

Supporting our Volunteers

By: Shawna Peddar, Volunteer / Friendly Visiting Coordinator

This past month the staff hosted two individual training sessions to support our volunteers who so kindly and generously give of their time to support our clients.

The first session on October 29th, was held for Volunteer Support Group Facilitators. This session included Client Support Coordinators, Lisa Morasse and Bonnie Fitzgerald and myself. Bonnie presented new resources that she developed to assist the volunteer facilitators in leading their support groups. Lisa presented new handouts relating to various types of dementia and other resources that the volunteers can use when supporting clients.

The Volunteer Support Group Facilitators had opportunity to discuss concerns and ask questions of staff and debrief about their time as group facilitators. The session was well received and the feedback was very positive.

Additionally, on Wednesday, November 4th, Friendly Visitors who provide in-home visits to clients in Peterborough city and County were invited to attend a Reflection Session. The session included active volunteers who have existing matches to clients, but was also opened to new applicants who are going through the orientation process to become a Friendly Visitor.

Reflection is a way to think deeply about our actions so that we can be even more effective in the future. Reflection provides an opportunity to volunteers to stop for a moment, and take the time to think about their volunteer contribution. Reflection at the beginning, middle and end of a role or project is important for self-development and learning.

Volunteers were given the opportunity to discuss successes and challenges of visiting a person with memory loss in his or her home. This session provided a unique opportunity for peer support and it also gave the volunteers additional resources to use during their visits.

Overall, the feedback from the volunteers about this session was positive. We look forward to holding more peer mentoring and education sessions in the future for our Volunteer Support Group Facilitators, Friendly Visitors and other Volunteers.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who help support the mission of the Alzheimer Society.