
Memorandum

COM-C 3-2024

Subject: Seniors Services LTC Homes Volunteer Update
Date: April 9, 2024
To: Public Health and Social Services Committee
From: Henri Koning, Director, Seniors Services

2023 Seniors Services Volunteer Update

Seniors Services is grateful for, and values, the volunteer contributions made by members of the public, community groups and students. Volunteers support a wide range of programs across the eight long-term care (LTC) homes including mealtime assistance; friendly visiting; pet visits; recreation programs such as cards and games, bingo, special meals and entertainment; pastoral visits; church services; and other meaningful activities. Volunteers also provide services such as palliative care support, operate tuck shops, add to the beauty of our gardens, assist in our hair salons, and help to coordinate fundraising events. Volunteers make an invaluable difference to the lives of all the residents of the Niagara Region long-term care homes, and we are so appreciative of their dedication and ongoing support.

In 2023, 940 individuals volunteered their time to Seniors Services including 124 volunteers and 816 students. Combined they provided 208,674 hours of support.

The volunteer pool in Seniors Services has gradually decreased over time as public interest in volunteering in the long-term care sector appears to have decreased since the pandemic. Seniors Services is currently working on re-building the volunteer pool that is so instrumental to the resident experience in long-term care homes. Seniors Services is piloting a new volunteer coordination role, fully funded by the Ministry of Long-Term Care. This role will implement a new volunteer database and tracking program called "Better Impact" to introduce a marketing and recruitment strategy that encompasses all municipally operated long-term care homes and streamline processes to help improve the onboarding experience of new volunteers.

Volunteers truly make a difference in the lives of residents who call the Region's LTC homes "home". The theme for the 2024 National Volunteer Week (April 14-20, 2024) is "Every Moment Matters" which highlights the importance of every volunteer and each contribution they make at a moment when we need support more than ever.

Harold Arp, Linhaven resident, Residents' Council President and Volunteer sums this up perfectly, "My volunteer role at Linhaven Home brings so much joy to my life. I am able to connect with others in a truly meaningful way and build lasting relationships. It also gives me the opportunity to use my skills and expertise back to the place that I call home. As a resident, I see meaningful moments, connections and relationships that are built with our volunteers. Our volunteers are irreplaceable in our homes, but also in our hearts."

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Henri Koning, MHSc
Director, Seniors Services