

St Christopher's

Helping Hands volunteers

**INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS,
CARERS AND FAMILIES**

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

What are Helping Hands volunteers?

Patients, families and carers often find that coping with the practicalities that arise when facing a life limiting condition are challenging, but Helping Hands volunteers are available to help.

Helping Hands volunteers visit patients or their carers in their own home to help with one-off or short-term practical tasks to improve their quality of life.

How does the Helping Hands scheme work?

Our Helping Hands Coordinator will look at what you need and where you live. They will then find a volunteer who is able to help.

Our Coordinator or a member of staff will contact you to let you know that a volunteer is available and to arrange a visit.

The volunteer will talk to you about the help you need and you can decide between you when the help will take place and for how long.

What support can Helping Hands volunteers provide?

Helping Hands volunteers can help in many ways, but the following are a few examples of what they might do:

- Running errands such as picking up parcels or a prescription
- Helping a bereaved person organise their loved one's belongings
- Keeping a bedbound or vulnerable patient company while a family member or carer attends a one-off appointment or activity and other care is unable to step in
- Washing/grooming a pet
- Light gardening
- Organising paperwork or photos
- Sorting belongings.

Is there anything Helping Hands volunteers cannot offer?

Helping Hands volunteers are not trained to:

- give 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
- give medication
- clean
- give long-term support.

If you do require long-term companionship and support we may be able to suggest a service that can help.

How do I know that Helping Hands volunteers will respect confidentiality?

Volunteers undergo training for this role and have signed confidentiality agreements to ensure that they understand the importance of maintaining your privacy and to give you peace of mind.

How can I arrange for a volunteer to help me?

Please speak to any member of St Christopher's staff, such as your community nurse or social worker. They will then refer you to the service.

How do I give feedback about the Helping Hands volunteer service?

We are always keen to hear from people about their experiences with their Helping Hands volunteers and all other aspects of the service and support that St Christopher's provide. Please email feedback@stchristophers.org.uk or call us on **020 8768 4500**.

Volunteering at St Christopher's

St Christopher's has around 1,350 volunteers who help both patients and staff in many different ways. We couldn't do the work that we do without the generous support of our volunteers and we have so many people who give their time in a variety of ways throughout all areas of the five boroughs that we cover.

If you would like to find out more about what volunteers do or becoming a volunteer, please visit www.stchristophers.org.uk/volunteering.

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

If you would like this information in a different format, such as audio tape, braille or large print, or in another language, please speak to the Communications Team on **020 8768 4500** or email **communications@stchristophers.org.uk**.

St Christopher's Hospice is a charity and our continued work is only made possible by your generous donations. Please consider making a one-off donation or becoming a regular donor. To find out more about how you can help, please visit **www.stchristophers.org.uk/donate**.

StChristopher's

Sydenham site

51-59 Lawrie Park Road, Sydenham, London SE26 6DZ

Orpington site

Caritas House, Tregony Road, Orpington BR6 9XA

Telephone 020 8768 4500

Email info@stchristophers.org.uk

www.stchristophers.org.uk