I’d Like to Volunteer For That!
Creative Ways to Recruit and Deploy Volunteers in Hospice and Palliative Care

Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care
MedStar Washington Hospital Center
Continuing Education

- **Nurses:** This session has been approved for 1.0 contact hours

- Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by the Maryland Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

- **Social Workers:** The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners certifies that this program meets the criteria for 1.0 credit hours of Category I continuing education for social workers in Maryland.

- MNA/ANCC does not endorse or approve any commercial products.
Speakers

- **Amanda Fields, M.S.Ed**
  - Volunteer Services Coordinator
  - Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care

- **Alexandra L. McPherson, PharmD, MPH**
  - Palliative Care Clinical Pharmacist
  - MedStar Washington Hospital Center

- **Jamie Glidewell, LGSW**
  - Palliative Care Social Worker
  - MedStar Washington Hospital Center

- **Mary Lynn McPherson, PharmD, MA, MDE, BCPS, CPE**
  - Professor, Executive Director Advanced Post-Graduate Education in Palliative Care
  - Program Director, Online Master of Science and Graduate Certificate in Palliative Care
  - University of Maryland Sch of Pharmacy

None of the speakers have anything to disclose
Learning Objectives

▪ At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will be able to:

1. Describe novel avenues for recruiting volunteers in hospice and palliative care.
2. Describe training requirements for volunteers in hospice and palliative care.
3. Describe roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for volunteering in hospice and palliative care.
Hospice Volunteering – From a School of Pharmacy?

- Fall semester – “Palliative Care Imperative”
- Hybrid course – meet four evenings in person, balance is online
- Course description
  - This course prepares pharmacy students to interact with terminally ill patients through increased understanding of the social and psychological aspects of death and dying as well as pharmaceutical care approaches when dealing with terminally ill patients. Students will utilize the Pharmacists’ Patient Care Process (PPCP) when making therapeutic decisions to approach patient care.
- Course is 2 credits, OR 3 credits
- Extra credit is for training as a hospice volunteer with Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care
- After completing all training, students provides a minimum of ten hours of volunteer service
Seasons Hospice Volunteer Training

- Requirements for all Seasons Hospice Volunteers
  - Two TB tests
  - Flu shot
  - Background check
  - Paperwork (application packet, references, job descriptions, policy sign off, waivers, etc.)
  - Nine self study video modules, one additional watched as a group
  - Six hours of group training
  - Virtual classroom training
  - Bedside training (orientation to the Inpatient Center)
Where Pharmacy Students Can Volunteer

- Inpatient Centers
  - Sinai Hospital, Northwest Hospital, Franklin Square Hospital
    - Flexible hours
    - Convenient locations
    - Interaction with a variety of patients

- Nursing Facilities
  - Convenient location
  - Less flexible hours
  - Assigned specific patient(s)
Ways Pharmacy Students Can Volunteer

- Chat
- Play games/cards
- Construct crafts
- Watch tv
- Read stories, poems, newspapers
- Talk about (light hearted, positive) current events
- Sit quietly, be a presence
- Listen to music
- Complete legacy projects
- Participate in We Honor Veterans pinning ceremony
Documentation Required

- All volunteers are required to complete volunteer progress notes tracking their time and visit.
- At every visit volunteers inquire or check for shortness of breath, nausea, anxiety, pain.
- Volunteer notes are in the DAROP format:
  - Data-
  - Action-
  - Result-
  - Observations-
  - Plan-
- Volunteers send the notes through the mail or leave them at the inpatient center for staff pick-up
Mutual Benefits

▪ Students
  ▪ Gain experience interacting with hospice patients and their families
  ▪ Become part of the Interdisciplinary team
  ▪ Learn about hospice from the inside
  ▪ Develop patient advocacy skills
  ▪ Improve understanding of physical, emotional and social pain

▪ Seasons
  ▪ Increase volunteer presence at the inpatient centers
  ▪ Fill a need of facility patients who were not being seen by a volunteer
  ▪ Recruit other students
  ▪ Pharmacy students added 230 hours from October 2018-February 2019
CARE COMPANIONS
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A special collaboration between
MedStar Washington Hospital Center &
Georgetown Special Master’s Program in Physiology
It started with an idea...
Palliative Care Volunteer Program at MWHC

Helping to make a difference

Our philosophy is "Patient First - Our Family Serving Yours" and we would like to make you a part of "our family" because we recognize volunteers as an essential part of the level of excellence provided to our patients. Whether you need to complete community service hours, gain exposure or want to give back to the community, MedStar Washington Hospital Center's volunteer programs will offer you many choices in finding just the right fit for your talents and skills and our hospital needs.
Georgetown University Medical Center – Special Master’s Program in Physiology

Since 1975, Georgetown University School of Medicine has conducted a one-year special program leading to a Masters of Science degree in Physiology. This program, called The Special Master's Program (The SMP), is tailored to college graduates who wish to strengthen their credentials for application to U.S. medical schools.

Volunteer component of the program

The Biomedical Career Explorations course features observation rotations in a variety of clinical and community service settings within the D.C./Metropolitan area.

The clinical rotations are designed to assist students in integrating their physiologic education in a meaningful and innovative way, utilizing patients to assimilate the lessons learned in the SMP classroom.
Georgetown Special Masters Program in Physiology
Volunteer Requirements & Process

- Volunteer application
- Confidentiality agreement
- Vaccination records
  - TB skin test, Influenza, MMR, Varicella
- Education goals
- Pre-training online
  - Patient Safety
  - Infection prevention and control
  - Corporate compliance
  - HIPAA
  - IT security
- (2) in-person training sessions – 5 hours total
- ID Badge
- (2) volunteer sessions – 4 hours each

- **Volunteer Day 1**
  - Complete Pre-Evaluation
  - Volunteering
  - Debriefing

- **Volunteer Day 2**
  - Volunteering
  - Debriefing
  - Complete Post-Evaluation
  - Complete Narrative Medicine Exercise
Volunteer Training

1\textsuperscript{st} Training at Georgetown

- Overview of Palliative Care
- Overview of MedStar Washington Hospital Center (MWHC)
- Palliative Chaplain Linda Fischer read a poem
- Grief and bereavement exercise
- Guided meditation and other self-care activities

2\textsuperscript{nd} Training at MWHC

- More about MWHC
- Introduce Palliative Care team
- Overview of volunteer visits
  - Confidentiality
  - Boundaries
  - The visit
  - Activity ideas
  - Debrief sessions
  - Standard precautions
  - Fire emergency response

Length of visits, don’t give out your phone #, don’t give advice
The Visit

- Volunteers have a patient list and make ‘the rounds’ – usually get through the list twice

- Examples of activities:
  - Singing
  - Reading to non-verbal patients
  - Adult coloring
  - Writing holiday cards
  - Reading poetry
  - Life review
## Pre- and Post Evaluation Data

### Pre-Evaluation

- Do you have previous experience volunteering with patients in a health setting?
- What do you hope to get out of this volunteer experience?
- Is there anything you are worried about?
- What are you most looking forward to?
- How comfortable are you interacting/volunteering with patients in hospital setting?

Circle one (10 being completely comfortable):

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10

### Post-Evaluation

- What did you learn about yourself?
- Anything that surprised you/anything you weren’t expecting?
- What advice would you give to future volunteers?
- Did you feel prepared going into the first visit?
- Any other feedback for the volunteer program to improve/change?
- How comfortable are you interacting/volunteering with patients in hospital setting?

Circle one (10 being completely comfortable):

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10
Is there anything you’re worried about?

▪ “Mostly reacting to the patient’s negative emotions, if they have them, or being able to empathize since I’ve never had any people I know under Palliative Care.”

▪ “I’m worried about not knowing what to say initially or about making a patient uncomfortable if they don’t feel like speaking.”

▪ “Feeling ‘awkward’ when I feel like I don’t know what to say in certain situations.”

▪ “… bringing up sensitive topics”
Is there anything that surprised you?

▪ “I was a little taken aback by how cheerful some of the patients were, which wasn’t the kind of attitude I would expect from patients who need Palliative Care.”

▪ “I was surprised when some patients talked very openly and candidly about dying.”

▪ “Figuring out how to communicate with someone on a ventilator wasn’t able to talk was something I had to get used to but eventually I learned of ways that I could communicate with them.”

▪ “… when they found out I wanted to be a physician, they were all very encouraging and provided advice from their point of view.”

▪ “… how talented some of my patients were when they sang with me.”

▪ “I was surprised by how much I got out of this program. I wish we got to do it longer.”
What **advice** would you give to other volunteers?

- “Just be open to the experience and let it happen.”
- “It’s okay to be nervous! Embrace not knowing what to expect.”
- “You’re not as awkward as you think!”
- “If you have talent, use it! Mostly though, I advise you to listen. To what they say and don’t say.”
- “It’s okay if patients seem like they do not want to talk (but would still like your company) because your simple company can comfort them too.”
- “I think the most important thing is to meet them where they are, be present, and be okay with silence.”
Narrative Medicine Exercise

Next we will do a short writing exercise; you will have five minutes to write about a prompt. Just write what comes to mind and as much as possible without thinking.

**Prompt:** Write about a door
What is a door, a physical structure we walk through or the metaphorical door each of us has gone through to get to that next chapter in life. For me, my metaphorical door is closed. I have been pounding on it and ringing the doorbell like crazy you would have thought someone would answer. But I guess I just have to keep standing there waiting and trying, unless there is another way in. Do we walk away from a dream/our next chapter just because there are obstacles or the way is shut (for now)? Do we continue to work towards breaking down the door when it is closed? This morning I felt the door once again slam in my face. But this afternoon, through a window, I saw what lay beyond the door and it reminded me of why I am trying to enter that space.
A door opens into a hospital room.
It’s closed.
But if you give the door a smile it disappears
It makes no sound and disappears
That power you have to smile
Why don’t you use it?
Maybe you like the door closed
Because it’s too hard to escape from a room with no door if you’re uncomfortable
If you want to leave

If you want to hide inside yourself and ponder why you opened it in the first place
The dying can’t open it themselves
Locked into their beds with restraints
Looking out their hospital windows
Dreaming of playing Blackjack in the new casino
The one that was built when they were shut in
If you could open it with a smile would they let you in?
First Year in Review

- 17 Students
- 18 Fridays
- 63 Hours
- ~5-8 Visits per Friday
- Estimating we will have had close to 75 visits
Lessons Learned

- We have many patients on service that we knew would benefit from companionship, but we didn’t realize the profound and positive impact it would have on the student volunteers.

- Continue to discuss creative ways to engage volunteers.

- Areas of opportunity
  - Cosmetic services (hair, nails)
  - Knitting blankets
  - Pet therapy
  - Music therapy
  - Art therapy
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