How do I contact my closest Palliative Care volunteer service?
You can find more information about the location and contact details of services at the Volunteer Support Services website at www.volunteerhub.com.au.

What is the Volunteer Support Services Program?
Palliative Care NSW hosts the Volunteer Support Services Program. The program is an initiative of NSW Health and aims to support and develop Palliative Care volunteer services in NSW.

Ready to take the next step?
For more information contact the service on the back of this brochure or contact the Volunteer Support Services Program on 02 9206 2097 or info@palliativecarensw.org.au or visit www.volunteerhub.com.au.

Contact Palliative Care NSW
Phone 02 9206 2094
info@palliativecarensw.org.au
PO Box 487, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
www.palliativecarensw.org.au
Volunteer in Palliative Care

Want to help make a difference to people as they approach the end of their lives?

Social isolation, loss of independence, cognitive impairment, family absence, carer stress, a lack of understanding of palliative care - these are the sorts of experiences of people in Palliative Care and at the end of their life. They need practical, emotional and spiritual support.

There are some 38 specialist Palliative Care volunteer services in NSW. This includes services that specialise in support for young people in Palliative Care.

Volunteers support clients in a range of settings, including inpatient, community visiting, respite and awareness-raising roles.

Each volunteer is trained and supported by their local Palliative Care volunteer service. All volunteers find the work highly rewarding, with many completing more than 10 years of service.

Would you make a good volunteer?

Each volunteer service provides support to people who are at a vulnerable point in their life. So they aim to recruit people who are:

• dependable;
• sensitive and non-judgmental;
• emotionally mature and resilient;
• empathetic and committed;
• responsive to client needs; and
• able to understand and accept the values, beliefs and decisions of others even when they differ from one’s own.

Services support a diverse client group and accordingly seek a diverse volunteer pool, assisting them to meet the needs of clients from a range of cultures and backgrounds.

Services are careful to select people who will be most suited to the emotional and situational challenges of being a Palliative Care volunteer. Specialised training, identity and security checks are all part of the induction process.

Inpatient support

Volunteers in a hospital setting spend time with patients, offering support and companionship including:

• providing companionship and comfort to clients;
• supporting families/carers;
• accompanying clients for walks;
• assisting at mealtimes;
• assisting with letter writing or reading to patients; and
• providing hand and foot massages.

Activities may range from simple conversation and companionship through to reading, massage and board games.

Home visiting

Home visiting volunteers provide support and companionship to people in their homes, including:

• support to the client so they can carry out daily activities such as shopping, going to appointments or on outings;
• support to carers to enable them to carry out daily activities (respite);
• social support to children of clients; and
• assistance when travelling to medical or other appointments.

Life Stories

A Life Story (or Biography) service helps clients document their lives so they can leave a lasting memento for their families and friends.

Bereavement support

After a person has died the service will follow-up with the loved one to see how they are coping with the period of loss and bereavement. Volunteers may assist with mailing cards and messages of support, and telephone follow-up.

Awareness-raising

Volunteers may be active in their local community promoting the principles of palliative care and raising awareness about the local services. Some may even be involved in fundraising to support local services.

Equipment services

Some volunteer services deliver, collect, store and maintain equipment for use by people in Palliative Care who are living at home.

Palliative care and young people

Volunteers contribute to the support of young people in paediatric Palliative Care services by home visiting, respite, sibling support and other roles in the home, as well as support and activities in a hospice or hospital setting.