Volunteering in Hospice and Palliative Care

People often become aware of Hospice and Palliative care through a close encounter with death. They may have had a partner or another family member die. They may have cared for a loved one at home, or have been employed in the area. Death and dying, end-of-life issues and grief and loss can be difficult and sometimes confronting subjects for people to discuss.

As a volunteer, your role will involve supporting people and their families as they grapple with these sensitive subjects. Sensitivity, empathy, life experience, warmth and communication are essential attributes. Volunteers need to be patient, flexible, non-judgmental, understanding and accepting of other people's beliefs and values so they can listen to people navigate themselves through these subjects and conversations.

What role do volunteers play?
Volunteers can work in the Busselton Health Campus Hospice Unit, Busselton Hospice Care Incorporated Bereavement Support Services and Complementary Therapy programs. They can also support Busselton Hospice Care Inc. with fund raising, administration tasks and in raising community awareness around End of Life issues.

What is the role of a Hospice and Palliative care volunteers?
- Offer a calm presence to patients and families
- Provide emotional and social support through reminiscing and sharing of stories
- Offer comfort care to patients
- Comfort and support families and visitors
- Assist with patient meals
- Hold the dying space with a patient who is actively dying so no one dies alone
- Assist in bereavement peer support
- Offer complementary therapies
- Provide a client biography service
- Assist with fundraising
- Raise community awareness around end of life
- Provide administrative support

How do I become a volunteer?
Potential volunteers are required to attend an initial interview. If offered a training place, participate in a 4-day training course to learn about the philosophy of palliative care, supportive communication skills, grief and loss and specifics of the Busselton Health Campus and Busselton Hospice Care Incorporated. Annual recruitment and training is in February and March. To find out more please contact the Volunteer Coordinator on 9751 1642 or email vc@busseltonhospicecareinc.org.au