

**Role Description**

**Title:** Home Support Volunteer

**Managed by**: Prospect@Home Team Leader

**Accountable to:** Head of Voluntary Services

**Role Purpose:**  To enhance the work of Prospect Hospice professionals by supporting patients and carers in their own homes – helping them to cope better and with more confidence. A minimum of one visit per week would be most beneficial.

The following **will not be included** in the volunteer role:

* Undertaking any medical care, such as administering drugs or changing dressings.
* Attending to patient’s personal hygiene requirements.
* Carrying out domestic chores, unless previously agreed with the Prospect@Home Team Leader.

**Principal Duties and Responsibilities:** You could be asked to do, or help with any of the following:

* To visit patients/carers at home as agreed with the Prospect@Home Team Leader. (For home visits, volunteers will be selected, where possible, according to the special needs, interests and location of the patient or carer).
* To contact the patient/carer, usually by telephone, to arrange a time for the visit, and telephone. the evening before any visit, to ensure that it is still convenient.
* To encourage socially isolated patients/carers, who may be nervous of taking the first steps to attend local activities or groups or to go shopping.
* To accompany patients to planned appointments or activities.
* To assist patients or carers with practical tasks around the house or garden.
* To provide companionship and a listening ear.
* To keep written records of all home visits and activities attended in a clear and concise way.
* To maintain confidentiality in all written and verbal communication.
* To understand and remain within the boundaries of your volunteer role.
* To adhere to Prospect Hospice lone working guidelines and out of hours procedures for your own safety.
* To telephone the Prospect@Home Team Leader after every visit for a ‘post visit de-brief’ and to report anything significant (eg: concerns about deteriorating condition or patients’ worries).
* To attend Support and Information meetings for volunteers, held every other month to exchange information and discuss any issues and contribute to the development of the service.
* To attend individual meetings with the Prospect@Home Team Leader as appropriate.
* To keep a record of any expenses you have incurred and submit them promptly at the end of each month to the Prospect@Home Team Leader.
* To support the collection of high quality monitoring data via (for example) telephone surveys to patients/carers.

**General:**

* To complete mandatory training requirements and relevant courses to ensure you keep up to date with organisational and legal regulation changes.
* To be aware of the legal responsibility placed on all volunteers by the statutory fire, health and safety regulations – know what you have to do should an emergency situation occur.
* To promote understanding and support of the values and philosophies of the organisation.
* To inform the Prospect@Home Team Leader of absences in advance.

The Prospect@Home Team Leader will keep you up to date with any relevant changes in the patient's condition, in particular, the prompt reporting of a patient's death.

Your involvement with the patient and family will be reviewed and end with the mutual agreement of the patient, carer, you and the Prospect@Home Team Leader.

**It is important that you remember:**

The safety and welfare of patients and carers is vital. **The rule is never to put yourself or your patient/carer at risk.** Be guided by the lifting and handling training you have done and **NEVER** lift a patient or help an incapacitated patient up or down the stairs. If a patient falls and they cannot get up on their own, make them comfortable with a blanket and pillow and ‘phone Prospect Hospice for advice. You may be instructed to call for an ambulance. At any time, if in doubt, ‘phone Prospect Hospice for advice.

**Your personal telephone numbers should NEVER be given to a patient or carer.**

**In an emergency** always telephone Prospect Hospice for advice first. If you have been notified that the patient has made an ‘Advanced Decision’ and does not wish to have active treatment, call the Advice Line at Prospect Hospice on 01793 816109. The nurse who answers will help you.

In all cases the Prospect@Home Service should be informed of the situation at the earliest opportunity on 01793 816160 or, if out-of-hours, a message left on this number.

You will find general information which applies to all volunteers in the Volunteers’ Handbook. Please read the Handbook, in conjunction with these guidelines, and ask Voluntary Services staff if there is anything you don’t understand or if you want more information.

**Health & Safety at Work Act**

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to ensure that the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act are complied with, safe working practices are adhered to and that any hazards are observed and reported to the appropriate office.

This role description will be reviewed periodically and may be amended according to the changing requirements of the service.

Skills and Experience Required

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
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| **Abilities / Skills** |  |  |
| * Own car for which mileage can be claimed at 45p per mile |  |  |
| * Ability to encourage and motivate people |  |  |
| * Excellent interpersonal skills |  |  |
| * Ability to work without direct supervision. |  |  |
| * Comfortable relying on your own initiative and common sense but also knowing when to seek support. |  |  |
| * Good confident telephone manner |  |  |
| * Good communication skills both written and verbal |  |  |
| * An ability to write clear and concise notes |  |  |
| * Good time management and organisational skills |  |  |
| * Knowledge of confidentiality and of when to pass on information. |  |  |
| * Awareness of own needs in relation to support |  |  |
| **Qualities** |  |  |
| * Willingness to operate within set boundaries |  |  |
| * Confident team member |  |  |
| * Courteous, friendly and approachable |  |  |
| * Reliable and consistent |  |  |
| * Trustworthy |  |  |
| * Conscientious |  |  |
| * Non judgemental approach |  |  |
| * Non smoker in performance of duties |  |  |
| * Commitment to the ethos of Prospect Hospice |  |  |