

**This factsheet provides guidance for volunteer organisations on managing expectations for volunteers who support people with palliative care needs, fostering a supportive environment for everyone involved.**

## What is Palliative Care Volunteering?

Palliative care volunteering involves offering support to people living with life limiting illnesses and their families. Volunteers function under a formal volunteering program and are supported by a volunteer coordinator and organisational policies

## What Volunteers expect

- A clear description of their role and limits
- To be welcomed, trained, and valued
- Good communication and support
- A safe and accessible volunteering environment
- Respect for their time and personal boundaries
- Opportunities for ongoing learning and skill development
- Recognition of emotional challenges and access to debriefing or counselling if needed
- Clear processes for raising concerns or asking questions
- Inclusion in team culture and updates relevant to their role
- Acknowledgement of their contribution through regular recognition activities.

## What organisations need to provide

- Recruitment, training, and supervision
- Clear policies and role matching
- Ongoing recognition, feedback, and support, including bereavement support and regular supervision
- Conduct risk assessment to the volunteering location before the role commences
- Provide clear boundaries and safety checklist to reduce risk factors
- Access to training on palliative care principles and communication skills
- Regular check-ins to monitor volunteer wellbeing and satisfaction
- Clear escalation pathways for volunteers to report issues or emergencies
- Insurance coverage and compliance with legal obligations for volunteer safety
- Opportunities for volunteers to contribute feedback and ideas for improvement
- Resources for emotional resilience and self-care strategies
- Networking opportunities with other volunteers for peer support.

## Why Boundaries Matter

Boundaries protect clients, families, and volunteers. They ensure safety, maintain trust, and clarify roles so everyone knows what to expect.



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**[palliativecaresa.org.au/volunteeringSAhub](http://palliativecaresa.org.au/volunteeringSAhub)**