

TOUCH BASE*Newsletter March, 2018***MESSAGE from LISA**

MVHPC is at fiscal year end and I have been reflecting on this past year, and even more than that, our last six. I was thinking if I could go back and speak to my 2012 self, what might I say that would be helpful to prepare for what was ahead. This is what comes to mind - "I'm not telling you it is going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it."



Yes, this journey has not been easy for any of us - board, staff and volunteers - but it has been extremely worth it as we grow, learn, adapt and expand. We have made a huge impact in a short time and we have done it together. Being a hospice palliative care volunteer takes special people and we are blessed that you choose to share your gifts and acts of service so generously with families who are facing end of life. I want to remind you how important your contribution is and hope that you have many rewarding experiences, even though at times we do recognize your role can be difficult. MVHPC volunteers have earned the respect of community members and health service organizations.

We have not had one complaint about our volunteers, but we have lost count of the many, many expressions of thanks.

I am grateful for each of you and enjoy working with so many gifted, compassionate people. I have immense respect for what you offer to others and so proud of how you represent MVHPC. I am inspired by you and forever changed by my experiences at MVHPC. Each of you has helped to build our program and we are improving quality of life for the people we assist. In our past fiscal year, here are a few highlights:

We have volunteers in each of our 12 catchment communities who offered over 4,000 hours of service.

We assisted 13 families (234 days) in hospice up from 8 last year (167 days).

We served 68 families that faced end of life, which is 50% of the deaths in our area. Previous fiscal it was 41%, the year before 32% - a very steady growth earned through the dedication and quality of our respected volunteer services. The provincial average is 18-20% which speaks loudly how your efforts are improving quality of life for our area.

We helped over 60 families with bereavement, and we started our first Grief Support Group.

I want to thank each of you for being wonderful ambassadors for hospice palliative care and for your ongoing commitment to the people in your communities. I hope you each feel that you are making a difference and know how valued your service is. Yes at times it may not be easy, but it is most definitely worth it – with every act of service changing your community for the better.



NOTES from KAREN: Recap of Touch Base

It was wonderful to see so many volunteers out for our March Touch Base. I believe it was our largest group to date...and there was standing room only.

With having one or two residents in hospice for the past 8 or 9 weeks, our volunteers have been providing continued consistent assistance. It has been a pleasure watching volunteers become more comfortable with their role in the hospice apartment.

Upon request, we spent time at our Touch Base reviewing the role of our volunteers and giving further guidance. Here is a recap.

When we are ill with a cold, flu or other illness some of the things that help us feel better are:

- Brushing teeth.
- Brushing hair.
- A bath or shower.
- Changing our pajamas.
- Changing the sheets.



It's not any different with our seriously ill and dying patients; only, they are feeling so poorly they don't know what to ask for and our families need guidance on what can be done to assist.

My suggestions are:

Each time a volunteer starts their shift, approach the patient and family by telling them you are here for "x" hours and during that time you would be happy to...(here is where you state what you are comfortable doing). I suggest you pick four things you are prepared to do, and they should vary depending on the alertness of the patient.

For comatose patients, we should all become comfortable turning and positioning, and wetting their mouth with a toothbrush or mouth swab — carbonated beverages work very well.

Families often need guidance in how they can assist the person in their care. State: "I would be happy to help you turn your [mom] at least twice while I'm here. When is the last time she was turned?" Ask if the PSW was able to provide the bath on the night shift. (A bath is to be provided, however, if a PSW is there from midnight to 6:00 they sometimes hesitate to disturb a sleeping patient.) If no bath was provided, suggest that a warm face cloth will help to freshen up [mom]. Changing a nightgown or the linen may be beneficial. Don't be afraid to laugh and say, "I'm not a nurse but I'm sure, together, we can figure this out." Offer to brush the patient's hair, or give a light massage with body lotion — do they have their own lotion or would they like our supply: scented or unscented? These are the personal kindnesses that are true comfort care and are remembered. Our last lady would almost purr when she had her daily massage.

It is similar with diapers. State: "I'm not a nurse but I'm sure we can do this together."

At the Touch Base we demonstrated our disposable bedpan and emesis bags — waste can be tied up in the bag and thrown into the garbage.

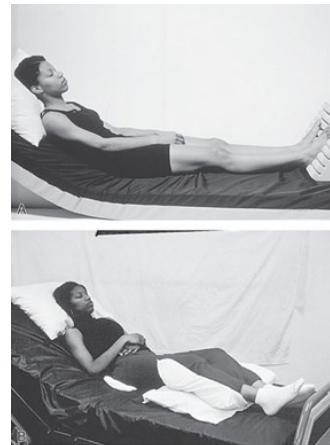
I know our volunteers often feel in the way but if you start by saying what you will do, everyone becomes comfortable and knows the expectations. This type of comfort care should become routine for us. The Hospice Orientation slides have many helpful teaching videos on turning and positioning, mouth care, and diaper changing. During the day the office staff are there to help and guide you.

I'm sure it can be very boring to sit for your shift with very little interaction. Other suggestions include: clean up dishes or floor, child care with grand kids, offer to put on music, go for a walk with a family member, visit patients within the hospital (this is always appreciated). At the end of your shift, let family/patient know you are leaving and when to expect the next volunteer, staff person or PSW.

Thanks, everyone, for your continued care of our patients and families. *Karen*

Pillows add comfort.

A little shifting is all



MV Hospice offers Grief Support Group



We are pleased to announce that MVHPC is offering a 6-week Grief Support Group which started on Thursday, March 15th, for anyone who has been affected by death. Twelve people have registered. Dawn Cruchet, Grief Educator and Counsellor is facilitating this group which provides a safe, confidential and non-judgemental place to talk about the loss experience, share memories, and discuss grief-related concerns.

One of our volunteers, Lucy King, is co-facilitating to assist and learn from Dawn. We will keep a list of those wishing to attend and when we have enough interest we will offer other sessions.

iPod Music Care

Music memories are stored throughout the brain, and can be activated when many other parts of the brain are no longer functioning. Headphones cut out external noise and allow our seniors to focus on just the music. Below you will find links to encourage you to come in to the office sign out an iPod and give it a try when you are visiting. Right click on the words below and left click OPEN HYPERLINK. We also have conversation cards that will give you ideas on questions to ask to help you engage with those you visit. The iPod's are ready for use by our volunteers. They are tiny and simple to use. Slide the button on the end to turn it on. This button also has a colour light that lets you know battery status. Green lots of power, Yellow recharge soon, red needs recharging. Plug the headphones into the only spot possible. + means volume up, - means volume down. > next song forward, < go back to previous song. Center button >II play or pause. Try them, I'm sure you will find it an amazing experience.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKDXuCE7LeQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOxP3BEgVtQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5z6pm8M_68
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVgeNL6qbFs>

The Caregiver Network introduces “Huddol”



Huddol is a community dedicated to helping family and friend caregivers connect with each other, healthcare professionals, and a network of resources.

How Huddol Works

Huddol is being designed to capitalize on the “know and smarts” of 8 million Canadians who walk the caregiving path every day, stumbling and falling, rising and succeeding, but always learning: What treatments work best? Where are the best places to access help? How do you navigate complex systems? It might be no fun to get there, but many caregivers, by virtue of their persistence and willfulness, eventually do.

Share experiences and learn from others.

Join care communities that focus on your needs.

Stay up-to-date with the latest caregiving news.

Caregivers will benefit from online learning experiences.

You can register on-line at: www.huddol.com



Huddol brings together the brightest minds with the biggest hearts to help you on your way.

IMPORTANT DATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE & TIME	TOPIC	LOCATION
April 9th at 7 pm	Trivia Night in support of LOCAL HEALTHCARE	Community Hall, Madawaska
May 10th at 8 am	Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Education Day	170 Colonnade Road South, Ottawa
May 23rd	Touch Base Meeting—Dignity Therapy Presenter: Nadine Valk, CHPCP	Details to follow at a later date.

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING WEEK—APRIL 16-22

Advance Care Planning is a process of reflection and communication. It is a time for you to reflect on your values and wishes, and to let people know what kind of health and personal care you want in the future if you were unable to speak for yourself.

It means having discussions with family and friends, especially your Substitute Decision Maker – the person who will speak for you if you cannot speak for yourself. It may also include writing down your wishes, and talking with healthcare providers and financial or legal professionals.

Take the opportunity during **National Advance Care Planning Day on April 16th** to think about what you want in the future. Get together with your family to start the conversation and prepare to write it down.

The website www.advancecareplanning.ca offers free, downloadable resources for advance care planning, including workbooks, videos, wallet cards and conversation starters. The website is run by the Advance Care Planning in Canada “Speak Up” initiative, and is dedicated to helping all Canadians start planning for their future care. You also can find information about the different provincial/territorial **legal requirements** for advance care planning and designating Substitute Decision Makers.

MV HPC will be placing a display in the lobby of the Opeongo Senior Centre, 19 Stafford Street from April 9-20 with free resource material for advance care planning to help you get started.

MVHPC		MONTHLY STATS		
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	Active Volunteers	101	101	
	Total Volunteer Hours	232	444	
	Total Volunteer Kms	3072	5713	
	Families Served	53	45	