



**volunteer
services**
yukon hospitals



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



*"The best way to find yourself
is to lose yourself
in the service of others."*

- Mahatma Gandhi

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Yukon Hospital Corporation acknowledges the many health service volunteer programs across Canada and within the Yukon, who have shared their knowledge and experience. This volunteer handbook references and uses material developed by:

- *Kingston General Hospital (Ontario)*
- *Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Prince Edward Island)*
- *Windsor Regional Hospital (Ontario)*

Our Mission

Safe & Excellent Hospital Care

At Yukon Hospitals we:

- Provide quality acute hospital care to the Yukon community through a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services.
- Are a passionate and highly skilled team focused on the needs of our patients.
- Aim to provide a safe, supportive environment that is efficient and effective in delivering a high standard of care.
- Are an effective partner in the broader Yukon health care community.

Our Values

Accessibility

Offering open and unrestricted access to all people seeking hospital care.

Compassion

Acting with empathy, understanding and kindness.

Respect

Believing in dignity and human rights, honouring the individual, and demonstrating courtesy for others' feelings and circumstances.

Collaboration

Committing to work with our partners to achieve the best possible care for our patients.

Excellence

Pursuing continuous improvement and innovation to achieve exemplary performance.

About Our Hospitals

We are a family of acute care hospitals focused on delivering safe and excellent care to all Yukoners, closer to home, at our facilities in Whitehorse, Dawson City and Watson Lake. Our comprehensive health services set a high standard of care in our territory and are models of care both nationally and internationally. Our community of more than 500 health care providers, professionals and medical staff are passionate about and committed to the best possible patient experience every time.

Whitehorse General Hospital is Yukon's primary acute care centre, providing a full range of care, including 24/7 emergency care, inpatient and ambulatory care, surgical services, cancer care, visiting specialists clinics, therapy and lab services, and advanced diagnostic imaging.

Dawson City Community Hospital and Watson Lake Community Hospital allow many Yukoners to receive care closer to home through access to 24/7 emergency care, inpatient and ambulatory care as well as many lab and diagnostic imaging services.

The history of Yukon hospitals begins with the opening of the first Whitehorse General Hospital in 1901. The organization is now a family of hospitals that includes WGH as well as community hospitals in Dawson City and Watson Lake.

For a complete historical timeline, visit our website www.yukonhospitals.ca select **About Us > Our Hospitals > History**

First Nations Health Programs

Our hospitals are also home to First Nations Health Programs which are recognized nationally and internationally for providing compassionate and culturally appropriate care for First Nations, Inuit and Metis.

- Programs, facilities & amenities
- In-hospital patient support
- Mental health services
- Complex care discharge plans
- Traditional foods
- Traditional medicine
- Cultural education
- Na’Ku Healing Room
- First Nations Elder’s Suite

First Nations Health Programs offer assistance with:

- daily visits with a liaison for emotional support or information about care
- working with Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) to figure out financial assistance and travel outside the territory
- keeping family members informed and supported with the patient’s guidance
- arranging for transportation back home
- providing basic personal care items when patients are brought in on an emergency
- working with outside agencies to get patients the services and supplies they need to recover and heal
- providing access to traditional food and medicine while in hospital
- offering healing and restful spaces for family, friends and community



Welcome

We are delighted that you have chosen to join our team by volunteering. You are sharing your time, experience and skills in a very meaningful way.

Volunteers play a vital role in complementing the work of our clinical and professional staff and enhancing health care services for all Yukoners. Our collective goal is to provide patients and visitors with a pleasant, safe and comforting experience during their time in our hospitals.

Hospitals are incredibly dynamic, social and healing environments. They are also complex, fast-paced and high-energy places to work. We are here to support and guide volunteers by providing orientation and education to help in your new role as well as opportunity to reach your personal goals no matter your motivation for volunteering – whether it's to get involved, give back, learn or build your network.

Our entire staff recognizes and values the contribution of all volunteers. They are available to answer your questions at

any time. It is through you that our one-of-a-kind community can be more involved in the care our hospitals provide.

It is our sincere hope that your volunteer experience in Yukon's hospitals is rewarding, meaningful and enjoyable, and provides you with new experiences and special friendships.

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with the information and tools you will need to be a successful volunteer.

Together, we can create a positive hospital experience that makes a real difference for every person in our care. We thank you again for being part of our team. We hope you enjoy your volunteer experience.

Jason Bilsky

CEO

James Low

Manager, Communications & Patient Support

Crystal Shimoon

Coordinator, Volunteer Services & Patient Support

Volunteer Services Team

The Volunteer Services team advocates for, promotes and coordinates volunteers in Yukon Hospitals. The team makes every effort to best match volunteers with the right opportunities based on personal interests, skills and needs as well as the needs of the hospital and our patients. These individuals are available to provide assistance, support and guidance at any point during your time as a volunteer on our team.

James Low

Manager, Communications & Patient Support
(867) 393-8698

Crystal Shimoon

Coordinator, Volunteer Services & Patient Support
(867) 393-8673

Volunteer Services Office

The Volunteer Services office is open for you as a place to gather before a shift or during a break, grab a snack or refreshment, leave your coat, sign in, and get changed into your volunteer uniform. A staff member is available in the office weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Volunteers working evenings and weekends may obtain a key to the office from Admissions & Discharge. The key is located in the key box, just outside the A&D Manager's office.

Where to find us

Room 2457 (second floor administration area)
Phone: 867.393-8673
Email: volunteer@wgh.yk.ca
5 Hospital Road
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 3H7



Preparing to Volunteer

Screening and Placement

Volunteers are part of our team. And as with any member of the team, we ask volunteers to complete a thorough intake process, including an application, police record check, vaccination updates and references. Even though volunteers do not provide patient care or perform the professional duties of hospital or medical staff, the screening process ensures the safety and security of our patients, staff and volunteers. We also want to match you with and place you in a volunteer opportunity best suited to your interest and abilities.

Thank you for taking the time to provide this information as it demonstrates your commitment to volunteering with us.

Communication

Effective on-going communication is the cornerstone of any positive work experience. Throughout your volunteer experience, the Volunteer Services team will remain in contact with you through regular email updates, check ins and follow ups, surveys, and evaluations that let you

know what's happening, share how you're feeling and understand how you're doing. This is meant to not only give you information and feedback you need to be successful in your role, but it also identify issues you experience or other volunteer and/or learning opportunities within the hospital that may be of interest to you.

Orientation & Training

We want you to be successful in your role. Every member of our team is provided with orientation so they can quickly become familiar with the hospital environment and their new team members. As a volunteer you are provided with the following:

- Orientation session and hospital tour: this covers the basics, including programs and services our hospitals provide, some of the key hospital personnel you will interact with, emergency procedures, proper hand cleaning and infection prevention practices. You will also complete three short online courses to understand the importance of patient safety and privacy.
- 'Site' or role specific training: each volunteer role has been assigned clear tasks and activities. The department manager, nurse or another volunteer will assist you with understanding how to perform these tasks within specific to the department (or site) such as where to fill water jugs or where to direct patients looking to register. You may also be provided with additional information such as on how to approach and work with patients with specialized health needs.

Being a Volunteer

Maintaining Confidentiality

As a volunteer, you are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, as are all other hospital personnel as we follow Yukon's Health Information Privacy Management Act (HIPMA). This means that any information you may acquire regarding the identity, diagnosis or treatment of any patient must be held in strict confidence, and never referred to inside or outside of the hospital. This is of the utmost importance as it ensures the health, trust and confidence of the patients we care for. Breaches of confidentiality will result in termination.

A good rule of thumb: a volunteer should never access, share or discuss information unless its needed to perform volunteer duties at the hospital. If in doubt, you should assume information is confidential unless advised otherwise.

Respecting the privacy of staff is also extremely important and in return, we respect your right to privacy. Volunteer Services will only give out your name, telephone number or email address to other volunteers regarding trading shifts or other volunteer matters. Please let the Volunteer Services Office know if you would prefer not to have your information shared. Do not give out your telephone number or address to patients.

Also, be aware that volunteers are not here to judge staff or the quality of patient care. If you have concerns about patients, their care, or any other matter, please talk to Volunteer Services staff or the staff person in charge of your area. YHC has a well-established process to report and review incidents involving patients, staff and volunteers.

Boundaries & Limitations

All volunteers, by virtue of their position in the health care system, are in a potential position of power over patients. This position must never be abused.

Patients must be able to trust those with whom they interact and situations which could lead to harmful interactions must be avoided. In order to maintain acceptable volunteer and patient relationships, volunteers should be aware of some of the warning signs that indicate they may be overstepping acceptable boundaries.

Warning signs may include:

- Sharing or asking for patient information beyond “need to know” requirements
- Performing any duties or tasks outside of your volunteer role
- Varying your assigned/established volunteer tasks to serve the patient’s needs
- Bringing personalized gifts into the setting
- Spending extra time with one specific person, beyond therapeutic needs
- Changing an assignment to visit with one specific person
- Dressing differently when seeing one specific person
- Giving out a home phone number or email address
- Stepping outside the normal setting to visit the person
- Getting involved in parental or family conflicts. Family issues should be brought to the attention of staff.

Hospital Systems & Equipment

Volunteers are given limited access to hospital systems and many will be able to use equipment such as computers to carry out their duties. You are expected to use the hospital's property or other supplies solely for the purpose of fulfilling your volunteer duties and responsibilities.

Gifts

It is not appropriate to accept tips or gifts from patients. If a patient insists on giving money, explain that it will be handed in to the Volunteer Services office as a donation to the Yukon Hospital Foundation. If possible, the donation should be accompanied by the name and address of the patient, so it can be acknowledged.

If a family member wishes to make a donation, they should be directed to the Volunteer Services or Foundation office.

Cell Phones

Cell phones may be used in lobbies, visitor waiting areas and private offices. You should not use your cell phone or another electronic device while on duty. Please be discreet and turn off your cell phone when on duty or in patient care areas. If, for any reason, you need to contact the Volunteer Services Coordinator, use a hospital phone by dialling 8673.

Social Media

Volunteers should not post photos or share comments about patients, visitors, staff or other volunteers on social media sites or apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others. The hospital has a policy about keeping personal information confidential – and only publishes names and photographs of individuals who have provided written consent. Volunteers also should not make public comments that are perceived as passing judgment on patient care or speaking on behalf of the hospitals.

Saying ‘Hello’ and ‘Bonjour’

Whenever welcoming a patient or visitor to hospital or introducing yourself to a patient for the first time, you are asked to say “Hello” and “Bonjour”.

Greeting patients and visitors in English and French, doesn’t mean you can or are expected to speak French. It simply puts many patients at ease and indicates that services and support are available at the hospital in both languages, including confidential over-the-phone translation services and printed materials.

Volunteers also help connect patients with on-duty hospital personnel or physicians who speak French and can assist patients in getting the right care. Being able to communicate with a medical provider or access information in their first language ensures patients better understand diagnosis, treatment and any special instructions they need to follow once they return home.

Smoking

All Yukon Hospitals facilities are non-smoking with the exception of ‘designated smoking areas’ located outside the building. Under Yukon law, smoking is not permitted inside public buildings or outside within 5 metres of doors, windows or air intakes. We ask that you refrain from smoking during your shift unless it is during a scheduled break.

Insurance

Volunteers automatically receive liability insurance coverage through Yukon Hospitals’ liability insurance policy. Volunteers need to know and understand their duties and the parameters of their volunteer assignment and work within those parameters. As a volunteer, you are covered on your travels to the hospital for your volunteer shift, while at the hospital volunteering, and on your way home from volunteering. For a full summary of Insurance coverage for

WGH Volunteers, please speak to the Volunteer Services Coordinator.

Identification

Prior to starting as a volunteer, you will be issued your hospital ID badge. This badge serves as personal identification notifying staff, patients and families as your role as a volunteer. The badge also gives you access certain areas within the hospital.

You must wear this badge at chest level when on duty. It is okay for patients to ask to see your photo identification if they cannot readily see it.

You will also receive a secondary ID badge that displays the Volunteer Services logo on the front and helpful tips on the back. Please ensure that both badges are worn each shift. When you resign from volunteer service, your ID badge must be returned to the Volunteer Services office.

Uniform

Your appearance matters as it promotes the acceptance of volunteers in a professional light by visitors, clients, and staff. Please maintain a neat, clean, casual yet professional appearance.

Volunteers are expected to wear a uniform, including an ID badge which helps identify you to other staff, patients and families, at all time during your shift. Volunteers can wear jeans or other relaxed-fit pants as long as they are in good repair with no holes or tears. Sweat pants are not permitted. In the summer, volunteers are permitted to wear tidy shorts that are an appropriate length.

Volunteers provide a \$20 refundable deposit for a uniform and ID badge. Keep both safe and in good repair. At the end of your volunteer placement, return both to the Volunteer Office to have your deposit reimbursed to you. If at any time, your ID badge is lost, stolen or broken a replacement

card will be issued at a cost of \$10, which will be the responsibility of the volunteer.

Footwear

In accordance with safe occupational health practices, all volunteers and staff are required to wear appropriate footwear based on the hazards in the work environment. Footwear should be in good repair, low-heeled (maximum height of 2.5 inches), fit well and be comfortable. Closed-toe shoes with flexible non-slip soles are required to reduce risk and prevent injury or exposure. You will potentially be on your feet for up to three hours.

Clean running shoes are acceptable. Sandals, flip-flops, high heels or any type of open-toed shoes are not permitted.

Personal Belongings

Please avoid bringing valuables with you. The hospital will not be responsible for any lost or stolen personal items. Lockers are available for day use only in the Volunteer Services office. Volunteers must bring their own lock. In some cases, hospital staff may designate an area in break rooms for volunteers to store their belongings during a shift, however, you should always exercise care.

Supervision

If you are uncertain about any task, always seek guidance. The staff will be happy to help you. If you are requested to perform a task which is not mentioned in your assignment guide, please check with the Volunteer Services staff before proceeding, or if appropriate, with the person in charge of your volunteer area.



Parking

In order to keep as many parking spaces open for patients and visitors, all volunteers and staff are asked to park only in designated staff parking areas. At WGH, staff parking is located behind the hospital and can be accessed via Wickstrom Road. You may use the back entrances of the hospital when coming and going from your shift. You do not need a parking pass, but will require your ID badge to enter the building.

Keeping Yourself & Others Safe

Transportation of Patients

It is important you never transport/escort a patient without approval from a staff member or leave a patient alone in a wheelchair. Ensure that patients are always delivered directly to their destination and inform staff when they arrive.

To ensure everyone's safety, please follow these rules:

- Permission from a staff person must be obtained prior to moving an inpatient from his or her unit.
- Volunteers may only transfer stable inpatients for socialization purposes. You are responsible for returning the inpatient safely to their unit.
- Volunteers must never attempt to transfer a patient from their wheelchair to a bed or vice versa. You must obtain assistance from staff who will transfer the patient.
- Make sure the brakes are on - on both wheels – before you allow the patient to be seated and before you allow the patient to get up from the wheelchair.
- Make sure the foot-rests are up before you seat the patient. When patient is seated, put the foot-rests down and encourage the patient to keep their feet on the steps while the chair is in motion to avoid injury.
- Always cover patient's lap and knees with a blanket or sheet while transporting them within the hospital, and do not allow it to become tangled in wheels.

Taking patients in wheelchairs into elevators

Always back into the elevator so that the patient is facing forward.

Moving empty wheelchairs

Always fold up the chair by lifting the seat upwards to help make the wheelchair easier to move.

Preventing the Spread of Infection

Taking steps to prevent and control the spread of germs that cause infection protects patients, staff and volunteers from developing serious illnesses. There are a number of things you can do as a volunteer to keep yourself and others safe:

- Practice routine hand cleaning – when entering and leaving the hospital or patient room, after using the restroom or after coughing or sneezing (see below)
- Get your annual flu shot and keep vaccinations up-to-date
- Cover your mouth by using your arm when you cough or sneeze
- Stay home and do not visit the hospital if you feel unwell

Cleaning your Hands

Routine hand washing/cleaning reduces the number of microorganisms on the hands and is the easiest and most effective way to prevent the spread of germs that cause infections. Hands must be cleaned when:

- before and after your shift;
- before entering and after leaving a patient room;
- before and after contact with a patient;
- before and after handling items used by a patient;
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose;
- after using the washroom;
- after handling money

Dispensers with alcohol-based hand rub are located at the main entrance of all of our hospitals, throughout the buildings as well as outside every patient room.

1. CLEAN

When your hands don't look dirty, or no soap and water is available, an alcohol-based hand rub (sanitizer) is the best option.



2. WASH

When your hands look dirty, wash using warm water and regular hand soap (avoid using products with 'antibacterial' on the label).



Emergency Codes

Anyone can call a Code

The number to call is **8281** (at WGH).

This telephone number is dedicated to Codes only. For Dawson City Community Hospital and Watson Lake Community Hospital, please follow the call procedures in place within the facility.

Emergency Procedures Manuals are available in each Department and Community Hospital. You are responsible for becoming familiar with its location and contents. The manual provides details of duties and responsibilities when a Code is called. The emergency procedures policies are also located on SharePoint.

Code Black (Bomb Threat)

Restrict the use of cell phones until the 'ALL CLEAR' is given. Check your immediate area for suspicious packages and report any findings to the Incident Commander. The RCMP will work closely with the Incident Commander and call CODE GREEN as required.

Code Blue (Cardiac or Respiratory Arrest)

The Doctor on Call responds to Code Blue and will run the code until the attending physician arrives and agrees to take over. We do not have a Code Team, therefore all available doctors and nurses respond. It is the understanding that the nurses trained in ACLS will take the leading nursing roles. Any physician in the building should respond, but may leave if there are adequate personnel present.

Code Brown (Hazardous Material)

Contain the hazard if safe to do so. Consult Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If unable to identify product, contain the hazard, or the MSDS indicates need for emergency personnel, ask A&D to call 911 for Fire Department and EMS.

Be prepared for a possible evacuation. If a CODE BROWN is called outside your department, stay in place unless otherwise instructed.

Code Gold (Earthquake)

Drop down to the floor. Take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other piece of furniture. Hold on to the desk, table or piece of furniture and be prepared to move with it.

Code Green (Evacuation)

Stage 1: partial evacuation from the danger area to a safe area.

Stage 2: complete evacuation of the entire facility. The order to evacuate is issued by the Incident Commander.

Code Grey (Shelter in Place / Air Exclusion)

Stay where you are unless directed to move to a new location. Do not exit the building until the ALL CLEAR has been given.

Code Orange (Mass Casualty)

The plan will be initiated upon hearing the announcement "Mass Casualty Response Plan is now in effect. All staff stand-by. All Physicians report to Emergency." The Doctor on Call or delegate is in charge of triage. The Doctor on Call initiates the doctor call-in procedure by contacting the second Dr. on call. In consultation with the ER nurses, clear the department of non-urgent patients.

Code Red (Fire)

Rescue patients from affected area. Contain fire: close all doors and windows, shut down equipment, clear corridors of obstructions, return patients to their rooms. Evacuate affected area following CODE GREEN procedure.

Code White (Aggressive Behaviour)

Remove yourself from danger. Follow directions of the person in charge.

Lockdown (Violent Situation / Hostage Taking)

Remove yourself from danger. If safe to do so, lock the doors between yourself and the incident, turn off the lights and stay out of the line-of-sight. Avoid tampering with potential evidence.

Code Yellow (Missing Patient)

When a CODE YELLOW is called, check printer for name, general description of patient, and if safe to approach. Search your immediate area for the missing patient.

Preventing Workplace Violence

YHC values and promotes a safe and healthy environment for all employees, patients, clients, volunteers, physicians and visitors through its workplace violence prevention program. The Workplace Violence Prevention policy applies to all YHC persons regardless of position, classification, or union membership.

Reporting Incidents

We want to ensure patients, staff and volunteers are kept safe at all times. If a volunteer witnesses or is directly involved in any incident (whether slipping on ice while walking into the hospital or being subject to physical or verbal abuse or threats), he/she must notify the site supervisor and Volunteer Services Coordinator, who will complete an 'incident report' form.

If you are unable to contact the Volunteer Services Coordinator to report the incident immediately, you are expected to document the incident, using the incident report forms provided and ensure it is given to your site supervisor. The site supervisor will see that it is given to the VS Coordinator. You will be then be contacted to discuss the incident and verify any details.



Schedule, Attendance & Recognition

Signing In/Out

Our hospitals use a computer program called Volgistics to schedule volunteers, communicate with volunteers and track volunteer hours contributed to our hospitals. This allows us to ensure we have as many volunteer shifts covered as possible, keep our volunteers up-to-date and can confirm all volunteer service requirements.

All volunteers are asked to sign into their 'Volgistics' account when they arrive on shift and to sign out on completion of their volunteer assignment. At each volunteer station, there is also a paper sign in/out sheet to be completed each shift. This gives you hospital liability insurance coverage. It also serves as a record of who is in the building in case of an emergency. In addition, this record enables you to participate in our volunteer recognition program.

Attendance

Dependability is as important in volunteer positions as it is in employment. When you anticipate you are going to miss your assigned volunteer shift always report your absence.

Please inquire at your area training about any additional

program specific shift absence reporting procedures. Several absences, problematic tardiness and/or leaving your shift early are not acceptable and can lead to dismissal.

If you are ill, we would prefer that you stay home and get well quickly!

You should NOT volunteer if you have the following:

- Communicable diseases such as chicken pox, mumps, rubella
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Respiratory infections such as colds, flu, sore throat, or cough
- Infections on the hands such as boils, dermatitis, scabies
- Eye infections
- Fever

Should you injure yourself or become ill while on duty, please report to the person in charge of your area and to the Volunteer Services office.

Scheduling

Maintaining a consistent schedule is important for everyone; staff, patients and volunteers alike. When you are determining your schedule with the Volunteer Services Coordinator, it is important to be realistic about the amount of time that you can commit each week, ensuring to balance your volunteering with work, study and social commitments.

At the end of each month, a schedule is created for the following month. It is available online through 'Volgistics': here you can review available shifts and schedule yourself in accordingly.

If you do not have access to a computer, you may determine your schedule with the Volunteer Coordinator, and a schedule will be printed for you.

For both online, and on paper scheduling, should you need

to make any amendments to your schedule (ex: for work, travel) please contact the Volunteer Services Coordinator.

Reporting Shift Absence

Consistency of service is vital in helping us achieve Safe and Excellent Hospital Care. If something conflicts with your regularly scheduled shift, please discuss your need with the Volunteer Services Coordinator.

Access your Volgistics Online Profile through the link below or by using a hospital workstation and your hospital-issued username and password.

- <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll?FROM=10703>
- Log-In Name: enter the email address we have on file
- PIN: First-time users will be asked to set their PIN.
- Click on the “My Schedule” tab and you will see your shifts in print.
- Click on your shift and hit “Remove Me” when the next screen opens up.

To pick up vacant shifts

Click on the “Help Wanted” symbol on any date(s) you are available to see which shift time needs to be filled. Click “Schedule Me” if you want to book the shift.

Request a Break in Service

Taking a Leave of Absence (LOA)

Volunteers can request a leave of absence if they plan to be away from their regularly scheduled shift for more than four weeks but are planning to return.

Request to Become Inactive

If you are not planning to continue volunteering, please let us know. If you decide to return and at least three months have passed, volunteers need to submit an updated Criminal Reference Check with the vulnerable sector search. You may

also need a one-step TB test.

For breaks in service of longer than two years, the applicant will need to complete a new application.

Recognition

Your contribution is valued and greatly appreciated by hospital administration, nursing staff, other professional personnel and most importantly, the patients. We celebrate, honour and recognize our volunteers on various occasions by hosting events along with other fun and meaningful activities.

Volunteers are entitled to a complimentary beverage and a muffin or pastry during each volunteer shift. Volunteers working for an extended shift (greater than three hours) are also entitled to a complimentary meal (\$10 value). Please ensure to pick up your card from the Volunteer Services office at the beginning of each shift. Evening and weekend volunteers may help themselves to complimentary beverages and snacks located in the Volunteer Services office.

Requests for Confirmation of Service

Verification can include a letter, email or phone reply stating:

- Start date of volunteer placement
- Resignation date (if applicable)
- Total number of service hours completed to date
- Brief description of placement and tasks performed

Letters of Reference

Prior to requesting a letter of reference please take the following into consideration:

- Part of the minimum eligibility criteria for requesting a reference is that the volunteer has contributed a minimum of 60 hours over seven months
- Review the questions being asked by the requesting body (school, employment, etc.). Do they fit with what we know about you?

- Before we agree to provide a reference, you need to provide us with a copy of the questions being asked. We will advise you which questions we can comfortably answer in support of your application. Then, you can make an informed decision whether our reference will meet the needs of the requesting body and confirm your reference need.

A letter of reference contains all the items mentioned in the Confirmation of Service, plus some or all of the following:

- Performance
- Responsibility and Motivation
- Interpersonal and Communication skills
- Leadership qualities/potential

While we maintain full computer records of volunteer service for three years after you become inactive, it is in your best interest to request a letter of reference within one year of your last day of active participation. YHC may not be able to complete a letter of reference after one year.

Respectful Workplace & Appropriate Conduct

Yukon's hospitals follow practices, behaviours and standards that reflect our goals, values and commitment to safe and excellent hospital care. These are outlined in two key policies that we've adopted – respectful workplace and standards of conduct. Both are designed to promote positive interpersonal communication and set clear expectations for anyone who works or volunteers in our hospitals.

Together, we can create a better environment for everyone.

Fostering a Respectful Workplace

We work in a fast-paced and often stressful environment. Disagreements, misunderstandings and differences of

opinion can and do happen. We all have a role in creating and the right to work in a respectful workplace. To help, Yukon's hospitals have updated our policy (HR-120 found in the volunteer manual for your area) to clearly communicate expectations for anyone working or volunteering in our facilities. Above all, this will help you to:

- More easily identify behaviour that negatively affects others
- Better understand what a positive and respectful workplace looks like
- Know our individual roles in promoting and maintaining respect at work
- Have a clear and fair process to report and resolve issues

What is a respectful workplace?

A respectful workplace is inclusive, undertakes a dialogue about work issues that welcomes diverse opinions, constructively and collaboratively resolves these issues, expects courteous and considerate behaviour, protects us from discrimination and retaliation, and supports learning.

Respectful behaviour in our workplace

- being polite, courteous and respectful
- saying "hello", "good morning" or "how are you?" to your coworkers
- listening to what others have to say and being open to their ideas, comments and suggestions
- seeking input and providing positive feedback
- considering all relevant factors when making a decision
- valuing diversity of experiences and perspectives
- treating others fairly and equitably

Inappropriate behaviour and conduct

- Derogatory comments or remarks
- Rumours, gossip and innuendo
- Practical jokes that cause embarrassment
- Yelling or shouting at others
- Shunning, isolation and/or exclusion from work-related activities
- Swearing and name calling
- Retaliation against anyone who speaks to you about your behaviour or files a complaint

Volunteers can raise any concerns directly with the person/people involved or seek assistance from and report incidents to the Volunteer Services Coordinator. Everyone is expected not engage in negative conduct and work in a positive manner towards a resolution.

Following the Standards of Conduct

During the general orientation session, volunteers are asked to review and acknowledge YHC's Standards of Conduct. This is a tool to help maintain a culture of integrity through consistent, ethical behaviour and positive working relationships.

Confidentiality

Anyone who receives care, works in or volunteers for our hospitals entrusts us with personal health and business information. It is our commitment to keep this information confidential, accessing it only for the purposes of performing our work and sharing it only with those authorized to receive it.

Appropriate Use of Hospital Information Systems & Equipment

By accessing and using hospital information systems and equipment, volunteers are expected to use appropriately and only for purpose of performing their duties.

Records & Documentation Retention

Manage, maintain and secure records and documents in a responsible manner and in accordance with our privacy policies.

External Communication/Public Comment

Volunteers may comment on public issues, but must ensure that any comment is not perceived as speaking on behalf of the hospitals or its volunteers. Only the Communications department is authorized to speak to the media and others for the hospitals. If a reporter approaches you about patient condition update or location or any other matter involving the hospitals – direct them to (867) 393-8698 or **james.low@wgh.yk.ca**. Hospital staff will respond to the inquiry and request written consent from the patient in question.

Legal Proceedings

You must not sign an affidavits relating to facts that came to your knowledge as a result of performing your duties as a volunteer unless it has been prepared by a lawyer acting for the hospitals or unless approved by the hospitals.

Conflict of Interest

Volunteers must disclose and address any real or perceived conflict of interest through discussion or written letter to the Manager, Communications & Patient Support. A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person is in a position to gain personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.

Post-Volunteer Term

Your confidentiality agreement extends beyond your time as

volunteer. Do not disclose any confidential information you obtained while volunteer in our hospitals without written permission from YHC.

Gifts

Volunteers may not accept gifts (even of nominal value) from patients, family members or staff. If the individual insists, the gift can be handed over to Volunteer Services who will make a donation to the Yukon Hospital Foundation on the individuals behalf.

Impartiality

Many volunteers take time outside their work or school hours to help out at the hospital. Many also volunteer with other organizations. Being a student, holding a job or volunteering elsewhere does not disqualify you from volunteering in the hospital – as long as you do not use hospital premises, equipment, supplies or services to perform any tasks outside of your hospital volunteer tasks.

Respectful Workplace

Volunteers should conduct themselves in a way that supports a work environment of mutual respect, safety and inclusiveness. You are also accountable for your behaviour and are expected to be respectful and co-operative in workplace, volunteer functions, phone conversations and online activities. You are expected to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour.

Disclosure

YHC will investigate all reported incidents, while maintaining the confidentiality of all information reported and disclosed during the course of the investigation.



Taking Care of Yourself

Volunteering to be part of our hospital community can be very rewarding experience. Still, working in an acute care setting can be stressful at times and it's important to remember to take care of yourself! Here are some warning signs to watch for:

Burnout and Stress

People experiencing burnout feel a deteriorating enthusiasm with no attempt to regain that enthusiasm. Some warning signs include:

- Believing you are NOT essential to the organization
- Negative thinking about your role and people you work with
- Being overly emotional
- Thinking about work all the time, you can't relax
- Fatigue
- Depression

Self-Care

As a volunteer, you give your time, skills and effort to make a difference in the lives of others.

This admirable quality means you often put the needs of others before your own. It's important to take care of yourself as well, though, as you are working hard and need some time to relax and refresh. Here are some self-care tips to keep you feeling good and helping others for years to come:

- Spend some time outside – fresh air and sunshine are great to help lift the spirits and leave you feeling rejuvenated!
- Make time for exercise – getting regular physical activity helps alleviate stress and provides many physiological benefits
- Eat and drink well – feed your body with nutritious foods and healthy drinks!
- Be sure to get enough sleep – make a habit of listening to your body, and resting when you need to; this will set you up to be able to cope well with any challenges.
- Take time for yourself – it's easy to get caught up in the 'business' of life; be sure to carve out time for you to do the things you love.
- Talk to someone – if you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed, speak with someone. "A burden shared is a burden halved".

yukonhospitals.ca/volunteer

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