3.20 Volunteer application forms and the result of any screening follow-ups such as reference checks, police checks and the like, shall be considered confidential and kept in a secure location. Notes will be kept in the volunteer's confidential file regarding results of screening process. Information gained through the screening process that does not directly relate to the volunteer assignment will not be documented on the volunteer's file. Disposal of these documents shall be handled in the same manner as other confidential documents in the region.

#### 4.0 References

- "Standards of Practice" – Administrators of Volunteer Resources of British Columbia - 2001
- "Beyond Police Checks – The Definitive Volunteer & Employee Screening Guidebook" – Linda Graff, 1999.
- "Screening Handbook – The National Education Campaign on Screening" – Canadian Association of Volunteer Bureaux and Centres, 1996
- Health Care Protection Program Insurance Policy  
British Columbia Health Care Risk Management Society (BCHCRMS)
- "Volunteer Management – Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community" – Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch. 1996