**Dementia Delirium Care Hospital Volunteer Program**

**Information Sheet**

**What is the hospital volunteer program?**

The program uses trained volunteers to provide person centred emotional support and practical assistance to vulnerable patients in hospital.

**What type of patients do volunteers support?**

* Patients with memory and thinking problems or who have dementia
* Patients who experience memory and thinking problems such as delirium as a result of their illness or operation
* Patients who have vision and hearing impairment
* Patients who require assistance with eating and drinking OR who have special feeding requirements
* Other vulnerable older patients who would benefit from someone sitting with them one to one.

**What is person centred care?**

Person centred care puts the person at the centre of their care. It involves gaining an understanding of the person, their background, personality traits, personal preferences and activities or interests which provide them with pleasure of enjoyment. This information is then used to support communication and individualised care. Family carers are important participants in gaining this information.

**What do the volunteers do?**

The volunteer role provides similar support to that which would be provided by a family carer. In this way the program is also designed to support family carers when they are unable to be with their loved one.

Consent from the patient or their family is requested by staff before a volunteer can visit a patient.

The volunteer firstly gains an understanding of the patient’s background, family members, personal preferences and activities they enjoy using a personal profile. The role of the volunteer includes:

* Sitting with a patient on a one to one basis
* Talking to the patient about current events and surroundings
* Assisting with making the patient comfortable to support their sleep and rest – this may include adjusting pillows or providing warm drinks or a hand or foot massage
* Making sure the patient is wearing their glasses and hearing aides and checking that these are clean and working properly
* Assisting the patient with eating and drinking and when needed regularly offering fluids to drink
* Assisting the patient with completion of their menus
* Accompanying the patient with walking as advised by the nurses or physiotherapist
* Supporting the patient with activities they enjoy such as reading to them, playing cards etc.

**What is required to become a Hospital Volunteer?**

All volunteers are required to undergo a formal application and recruitment process including Criminal Record Check and are bound by the health service confidentiality requirements. Volunteers complete a specific training program including buddy support with existing volunteers. Hospital Volunteer Program volunteers are identified by wearing a gold polo t-shirt which is supplied and they have health service name badge identification

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