Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Roles of volunteers and Alzheimer Society staff

Volunteers:

Volunteer support group facilitators work as part of a larger team with Alzheimer Society of B.C. staff to provide caregiver and early-stage support groups around the province. Volunteers and staff members work together as partners in ensuring the safety, quality, and sustainability of support groups.

Volunteer facilitators are assigned to a staff supervisor who is responsible for direct management of support groups and supervision of group facilitator(s). Support group members, volunteers and staff supervisors are further supported by their regional managers and provincial office staff. Each team member has a valuable and complementary role to play. The contribution of volunteers is designed to extend rather than replace Society staff.

Like Society staff, volunteer support group facilitators are required to maintain professional boundaries. Professional boundaries are derived from the Society's mandate, the scope of our programs and services, and volunteer position descriptions. Boundaries serve to protect clients, volunteers, staff and the organization from risk, ensure continuity and sustainability of our programs, and maintain the Society's reputation.

Volunteer facilitators provide only the services outlined below and in their position description. Volunteer facilitators are primarily responsible for the healthy functioning of the support group as a whole; not the support needs of group members as individuals. Anyone who wishes to offer their time and/or services beyond the scope of the roles and responsibilities outlined in their position description must first gain permission from their staff supervisor and Regional Manager.

The following is designed to illustrate the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and Society staff in the provision of support groups.

Support and Education Coordinators:

- Identify communities in need of a support group.
- Recruit volunteer facilitators.
- Arrange meeting space.
- Coordinate area volunteers to attend the training for support group facilitators.
- Act as a resource for support group facilitators.
- Assist in maintaining support groups.
- Periodically visit support groups.
- Assist in identifying important community resources.
- Keep information about support groups on file and inform potential members about the groups' existence.

- Provide support, encouragement and consultation.

The Provincial Office will:

- Provide approved resource materials, including, but not limited to, Discussion Segments, brochures, bulletins and information sheets to each support group and update these as necessary.
- Keep support groups up-to-date on the Society's activities by providing copies of the Society newsletters and bulletins and information on upcoming events.
- Plan and ensure training for support group facilitators.
- Provide guidelines and policies for the consistent operation of support groups throughout the province.
- Pay for approved support group operating expenses: greeting cards for members who are sick, bereavement cards, rental for meeting space if free space cannot be found. Please review any expected expenses with staff supervisor.

The Support Group Facilitator will:

- Facilitate the support group according to the principles and procedures outlined in the training and guidelines.
- Familiarize themselves with Alzheimer Society of B.C. resources and programs as well as community resources related to dementia.
- Attend volunteer meetings and all facilitator training sessions.
- Ensure they are regularly debriefing with staff supervisor.
- Complete volunteer hours and submit support group attendance to supervisor.
- Familiarize themselves with the volunteer portal.
- Complete an expense form as necessary.