

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ROLE: Volunteer – Palliative Care

REPORTS TO: **Coordinator of Volunteers MCMPC**

LOCATED: 230 Normanby Ave Thornbury Vic 3071

DATE: July 2024

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Melbourne City Mission (MCM) is a leader and innovator in the provision of services to the community. Established in 1854, MCM is a non-denominational organisation that provides assistance to thousands of Victorian people and communities experiencing disadvantage.

As a service provider, MCM's work is focussed on providing a hand up, not a hand out, supporting people to take charge of their own lives and participate fully in community life. MCM's service profile includes Children, Youth, Family, Disability, Employment, Education & Training; Homelessness, Justice, and Palliative Care.

As a social change agent, MCM advocates for social policy change and works across all sectors in seeking to achieve sustainable outcomes for communities experiencing disadvantage.

ROLE CONTEXT

As part of the Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care (MCMPC) team, this position implements Melbourne City Mission's commitment to best practice in palliative care.

Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care was established in 1981 as the first community-based palliative care service to operate in Victoria. The service aims to enhance quality of life by providing specialist, interdisciplinary health care and practical support for people living with a terminal condition and their families and carers including the management of complex symptoms, loss, grief, and bereavement.

The service is provided to people living in private homes and Aged Care Facilities in the local government areas of Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, and Yarra.

PURPOSE

Volunteers provide face-to-face or telephone connection with clients, carers, and families to reduce social isolation, and improve their enjoyment of life. Volunteers work as an integral part of the allied care team. Each volunteer fulfils support needs identified by clients and carers in consultation with members of the interdisciplinary team, and the Coordinator of Volunteers.

ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work within the philosophy, objectives, protocols, policies, and procedures of MCMPC.
- Develop a meaningful and supportive relationship with clients and/or carers.
- Participate in a wide range of roles which may include companionship to clients and/or carers, respite care for family or carers, transport clients on outings and to appointments.
- Reduce a client or carer's sense of isolation and aloneness.
- Work within the prescribed volunteer/client role boundaries.
- Regularly communicate with the Coordinator of Volunteers after each client visit to discuss the welfare of the client and/or carer.
- Communicate any urgent or significant concerns about client, family or carer welfare to the Coordinator of Volunteers and members of the interdisciplinary team.
- Participate in team meetings, debriefing sessions, and in-service training with other volunteers and the Coordinator of Volunteers as required.
- Provide timely notification of the planned visiting/phoning schedule, and feedback after each client/carer contact.
- Maintain accurate records of out-of-pocket expenses for reimbursement.
- Provide the Coordinator of Volunteers reasonable notice when unavailable to volunteer.
- Volunteers may choose to undertake additional training to provide gentle hand and foot massage, or work with clients to record their Life Stories. These specialist roles cannot be performed before the additional training is successfully completed, and the boundaries of these roles understood.

ORIENTATION TRAINING

MCMPC provides an orientation training program for all volunteers who apply to work with clients in the home. The comprehensive training program has been developed by Palliative Care Victoria. Client-facing volunteers agree to:

- Attend all sessions (over four days) of the in-person induction training program.
- Spend half a day "on the road" with a nurse visiting clients.
- Attend a final interview following the successful completion of the induction program.
- Volunteers working in bereavement, the Life Stories program or providing clients with hand and foot massage are required to undertake further training.

SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

- Regular conversations to debrief with Coordinator of Volunteers about client visits and the challenges in the volunteer role.
- Attend a minimum of two volunteer team meetings and education sessions per year.
- Mentor support provided by experienced volunteers.
- Reimbursement of travel costs.
- Public Liability Insurance cover.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Key relationships	To work within the palliative care team which includes volunteers, allied care, and nursing staff.
Accountability	Volunteers are accountable to the Coordinator of Volunteers

ROLE CAPABILITY REQUIREMENTS

Key selection criteria

- Demonstrate a commitment to respond to the needs of palliative care clients and carers.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Flexible, reliable, and responsible.
- Commitment to, and an understanding of issues of confidentiality.
- Capacity to be caring, empathic, compassionate, and non-judgemental.
- Capacity to be self-reflective and considered in self-disclosure.
- Capacity to sit “with a quiet mind” with a person’s sadness and grief.
- Ability to exercise discretion and judgement to work in sensitive situations.
- Ability to work autonomously.
- Demonstrate willingness to work as part of a team and accept supervision and direction from the Coordinator of Volunteers.
- If driving, a current Victorian Driver’s Licence, and motor vehicle covered by comprehensive insurance for transport related activities (desirable).
- Willing to undergo a Police Check and receive “clearance” prior to any client contact. An International Police Check is also required if lived/worked overseas in last 10 years. All Police Checks are paid for by MCM and must be renewed every three years.
- Hold a valid Victorian Working With Children Check (WWCC), and have this renewed as required.