

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: THANK-YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING

Dear Volunteer,

Jewish Family Services (JFS), a community agency, provides a wide range of services to promote independent living and quality of life for seniors and their families. Volunteers enrich all JFS services and programs and are crucial to implementing successful services and programs within the community.

On behalf of the clients and JFS, thank-you for giving your time and support to those individuals in our community who have so much to gain from a volunteer. Volunteers help our agency in meeting clients' needs, a role that is becoming more and more important as the greater community becomes more de-personalized. You assist us by personalizing what the agency can offer the people who come to us for assistance or support.

We hope that you too will benefit and find your time as a volunteer with Jewish Family Services to be richly rewarding. Welcome to the JFS Volunteer team.

Thank you very much for offering to enhance the quality of life for others.

Sincerely,

Mark Zarecki, MSW, RSW
Jewish Family Services of Ottawa

RECRUITMENT

Contact: The Coordinator of Volunteer Services

Responsible to: All clients and volunteers within the Seniors Unit

Purpose: To recruit new volunteers and to provide support and resources to existing volunteers, as well as, clients.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Perform all initial interviews with potential volunteers, working to match them with the program or service that will be most fulfilling of their needs, at the same time as filling the most needed gaps in the community.
- Any questions or concerns are to be addressed firstly to the Coordinator, who will then pursue any other professional staff who needs to be involved with a particular client or situation.
- Recruitment for clients and volunteers will be ongoing. This is done through community newspapers, websites, out-reach and word of mouth.
- Sets up an office or home meeting *as soon as possible*. Various issues are covered, including history of the agency, expectations of the volunteer and the client.
- An application form and a police check are filled out. The volunteer will not be matched until the police check is returned. (This may result in a 3 week delay.)
- Confidentiality is discussed in great detail and the volunteer must sign a confidentiality form.
- Wherever possible, the Coordinator will attempt to match people living in the same area to facilitate getting together, should they need or want to.
- When a social worker is involved, volunteers will be introduced and ongoing communication between the volunteer and social worker maintained.
- Arrange any training, workshop or support program that would be of benefit to the volunteer.
- Regular meetings are held approximately every other month, to reduce feelings of working in isolation, to provide peer support among volunteers, to communicate new developments in service delivery, and to celebrate the contributions of our volunteers. Invitations to these programs are mailed directly to all volunteers well in advance.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

JFS takes the issue of client confidentiality very seriously. As an extension of the work that the agency does, the volunteer must agree to share information received from the client contact only with the Volunteer Coordinator or the client's social worker. No disclosure of information is to be made to anyone else. If the volunteer has any reason to believe that the client is in any danger to themselves or to others, it is incumbent on the volunteer to contact the JFS staff immediately.

All volunteers are required to:

- sign a Confidentiality Agreement,
- apply for a Police Check (for most programs). 2 pieces of ID with name and date of birth (excluding OHIP card).
- submit a monthly timesheet, indicating what contacts were made, what kinds of services were provided, and number of hours spent with clients.
- accept a 3 month trial period to ensure that volunteers and client are appropriately matched.

It is expected that every volunteer will attend an information sharing and educational monthly meeting.

Volunteer driving is covered under Ontario Automobile Policy 1. Volunteer driving should not be considered as a situation involving paying passengers. Therefore, no additional insurance coverage is required and no additional premium should be charged to volunteer drivers.

Volunteer Conflict of Interest

At no time are volunteers to profit or to be perceived to be profiting from their role as volunteer. Volunteers are never to replace paid staff positions.

FINDING YOUR VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Before your introduction to JFS volunteer opportunities, you might find it enlightening, or at least interesting, to consider the following volunteer profiles and quizzes for your exploration of inherent possibilities.

- It is well known that many volunteers choose to “give of themselves and their time for altruistic reasons.
- Jewish Family Services recognizes that personal self-fulfilling needs must also be met in order to provide a satisfying and meaningful experience.
- An opportunity for growth and learning can often be derived from a volunteer assignment.
- The following volunteer “quizzes” and questions may be interesting for you to consider in your quest for the best “fit” between your abilities and availability and the volunteer programs offered by the agency.

Important questions to ask yourself

No matter what drives you, take the time to find a volunteer opportunity that matches your interests, availability and lifestyle. Start by asking yourself these questions:

1. What causes and issues matter most to me?

Not sure where to start? Read the newspaper or watch your local TV news. What stories make you angry? Sad? Inspired? Write down things you would ideally like to change, whether they're in your community or around the world. Are there organizations or groups tackling these issues? Do they have local chapters? (Or would you like to start one?) Contact them to learn how you can help.

2. Do I want to apply my professional skills or try something different?

For every talent, there is a need somewhere. If you're an accountant, for instance, your pro bono services would be appreciated by many a non-profit organization. But it's equally fine to leave the ledger at the office and dive into something new and different-it could be a refreshing change!

3. How much time can I devote to this?

Some volunteer opportunities require a significant time commitment, while others are one-time events that last just hours. According to the Independent Sector, formal volunteers dedicated an average of 3.6 hours weekly in 2000. Is that realistic for you? Consider your schedule and lifestyle to determine how much time you can and want to spend volunteering. Can you commit to donating an evening a week, for example, or do you need more flexibility?

4. Do I prefer to work alone or with others?

One person can make a difference-and so can 20. But where do you feel most at home? For some people, the fun, social element of volunteering is what attracts them in the first place. If you'd rather work on your own, consider something like virtual volunteering, where you perform volunteer work remotely and on your own time, via the Internet.

5. What don't I want to do as a volunteer?

It's not only OK, but important to consider what you don't want to do as a volunteer. Maybe you're uncomfortable with the idea of phoning people to ask for donations, or you'd prefer not to work with small children. The bottom line is, if you take on a role you don't enjoy, you won't want to keep volunteering. So find something you like to do.

Volunteer Quiz #1

What drives you as a volunteer? Take our Volunteer Quiz and find out. There are no good or bad answers, and you may feel an affinity with more than one answer. Just select the one that sounds most like you.

1. Which of these statements sounds most like you?

- I want to do something for a cause that is important to me.

- Volunteering is one way to get my foot in the door at a place I might like to work.

- Volunteering gives me a chance to learn new things.

- Helping others makes me feel needed.

- I like making new friends through volunteering.

2. A co-worker has organized a company-wide blood drive. You're one of the first people to sign up, because:

- Local blood banks face a critical shortage this time of year.

- Your boss always donates, and this will give you something to talk about.

- You've never given blood before and you're curious.

- You like knowing your blood could give someone a second chance at life.

- Your department is competing against others to sign up the most donors.

3. Your parents have been involved with the local lodge for as long as you can remember. As for you....

- You joined because of the big difference the lodge makes in your community.

- You joined because the lodge is a good place to make professional contacts.

- You participated as a kid, but you've moved on to other things now that you can choose.

- You gave the lodge a try, but it isn't your thing. You get more personal satisfaction from other activities.

- You joined so you could spend some quality time with Mom and Dad.

4. Which of these statements sounds *most* like you?

- Helping people in need is important.
- Volunteering is a good way to explore career options.
- Volunteering can give you a new perspective on things.
- Helping people makes me feel good about myself.

5. The president of your local PTA knows you're a journalist and asks you to produce the group's newsletter. You say "yes"...

- Because you think the newsletter is a great vehicle for exploring issues.
- Because even though it's a volunteer project, you could still include it in your portfolio.
- Even though the last thing you want to do on your time off is write some more. You'd prefer to try something different.
- Because it feels good to take on an important responsibility for the association.
- Because you look forward to meeting fellow parents this way.

6. Every year, you and your spouse run the Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving to raise money for local youth programs. But this year, your spouse has a sprained ankle and can't participate. You...

- Go on your own-the kids still need after-school programs, right?
- Find out if anyone from work is going; maybe you can form a team and get sponsors.
- Have to do it-you need to burn off that mashed potatoes and gravy!
- Would you feel guilty if you skipped out on it, so you go by yourself.
- Decide to stay home as well. It wouldn't be any fun to do it alone.

Note: The volunteer Quiz was adapted from findings by E. Gil Clary et al. in "Volunteers' Motivations: Findings from a National Survey," published in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 25. No. 4, 1996.

VOLUNTEER QUIZ #2

- 1. Your boss asks for volunteers from your department to help out a charity bingo. You sign because:**
 - **a** It'll be a good chance to get to know your boss better.
 - **b** You've never been to a bingo game and want to check it out.
 - **c** Your friend from production is going.
 - **d** You know you'll feel good about helping out.
 - **e** The cause is one that's near and dear to your heart.

- 2. You're a new mom adjusting to being home full time on maternity leave. Which of these volunteer activities are you most likely to undertake?**
 - **a** You continue to sit on the board of the teen crisis centre because you've committed yourself to the kids.
 - **b** You offer to help out with your company's United Way campaign by
 - **c** You decide to put volunteer work on hold because you don't have any extra emotional energy right now. You'll volunteer again when the idea of getting involved gives your spirits a boost.
 - **d** You decide to volunteer as a guide at the local museum a couple of afternoons a month. This is your chance to explore the facility.
 - **e** You find out what volunteer activities other moms in the neighbourhood are involved in and go along with them as time permits.

- 3. Your 10-year-old's teacher is looking for volunteers for the next school trip. You sign on:**
 - **a** Because you'll feel good if you go and bad if you don't.
 - **b** Because it's important for parents to be involved.
 - **c** To spend time with your child and his friends. It'll be a hoot.
 - **d** If you're interested in the destination.
 - **e** If you can get the time off from work.

4. Your mom has belonged to the women's auxiliary at your synagogue for 30 years. You:

- **a** Join so you and your mom can spend some time together.
- **b** Offer to raise funds for her latest project among your co-workers.
- **c** Have never even considered joining. You've always followed your own passions – now it's saving the polar bears.
- **d** Have decided against joining because you went to a couple of meetings and didn't get the same lift you do from your other volunteer activities.
- **e** Join because the work the auxiliary does has made a big difference in your community.

4. Imagine that you're an accountant and you're sometimes asked to do the year-end for a local charity. You:

- **a** Wish they'd stop asking. You would like to do something completely different in your volunteer time.
- **b** Always say yes. You see it as a part of your responsibility to your community.
- **c** Say yes. The people are so grateful that it gives you a good feeling.
- **d** Take it on, if you know and enjoy the people you'll be working with.
- **e** Say yes. It's expected to do some pro bono work.

5. A colleague at the office is going for chemotherapy. You:

- **a** Know she's worried about being away from work, so you keep her up-to-date on projects.
- **b** Plan a potluck for her and some close friends when she's feeling up to it.
- **c** Lobby your charity-giving committee at work to donate more to home-care services now that you've seen firsthand how much they are needed.
- **d** Bring her a casserole whenever you can. Somehow you feel better knowing she doesn't have to cook.
- **e** Do an Internet search for her to learn more about her experiences and help her answer the questions.

6. Your sister has political aspirations and is running for the local school board.

You:

- **a** Rally friends and family to campaign-win or lose, it'll be fun to work together.
- **b** Set up coffee parties with prominent people in the ward, including people with whom you'd like to do business.
- **c** Work with her to focus her platform. Help her clarify the values you both hold dear.
- **d** Design and build her Website – it's something you've always wanted to do.
- **e** Tell your sister you'll do whatever she asks. She needs you.

7. You and a close friend have always done the Terry Fox Run together. She can't go this year. You:

- **a** Also decide to bow out for a year.
- **b** Decide to try something new, so you volunteer to be a timekeeper.
- **c** Invite a coworker to come along.
- **d** Go by yourself anyway. Terry Fox's dream has always inspired you.
- **e** Love that walkathon – of course your going.

Source: Canadian Living Magazine 2001

Volunteer Personality Quiz

In the grid below, check off each of your answers

Self-Improver				1	1	1	1	1
	1d	2c	3a	4d	5c	6d	7e	8e
Experience Seeker				1	1	1	1	1
	1b	2d	3d	4c	5a	6e	7d	8b
Altruist				1	1	1	1	1
	1e	2a	3b	4e	5b	6a	7c	8d
Connector				1	1	1	1	1
	1c	2e	3c	4a	5d	6b	7a	8a
Job Seeker				1	1	1	1	1
	1a	2b	3e	4b	5e	6c	7b	8c

If five or more of your answers were in one category, that indicates your volunteer personality. If your answers are spread across two or more categories, you have a variety of motivations for volunteering.

Self-Improver

Your volunteer work is an important part of what makes you feel good about yourself and it improves your mood when you're down. You're inner-directed and you need volunteer work that satisfies those feelings. When you choose your volunteer work, listen to your heart. It doesn't really matter what you do as long as you come away with good feelings. That's what will keep you coming back.

Experience Seeker

You're curious about people. You like to learn new things and visit new places. When you get interested in something, you like to learn everything there is to know about the topic. As your interests change, your volunteer work may constantly change, too. When you choose your volunteer path, go with your latest passion.

Altruist

You have a strong sense of personal values and you're clear about what issues are important to you. You'll stay with your volunteer commitments as long as you can see progress, however slow it is in coming. Once you've committed to a cause, you stick with it, so choose carefully from the start.

Connector

You're part of a group who gets asked to help out in a lot of different organizations because you fit in well and you enjoy spending time with other volunteers. You like volunteer activities that allow you to work with family and friends and you're always up for the next walkathon; the cause itself is secondary.

- We hope you have enjoyed and found useful the information you acquired about yourself. We trust that you will be better able to identify the areas of volunteerism that will be most rewarding to you. Following is an overview of the services for seniors that are offered at JFS and some general aspects of aging.

Source: Canadian Living Magazine 2001

SENIORS SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Purpose: To enable the elderly to remain as long as possible in their own homes, and to facilitate transitions as necessary.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Agency to the Volunteer:

- Accessing and coordinating services on behalf of clients is key to their overall well-being. JFS programs and services are often requested by family members or friends who are unable to meet the client's needs. Volunteers serve a vital role in helping the agency provide quality service to our seniors.
- Help to develop unique and meaningful relationships
- Provide ongoing support to the volunteer through the Coordinator or the social worker
- Invite the volunteer to attend monthly workshops designed with the volunteer in mind
- Offer JFS services to the volunteer if needed in a timely fashion.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Volunteer to the Agency:

Keep the appropriate JFS staff updated on contact with client
Complete monthly statistics for the volunteer coordinator
Attend when possible volunteer workshops which are held monthly
Respect the issues around confidentiality

The following information is designed to sensitize volunteers to some of the dynamics pertinent to the elderly.

Attitudes towards Seniors:

Why do many of us fail to recognize senior citizens as worthwhile, given their years of experience? Why do so many of us allow the small percentages who are unable to maintain their independence to influence our image of most older people? We assume that all their abilities have lessened. We ignore their past contributions and future potentials. When we do come in contact with elderly people, we don't always give them the opportunity to handle their own affairs, in spite of their long years of experience.

These attitudes are all barriers to the client's emotional well-being. Highlighting their value in terms of family, friends and community can often turn things around dramatically, empowering them with a sense of accomplishment and hope. This generally occurs in the most innocent of ways: a perusal of old photo albums, reminiscing over a cup of tea, admiring a current art project, even a well placed "you're amazing" can make all the difference.

Situations of the Older Senior:

Some older people have lost their family and friends, and yet others are distanced from the ones they still have. Some seniors clearly prefer to develop friendships and relationships with non family members. They value their independence and autonomous thinking and feel this is more easily facilitated with “others”. With no special contacts and little to do, they find time passes slowly, and days seem empty and monotonous. Increasing physical infirmities cause concern and limits their autonomy. Some seniors describe themselves and their lives with words such as: bored, useless, worthless, disinterested, hopeless, lonely, isolated, uprooted, rejected withdrawn, unhappy, fearful, discouraged, depressed, disillusioned, bitter, dependent. Some experience financial hardships that come with living on a fixed income.

On the other hand, the elderly have much to offer in terms of wisdom, experience and perspective. The knowledge of life’s events and coping strategies can teach younger generations how to manage life with success.

Needs of Older People:

The needs of seniors are the same as those of other members of the community, some are more intense and some are less urgent.

Tangible Needs:

- ☺ Income
- ☺ Food
- ☺ Shelter
- ☺ Clothing
- ☺ Medical care
- ☺ Recreation
- ☺ Transportation

Intangible Needs:

- ☺ Someone to love
- ☺ Someone who loves them
- ☺ Something useful to do
- ☺ Something they feel is important
- ☺ Something to look forward to
- ☺ Cognitive stimulation
- ☺ Independence
- ☺ Respect and self-respect
- ☺ Friendship
- ☺ Involvement

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER/CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

Department: Seniors Unit, Volunteer Coordinator

Purpose: To enrich the quality of life of a senior in our community.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To give the senior some shared moments of happiness and interest in life, some satisfaction in the present, as well as something to look forward to, and to fortify the belief that the community has not forgotten.
- To stimulate interest in the outside world in creative, intellectual and recreational activities, increasing independence.
- To stimulate physical and mental health and prevent regression.
- To preserve dignity and belief in self.
- To help the individual make the most of their abilities.
- To help the client attain a feeling of achievement and acknowledge accomplishments and contributions past and present.
- To encourage the individual to establish and maintain friendly relationships with neighbours.
- To help residents accept their institutionalization.
- Advocacy on behalf of the needs of the elderly.
- Enabling residents of long-term care facilities to maintain or renew contact with the community.
- Enlightening staff regarding observations of residents and their needs.
- To bring first-hand information back to the community and help change attitudes towards the chronically ill and physically challenged.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER/CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa offers many volunteer-run programs and services.

Contact: The Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Seniors Unit

Purpose: To establish a mutually respectful and satisfying relationship between clients and volunteers.

The volunteer-client relationship serves several purposes:

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of the client
- Creating bonds between the individuals and the community
- Offering support to the clients and decreasing their sense of isolation
- Volunteers act as our “eyes and ears”, identifying and making professional staff aware of changes and/or potential problems developing for the clients we serve.

General Guidelines in establishing a relationship with clients:

Awareness

Be aware that newcomers and seniors may be treated dismissively in a fast moving world. Newcomers might be perceived as though they were less intelligent because of poor English language skills.

Some seniors may feel isolated, especially if there are physical and/or psychological deficits including hearing loss and cognitive impairments. Over-extended health care systems may not have the resources to provide adequate care. If you notice your client is being neglected or in need, please bring this to the attention of the Coordinator.

Be a Good Listener

Listening actively and without being judgmental is one of the most important gifts you can give to a person. Showing genuine interest in what the other person is expressing helps to acknowledge their identity and validates their feelings. Feelings are neither right or wrong – and expression of feelings is encouraged in a supportive, caring environment.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A GOOD VOLUNTEER

- ♥ Be a good listener.
- ♥ Respect confidences and confidentiality. Unless clients disclose that they plan to harm themselves or someone else ensure consent is given before you share any information about them.
- ♥ Be tolerant. Recognize your own value system.
- ♥ Be tactful. Avoid arguments.
- ♥ Be understanding and nonjudgmental.
- ♥ Explore common interests.
- ♥ Be positive and supportive.
- ♥ Allow and encourage clients to do whatever they can for themselves.
- ♥ Be kind. Show empathy rather than sympathy.
- ♥ Encourage positive attitudes in clients.
- ♥ Be dependable. You will be working with a vulnerable population...showing up when expected is crucial to developing a mutually respectful and trusting relationship with clients.
- ♥ Be sensitive about the amount and type of personal information you disclose to the client.

Please Remember...

- **Do Not** administer medication or do anything else that would be considered the job of a doctor or public health nurse.
- **Do Not** become involved with legal matters or family affairs.
- **Do Not** become involved with any personal care, ie. bathing.
- **Do** advise the Coordinator of anything that appears to be problematic.
- **Trust your gut.** If something seems uncomfortable or “off” check it out with the coordinator.

The following sections detail specific programs and services that rely on the contributions of volunteers. Pertinent information and requirements are outlined.

Potential Challenges:

The Coordinator of Volunteer Services or Case Manager is always available to discuss any matter that may arise. Some of the potential challenges in working with seniors include the following:

Setting Limits Seniors may ask you to do things that you are unable to do as part of your volunteer duties. Should this occur, it is important to discuss it with your coordinator, who will help you in setting appropriate limits and goals.

Don't be afraid to tell seniors what you can or cannot do.

Allow seniors to do what they can for themselves, instead of doing it all for them.

Motivation Can you expect seniors to change and become more active or outgoing if they never have been in the past? Seniors who were not interested in many activities in their younger years are unlikely to change in their declining years. They simply welcome your presence and the time spent with them.

Do not be overly concerned if they will not attend outings that you think would be enjoyable to them.

Affection Be aware of an appropriate level of affection. Sometimes volunteers can be the recipients of an unwanted level of affection, and occasionally their own friendliness is misinterpreted. Always be aware of appropriate limits.

The following is an outline of current volunteer programs and policies under our Seniors Services Unit.

VOLUNTEERS AND KOSHER MEALS ON WHEELS

Program Outline:

This program began in 1982 thanks to an initial grant from Health and Welfare Canada. Currently JFS partners with Hillel lodge to provide meals at the noon hour, Mondays Wednesdays & Fridays. These meals are delivered to clients at home, in hospital or long-term care facilities.

Contact: Kosher Meals on Wheels Coordinator

Purpose: To enable seniors and/or convalescents to remain independent in their own homes as long as possible, by providing hot, nutritious meals.

Role of the Program Coordinator:

The Coordinator of Volunteer Services arranges initial intake interviews with potential drivers. The KMOW Coordinator then oversees the volunteers participating in this program. She arranges routes and scheduling of drivers for each month at least two weeks prior to the end of the month, and ensures that meals arrive according to plan.

Role of the Volunteer:

Every volunteer is a valued part of a team helping to provide hot nourishing meals to those unable to prepare meals for themselves. As well as helping our consumers maintain their independence, you will be providing them with a valuable social contact from our community. This is a mutually rewarding experience, and you will no doubt enjoy getting to know the appreciative recipients.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- ☞ Arrive at Hillel Lodge to pick up meals at 10:20 am.
- ☞ Collect daily route instructions and make sure the correct number of servings are provided.
- ☞ Keep an area map in the car. Make sure you have the Coordinator's phone number handy in case of difficulty, as well as the special KMOW card clearly displayed in your window. Never park in a "fire zone".
- ☞ Arrange to spend a few minutes talking to the consumer at each delivery. This will allow for an opportunity to observe the general state of health of the client, and to report any problems to the Coordinator.
- ☞ If no one answers, contact the KMOW Coordinator.
- ☞ At your own discretion, you may perform small services for the client, such as mailing letters. It is important to space yourself so that you get a chance to speak to each consumer, but the meals must be delivered before they

get cold. If you wish, you may return after your route is finished for a friendly visit. Please advise the Volunteer Coordinator if this occurs.

- ☞ Try to get to know some of the other volunteer drivers, so you can find a replacement if necessary. If you are unable to find a replacement, call the KMOW Coordinator as soon as possible.
- ☞ Inform, in writing, your vehicle insurance carrier of your intention to join the program and obtain assurance that your premium will not be affected. The agency must have, on file, a letter with regard to your having informed your insurance carrier of these activities, as well as a copy of your valid driver's license.

Suggestions:

- Greet the recipient by name and introduce yourself. Show the recipient that she/he is an individual whom you feel is important.
- Be cheerful, patient and friendly. Even though you only have a short time to spend with each client, try not to talk too fast or to appear rushed.
- Occasionally, recipients will complain about the food. Often, this is only a means of starting a conversation. Listen patiently, record the complaints, but make no promises. Report the complaints to the KMOW Coordinator, and they will be looked into. While it may not be feasible to make substitutions for those who do not like a certain food, perhaps meals can be adjusted to suit the preferences of the majority.
- Encourage consumers to eat the meal when it is delivered, as food deteriorates rapidly at room temperature. Meals provided for dinners or weekends should be placed in the refrigerator. A gentle reminder may be necessary for some recipients.
- Never leave a meal outside the door, especially during the summer months. If there is no answer, contact the KMOW Coordinator at Jewish Family Services immediately.

VOLUNTEERS AND TELESALOM


Program Outline:


Teleshalom is the daily telephone call assurance program. The greatest danger facing most homebound elderly is social isolation, which can contribute to deteriorating health, a slow recovery from accidents, and depression. For some of these at-risk or vulnerable elderly, a weekly telephone call from a social worker or a weekday call from a trained volunteer can make a difference.


Department: Seniors Unit, Volunteer Coordinator


Purpose: To ensure the client's safety and well-being, as well as, to assure people that they are not alone and to decrease the anxiety which people often experience when living alone. To maintain contact with the older individual and report problems as they surface. It can also be a gateway to other services.

Duties and Responsibilities:

-  Your client should be called at the same pre-arranged time daily, between 8:30 and 10:00 am. You are not expected to call on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays. (Jewish and Statutory)

-  A long call is not necessary – just find out if all is well.

-  The client should let you know if he/she is going away at any time. Any problems with this arrangement should be reported to the Coordinator.

-  Assure the client that she/he may call Jewish Family Services at any time between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm Fridays.

Emergency:

What constitutes an emergency? If any of the following occur, contact the Coordinator, who will follow-up with appropriate action.

- ☹ There is no answer after 30 minutes please call Volunteer Coordinator.

- ☹ There is a prolonged busy signal (more than 30 min.)

- ☹ The client sounds emotionally or physically ill.

Social Service Backup:

As a volunteer you are able to refer a client for other services that may be helpful to them. Volunteer should contact the Coordinator and apprise them of the need. Callers are encouraged to report to the Coordinator any important change noted in their daily phone conversation.

If You're Going To Be Away:

- Contact the Volunteer Coordinator and a temporary replacement will be arranged.
- If a client plans to be away and wishes to notify someone after hours, they should notify the JFS office and leave a voice-mail message. The Coordinator will pick up the information the next morning and distribute it to the caller.

The Outline and Importance of a Friendly Visiting Program:

This program has been an integral part of Jewish Family Services since the Agency's inception. A committed volunteer is paired with a senior for the purpose of visiting on a regular basis.

People of all ages can feel lonely and isolated; however, older people are especially apt to feel this way. Slowly, they lose their friends, their skills are no longer needed in the working world, there is no longer someone who depends on them. They may lack transportation to community facilities, or they may be bedridden.

Studies have shown that the need for a friend is as basic as the need for food and shelter. Involvement of volunteers with seniors broadens the latter's interest, helps them to make use of community services, encourages a sense of dignity, and gives them something to look forward to. The volunteers are able to discover the real needs of seniors, and begin the process of assisting staff in their attempts to adjust and improve existing services.

Department: Seniors Unit, Volunteer Coordinator

Purpose: To provide seniors who may be experiencing isolation and loneliness, with an important link in the chain of health and social services within the community, as well as, to provide welcomed companionship initiated and maintained by both individuals.

Goals:

- ☺ To make a friendly contact with an older person, developing a meaningful and on-going relationship.
- ☺ To help in little ways (as a "good friend" would), while engaged in this friendly contact.
- ☺ To be a good listener, receptive to the fact that there may be many needs which are not readily expressed.
- ☺ To regard personal information concerning the senior as STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- ☺ Once a match has been agreed to by yourself and the Coordinator of Volunteer Services, contact the person immediately to arrange a suitable time for the visit.

- ☺ Identify yourself and the agency clearly on each contact with your client.

- ☺ Maintain regular, on-going friendly contacts with the client. A suggested average would be once a week.

- ☺ Call the morning of the visit to confirm.

- ☺ Notify the Coordinator immediately if any problem or uncertainty arises, or if the situation changes in such a way as to make continued contact difficult or impossible.

- ☺ Attend the required orientation interview and any training sessions provided for volunteers, which may be relevant.

- ☺ Length of visit is up to you and the senior, along with the involvement of the Social Worker.

Services a Friendly Visitor Might Provide:

- ☺ Listening. Show respect for stories repeated again and again. Reminiscing can be a healthy outlet, and should be guided and encouraged.

- ☺ Conversing. Introduce topics of special interest to the elderly.

- ☺ Reading aloud, writing and mailing letters.

- ☺ Making phone calls, upon request.

- ☺ Aiding in shopping and supplying requested information.

- ☺ Discussing newspaper and magazine articles, radio, TV, etc.

- ☺ Providing opportunities to participate in hobbies, or to develop new interests.

- ☺ Remembering birthdays and holidays, sending sympathy and convalescence cards.

- ☺ Corresponding when out of town.

- ☺ Exchanging library books.

- ☺ Playing games.

- ☺ Acquainting them with community and social service resources.

- ☺ Transportation to the doctor, clubs, meetings, etc.

- ☺ Outings to museums, galleries, movies, shopping, synagogue, local events, etc.

- ☺ Sharing recipes.

Emergencies:

Be on the lookout for any kind of unusual behaviour on the part of the senior whom you are visiting. Some examples would be: sudden confusion, grogginess, incoherence, uneven breathing, pallor, or pain in the head, chest or abdomen. If you are doing home visiting, phone either the hospital emergency ward, ambulance or the senior's own doctor, depending on the seriousness of the situation. JFS should also be called so that we can contact other family members.

Special Needs:

You may be visiting people with special needs. Being physically challenged, hearing or visually impaired can occupy a prominent place in the person's thoughts. It is understandable that the person may need to express their feelings in this area. However, also reinforce the view that a person is more than their impairments. Try to focus on the positive aspects of peoples' lives.

Gifts:

What you should be giving is YOURSELF. If you always bring a gift, the client is put on the receiving end, and may feel very uncomfortable if she/he is not able to afford gift-giving in return. Give as you would a friend: share a magazine, flowers from the garden, a small plant, photos of your latest trip. Or, better yet, go empty-handed...the client is looking for YOU, not your gifts.

If at times you feel you would like to take a gift, do so to fill a special need or wish, to develop interests, or to celebrate special holidays or events.

VOLUNTEERS AND GUTTEN TOG

Program Outline:

This new initiative, born out of the tremendous need identified by the Jewish Family Service Chaplaincy program. Organized into teams, or on an individual basis, volunteers go into these facilities to visit, make sure all is well, and break the feelings of isolation that is so common to seniors at this stage of life. Many of these clients do not have family or friends who visit, while others are connected minimally.

Encouraging participation in community life in a way that many have not done in years, volunteers provide opportunities to chat about old acquaintances, meet young children, hear some Yiddish, eat something a bit “heimisch”, celebrate holidays...be a Jew among Jews again.

Department: Seniors Unit, Volunteer Coordinator

Purpose: To provide Jewish residents of long-term care facilities with a friendly visit and connection to the Jewish community.

What To Expect:

- residents who have a variety of issues: some are completely lucid and coherent, while others are totally non-functioning and unable to communicate.
- The key to this program’s success has been to match volunteers with situations they can be comfortable with on an on-going basis.
- Each client has an individual set of needs. Some may welcome an opportunity to speak Yiddish, others may appreciate watching the antics of a child or pet. Others may respond to the gentleness of holding hands. Being sung to, smiled at, shown pictures, read to...any friendly contact at all can make the biggest difference to the person’s quality of life.
- All of the facilities involved are clean, well maintained and comfortable.
- It can often be difficult to visit people who are struggling with chronic or critical illness, especially over prolonged periods of time.
- Becoming attached to the people you visit can make it traumatic for the volunteer should that person pass away. On-going support is always available within the agency, and volunteers are encouraged to turn to us for emotional support, to vent frustrations, or to share success stories. The other members of your “team” of volunteers who visit the same people can also be a valuable resource when you need to talk.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Volunteers will be contacted by the Jewish Family Service Chaplain to arrange the first visit. The Chaplain (who also visits periodically to provide spiritual counselling) will introduce the volunteer to any pertinent staff and to each of the individuals being visited, providing necessary information on a case-by-case basis. This initial visit will also afford the opportunity to meet the other volunteers who make up the “team” visiting at that particular facility.
- Where required by the institution, any necessary vaccinations, flu shots, police checks, etc. will be obtained.
- Volunteers will be organized into teams to cover each facility, ensuring a minimum number of regular visits to each client (ideally, once a week). This might involve a rotating weekly schedule, an alternating schedule, or pairing up of visitors, as each case warrants.
- A visit with these clients might last anywhere between 5-20 minutes each, depending on your own interest and availability, their energy level, the time of day, or any other number of factors. Use your own discretion, bearing in mind that even a short visit might be exhausting to someone who is frail.
- Always ask the client first if they would like a visit.
- Volunteers will keep track of time spent visiting and report back to the Coordinator regularly.
- The Coordinator should be contacted if there are any concerns regarding the individual’s well-being, the quality of care being provided, or any other significant changes.
- If you are ill, DO NOT visit until you are feeling better. The elderly in these facilities are particularly frail, and even a common cold can be seriously dangerous to their health.

Reminders:

- If someone is not up to a visit, recognize that there are all kinds of reasons why they might prefer to be alone. Even those who regularly refuse should be asked anyways in case, this is the time they change their mind!
- Family matters are best left in the hands of family members.
- Celebrating holidays or special events with your clients is an opportunity they may not get otherwise.
- The health care system has undergone serious financial cutbacks that have greatly impacted the quality of life in long-term care facilities. Most of these institutions are seriously under-staffed and lack the resources we might hope they could provide. Understand the conditions the staff are working under, and try to support them.
- Experience has shown that both the quality and quantity of care and attention received by patients increases significantly for those who receive regular visits from members of the community.
- Advocacy by volunteers is a gradual process that will be recognized as beneficial for all concerned. Over time, the staff should feel less threatened, and recognize our volunteers as a valuable resource to support them in their role.
- If you are uncomfortable with any kind of personal treatment or interaction between a staff member and your client – or yourself – contact the program Coordinator, who will look into the matter immediately.

VOLUNTEERS AND TRANSPORTATION

Program Outline:

Volunteer drivers and companions are occasionally needed to drive clients to medical appointments, community events, or on shopping excursions. These arrangements might be as part of an on-going relationship with a particular client, or as an “on-call” situation serving many clients on an occasional basis.

While some clients may make a direct request for transportation, all requests should be referred through the Volunteer Coordinator.

Department: Seniors Unit, Volunteer Coordinator

Purpose: To allow seniors to maintain a relatively high level of independence without losing contact with the outside world or endangering their safety by traveling alone.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- ☞ Drivers must notify their insurance carrier in writing of their JFS activities. (There should be no change in premium rates.) The Coordinator must have a copy of this notification, as well as a copy of your valid drivers license.
- ☞ Drivers are asked to be prompt and dependable when picking up clients.
- ☞ The client is responsible for any parking costs that the driver may have to incur. This is usually clarified at the onset.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Program Outline:

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa-Carleton has been settling and integrating newcomers into the community since the inception of the agency. As part of the LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) Consortium, we have become leaders on the local settlement scene, expanding and coordinating services throughout the Region.

Immigrants to Canada often arrive with few possessions, little or no language skills, unemployable work experience, and no knowledge concerning "Canadian Life". Many have no connections to family or friends, leaving them completely isolated and vulnerable. Often, a call to our agency is their very first step to rebuilding their lives.

Department: Settlement Services

Purpose: The underlining issue inherent in the resettlement process is always the development of language skills, impacting on every aspect of life. In addition to facilitating communications in the broadest sense, the ability to function in English opens opportunities for employment, social contact, extra-curricular participation, and developing friendships.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To work mainly with seniors who cannot attend ESL schools because of health, age and other problems.
- On-going contact between the volunteer and the client is arranged directly to be mutually convenient, and might include a weekly 2-hour session.
- These meetings might take place in the client's home, at a coffee shop, library, school or other appropriate setting. Normally, to make things easier for volunteers, we try to send them to people who live more or less in the same neighbourhood.
- Assisting with English comes first. We can distinguish three levels of assistance depending on the level of knowledge that is already there. A person who does not know a word of English needs to be taught to say a few simple things about himself, to ask simple questions and understand simple answers.
- At the second level, people are taught to talk on certain subjects, such as banking, visiting a doctor, shopping, visiting a pharmacy, transportation, social services, etc. At this level the student must be able to formulate more complex questions and to understand expanded answers given to them. A particularly important task is to help people to fill out all sorts of official forms.
- The third level involves developing and improving the ability to carry on a conversation on a wide range of topics. As most of our volunteers are not professional teachers and have little or no experience teaching English, they either prepare teaching material on their own, or more often, come to us for advice and teaching aids. The emphasis is on developing conversation skills. Our volunteers always take into account their students' specific needs and wishes. For example, on the eve of a visit to a doctor's office, they will teach their students terms and phrases that will be useful when they explain their problems to their doctor.

Some volunteers pay more attention to grammar; other place particular emphasis on pronunciation; some assign homework to their students; some use pictures or newspaper articles for discussion.

In most cases, our clients develop very warm relationships with their volunteers. They are all very grateful and appreciative of the help they are getting. They invariably invite their volunteers to share meals with them, introduce them to their children and grandchildren, tell them about their life in the former Soviet Union and of their impressions of their new life in Canada. Often such contacts lead to good and lasting friendships.

WARM HOME PROGRAM

Initiated in the spring of 1989, this volunteer driven luncheon for elderly Russian newcomers is held once a month. The goals are to promote integration, connection to the community and well-being among the senior Russian newcomer by offering a culturally sensitive socialization and nutritional congregate dining experience. These meetings are normally attended by 12-14 clients.

Miriam's Well

Volunteers, many of them recent immigrants help pack and distribute fruits and vegetables to those in need at the end of each month. Many of these people find this is a perfect way to repay the help that they have received and they come away with a great sense of accomplishment

Mailings

A group of about 6-8 Russian elderly immigrants are responsible for helping out with major JFS mailings. This gives them a reason to get out of their homes and feel that they are contributing members of society. They look forward to these outings.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Do you have a special skill or expertise to share as an entertainer or speaker at one of our on-going programs? Perhaps you would like to offer your professional services to someone in need. From pro-bono medical attention to graphic design services – whether your talents and experience lie in an area of benefit to a client, or to the enhancement of our ability to deliver service, we welcome your contribution.

Some of the possibilities include:

- ♥ Legal services for family, immigration, employment or criminal cases
- ♥ Medical services
- ♥ Assistance with filing income tax returns
- ♥ Optical services/glasses
- ♥ Helping with household chores, repairs, landscaping, etc.
- ♥ Dental work
- ♥ Tickets to local events
- ♥ Auto parts & service
- ♥ Speaking at a workshop or support group
- ♥ Clerical support in our office
- ♥ Design, layout or printing services for special projects
- ♥ Resumé writing
- ♥ Tutoring
- ♥ Babysitting
- ♥ Soliciting for fundraising campaigns
- ♥ Musicians who can entertain

Whatever you do for a living...whatever your special talents...someone can benefit from your sharing.

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

From time to time, especially holiday time, JFS runs special programs that count on the assistance of volunteers. Tasks range from stuffing envelopes, to making phone calls, serving meals, decorating party rooms, or delivering food parcels.

Contact the Coordinator of Volunteer Services if you have an interest in any of the above activities.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Good ideas and leadership skills are always welcome on our Board of Directors or a variety of committees and task forces. Contact the Executive Director for more information, to offer a service or contribute your expertise.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY WHILE YOU ARE WITH A CLIENT



➤ If a client requires emergency medical attention, go to the nearest telephone, call 911 and then return and stay with the client until help arrives.

➤ Also notify JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES 722- 2225 as soon as possible. Do not try to provide assistance unless you are qualified to do so (e.g. First Aid or CPR training).

➤ If the client falls while with the driver but does not need emergency help, assess the situation and take the client home or to the nearest clinic or emergency department.

➤ If the vehicle is in an accident, contact the Program Coordinator as soon as possible.

➤ Report any incident as soon as possible to the Program Coordinator and complete an incident report.

UPDATED: August 2004