

Volunteerism in 2008

Date:	March 30, 2009
To:	Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services
From:	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services
Ward:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

In 2008, approximately 2,000 volunteers contributed over 125,000 hours within the division providing almost 50 hours of volunteer time per resident.

Volunteers assist residents to maintain an active, independent and high quality of life by augmenting and complementing services provided by staff of the home through a wide range of volunteer initiatives. Volunteers provide complementary services (tuck shop, bingo), enhance home programs (escorting, dining) and take leadership in fundraising.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

ISSUE/BACKGROUND

Each home has a part-time Coordinator of Volunteer Services responsible for volunteer recruitment, orientation, training, assignments, recognition and communication relating to the volunteer program. Hours of service are tracked on a monthly basis and form part of the home's quality improvement and risk management reports.

Each year, in preparation for the Excellence in Volunteering ceremony, Coordinators provide a reflective overview of the volunteer programs, highlights follow.

Highlights of Volunteers and Volunteer Programs

Bendale Acres (Ward 38 – Scarborough Centre):

- Volunteers speak 26 different languages and represent the growing diversity of language and culture in our neighbourhood.
- Ranging in age from 12 to 85 years, volunteers bring the enthusiasm of youth and the experience of life.

- Spiritual and Religious Care Services are provided by 11 different volunteer faith groups on a monthly basis offering comfort and support from local faith communities.
- Individuals of all abilities find a way to serve in the community – those with learning, language or physical disabilities make a positive difference in the lives of the residents.
- Community partnerships with volunteers allow residents to participate in special celebrations in the home, annual visits by Boy Scouts and other service groups during the holidays help ring in the season.

Carefree Lodge (Ward 24 – Willowdale):

- High school and university student volunteers accompany residents on day-trips, organize games including bingo and trivia, run a weekly arts and crafts program and help out in the Gift Shop.
- Volunteers help residents celebrate at special events, such as Halloween parties, holiday gala dinners and monthly birthday parties.
- Volunteers have the opportunity to learn 2-Hand Manual communication to enhance the quality of life of deaf-blind residents.
- Musician volunteers perform weekly for residents. Mostly students, they play a range of instruments, including clarinet, flute, guitar, piano, as well as singing.
- Volunteers organize a giant Garage Sale each year, raising thousands of dollars for residents; these funds have purchased exercise equipment for the rehabilitation centre, a large-screen LCD television and furniture for lounges.

Castleview Wychwood Towers (Ward 21 – St. Paul's):

- Volunteers assist with the beautification of the home's parkette for residents, family members and the community to enjoy.
- Corporate PricewaterhouseCoopers and Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants extend their hearts to residents through leisure activities and special events.
- Youth volunteers play Wii™ games with the young adult residents and dress up in costumes for themed parties and events.
- The Momiji Japanese and Korean Community volunteers share cultural and traditional programs through planned activities and events.
- Students from the University of Toronto exchange program and the GEOS Language Academy support residents through bingo programming and bazaar fundraisers, while practicing their language skills through friendly visits.

Cummer Lodge (Ward 24 – Willowdale):

- This year, youth volunteers organized and participated in two music festivals and a 'Winter Wonderland' program for the residents.
- Student volunteers played an important role in the home's summer activities, including regular bingo games and one-on-one games that residents enjoy, like checkers.

- Operation of the Tuck Shop was supported by youth volunteers who do everything including handling cash, making coffee, stocking shelves and serving customers.
- Youth groups from two local places of worship participate on the first Friday of the month services in the home spending time with residents and singing for them.
- Young volunteers use their artistic skills painting posters and banners to promote special events within the home.

Fudger House (Ward 28 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale):

- Volunteers get the day off to a positive start for the home's early risers by providing coffee in the lobby every morning.
- Three afternoons each week, bingo is organized and hosted by the volunteers for all of the enthusiastic residents; some don't want to take a break for coffee and tea intermission.
- Volunteers host the Tea in China program using a silver tea service and Royal Doulton china cups adding a touch of sophistication to the memory sharing chats and treats.
- The tiny but busy volunteer-run Tuck Shop sets up in the lobby; all funds going to support resident focused activities in the home.
- Jake, one of the most popular "volunteers" in the home, arrives on four legs with his owner at the other end of the leash, bringing smiles throughout the home as he visits as part of this pet therapy initiative.

Kipling Acres (Ward 2 – Etobicoke North):

- The Mall and More volunteers assist residents, visit and shop at the local mall and provide \$5.00 towards the cost of lunch.
- Volunteers host a bar social for the residents providing entertainment and a free drink to those in attendance.
- Youth volunteers participate in an arts and craft program for residents and enjoy friendly one-on-one visiting.
- A team of Tuck Shop volunteers ensure that the daily operations of the store are met with all proceeds benefiting the residents.
- Funds raised by the volunteers purchased new cafeteria chairs for the home.

Lakeshore Lodge (Ward 6 – Etobicoke-Lakeshore):

- Corporate volunteers contributed generously to the environment of the home – decorating for the holidays and gardening on the outdoor patio.
- Very special relationships form between residents and volunteers, whose generous giving of their time tells the residents someone cares.
- Volunteers raise money and purchase items for resident use including a video entertainment system and hosting a bus tour of city lights this past December.
- Many activities planned by Recreation Assistant Staff are enhanced by the participation of volunteers, increasing resident joy.
- Student volunteers enhance the lives of residents through their participation in both group activities and through one-on-one visiting.

Seven Oaks (Ward 43 – Scarborough East):

- Inter-generational programming and activities offer a wonderful volunteer experience for residents and their young visitors.
- Volunteers put on a very successful pub three times per week to the enjoyment of residents.
- Youth Council volunteers are actively supporting birthday parties, bingo, bowling and friendly visiting make a huge impact throughout the home.
- Fundraising and financial support from the volunteers has allowed for the purchase of an auditorium sound system, window tinting in the dining rooms and sponsorship of the Smile Theatre musical entertainment.
- This past holiday season, volunteers helped staff create a winter wonderland in the lobby and gave each resident a festive postcard of the scene to share with a family member or friend.

True Davidson Acres (Ward 31 – Beaches-East York):

- In recognition of the home's 35th anniversary, the volunteer True Revue Planning Committee organized the True Revue, a very successful fundraising event raising funds to transform the resident bathing areas into a spa experience.
- Student volunteers earn hours and assist with activities in the home including the bistro, visiting with residents and putting on special events.
- As part of the home's LGBT initiative, volunteers participate alongside staff and residents in the Pride Parade.
- Celebrating diversity found in the home, volunteers helped to organize a fashion show that featured costumes from various cultures.
- Volunteers participate in the Toronto Challenge by assisting recreation staff bring a group of residents to the 5k run and walk held each June.

Wesburn Manor (Ward 3 – Etobicoke Centre):

- Volunteers made and gave each resident a handy, quilted cloth walker/wheelchair/armchair bag to brighten up their environment and to help identify their assistive devices.
- Each Saturday morning, a fun loving team of volunteers gather in the Alder Café to host a jovial Cappuccino Bar for residents and families while an entertainer plays well known songs.
- The Tzu Chi volunteers hosted a Chinese New Year's Party including Chinese Folk Dances, the Lion Dance, and a visit from the God of Prosperity.
- The cheerful sound of "ICE CREAM IN THE LOBBY" is welcomed by the residents every Tuesday when the Ice Cream Social volunteers announce they are ready to start serving treats.
- Volunteers purchased six wall-mounted televisions, one for each resident home area lounge.

COMMENTS

As this hours of service summary indicates, throughout 2008, dedicated and caring volunteers have provided invaluable contact and support to residents in Toronto's ten long-term care homes, maintaining the division's leadership within the voluntary sector:

Volunteer Service 2008	Volunteer Hours	# of Active Volunteers	Hours per Resident	Youth Volunteers
Bendale Acres	12,325	229	41	34%
Carefree Lodge	6,770	227	53	74%
Castleview Wychwood	24,320	330	53	5%
Cummer Lodge	18,612	312	48	33%
Fudger House	7,908	91	32	13%
Kipling Acres	18,681	196	60	30%
Lakeshore Lodge	4,964	90	33	12%
Seven Oaks	11,520	190	46	35%
True Davidson Acres	12,328	140	66	32%
Wesburn Manor	7,904	166	41	28%
Divisional Total	125,331	1,971	48	31%

Students are the fastest growing volunteer demographic group; almost 1 in 3 active volunteers are youth. The mandated high school curriculum of volunteer hours allows the division to reach out to students, provide inter-generational opportunities and insight into future career opportunities in long-term care. Strong programs of interest like memory art projects, Wii™ tournaments, musical theatre and gardening programs along with development of Home Youth Councils and the Annual Youth Summit encourage students to remain after their required 40 hours of service are complete.

Many employers encourage staff to get involved in community service projects and we offer an excellent opportunity for these corporate groups to participate. In 2008, six homes hosted corporate group volunteer days, bringing 110 individuals for 530 hours of service, a positive introduction to Toronto Long-Term Care Homes and Services. This program is highlighted on the website and we expect these numbers to grow in future years as corporations look for ways to support the communities in which they work.

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SIGNATURE

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