

It is really important for your care that the information you give us is as full and accurate as possible.

This leaflet explains what you can expect from the St Christopher's Group community support volunteer service. We hope to answer the most commonly asked questions. If you have any more questions please ask your doctor or nurse.

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND CARERS

Community support volunteers

A service offered by the
St Christopher's Group



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St Christopher's Hospice is registered charity 210667
Harris HospisCare is registered charity 1003903
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The St Christopher's Group aims to improve people's quality of life by supporting them and their families to deal with some of the most difficult aspects of serious illness. Care is delivered by a multi- professional team of nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, complementary therapists, social workers, welfare officers and others, in collaboration with the primary care team. The care is provided free of charge.

What is a community support volunteer?

A community support volunteer offers practical help at home for patients and carers under the care of St Christopher's and Harris HospiceCare *with St Christopher's*. The volunteers are supervised and trained to offer a range of support to complement the care provided by your hospice home care nurse and other members of the multi-professional team. Community support volunteers can also support patients who are being discharged from hospice services. The overall aim is to help you adjust to life without support from the hospice.

What does 'practical support' include?

- Keeping you company at home
- accompanying you to an appointment
- taking you shopping, to the pub or going with you for a walk (all of our volunteers are able to push wheelchairs)
- helping with other practical tasks such as preparing drinks/snacks, help with eating and drinking, etc

- spending time with you so that your carer or family member can have a break and
- visiting you in hospital.

Is there anything a community support volunteer cannot offer?

A community support volunteer is not trained to do the following:

- give you personal care – i.e. bathing and showering, help in the toilet etc
- do any heavy lifting or moving people in bed or on and off chairs or
- give you your medication.

How often will a community support volunteer be in contact?

Once a volunteer has been assigned to you, they will visit you with your hospice home care nurse. After this first meeting, you or your carer can make arrangements for them to visit you once a week **for up to three hours at a time over a period of three months.**

At the end of six weeks then again after three months, the service will be reviewed with yourself, the volunteer and your hospice home care nurse.

If you don't need a visit every week, they will keep in touch with you by phone to check that things are OK.

How do I know that my community support volunteer will respect confidentiality?

Our volunteers undergo training for this role and understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality. They are expected to record the basic details of their contact with you in writing, and share this information with your hospice home care nurse.

How can I arrange for a volunteer to help me?

Please speak with your hospice home care nurse.

How do I give feedback about the community support volunteer service?

We are always keen to hear from patients and their carers about their experiences with their community service volunteers and to find out what aspects of this service are most useful.

At the end of your contact with the community support volunteer we will give you a short questionnaire to ask for your feedback. The feedback will help us develop the project further. If you have any concerns or comments you can talk to your hospice home care nurse.