



5.0 – Human Resources

5.11 Volunteer Resources and Engagement

5.11.2 Initial Screening and Registration of Volunteers

1.0 Definitions

Island Health Volunteer:

Any individual who provides services at the direction of or on behalf of Island Health without compensation or compensation beyond reasonable reimbursement. Volunteer Resources shall be supernumerary and not used to fill paid staff positions.

- 1.1 **In-Service Volunteers** - Any individual who is registered as a volunteer with a facility or program of Island Health.
 - Volunteers must be 15 years or older;
 - Children volunteers (under the age of 15 years of age) must be accompanied by a legal parent/guardian who is a registered volunteer;
 - Family Members: A family member of a resident/patient becomes a volunteer when they participate in any activity involving residents/patients other than the immediate family member(s);
 - Staff as Volunteers: A staff member who is volunteering on their own time.
- 1.2 **Health Care Auxiliaries** - Voluntary organizations representing the communities served by Island Health, which exist to provide financial assistance and/or voluntary service to the facilities and programs of Island Health. Auxiliaries may or may not be a member of the British Columbia Auxiliary Hospital Association (BCAHA).
- 1.3 **Organizational Volunteers** - Volunteers, who are pre-screened, trained and scheduled by other community organizations with whom Island Health has a collaborative relationship and a Memorandum of Understanding in place to acknowledge the involvement of those volunteers.
- 1.4 **Community Group Services** - Includes entertainers (individuals and groups), service clubs, schools and other organized 'groups' who on a one-

time or occasional basis provide a voluntary service as a group for a special event or project.

2.0 Preamble

There is a general principle in common law called 'duty of care' as well as moral and ethical obligations which require an organization to do everything it reasonably can to deliver its programs and conduct its affairs in a safe, adequate and well-managed manner. Therefore, Island Health must take reasonable steps to screen and assign volunteers. Based on that principle, all volunteers are required to complete the onboarding process. This is the process to ensure candidates meet eligibility and the requirements for the volunteer assignment.

The screening protocol for any given volunteer assignment is determined by:

- the vulnerability of the client;
- the nature of the position and the activities or tasks to be done;
- the setting in which the volunteer assignment will take place; and
- the nature and degree of supervision and involvement with other people.

3.0 Policies

Registration

- 3.1 All volunteer placements will be supernumerary to established positions; will not result in the lay-off of employees; and will not be used to fill established positions.
- 3.2 All volunteers must be screened and registered according to procedures approved by the Island Health, prior to providing any service in the facilities or programs of the Island Health.
- 3.3 All members of a Healthcare Auxiliary who are providing service within a facility or program of the Island Health, and who will have contact with patients/residents/clients, visitors or staff must be registered as either In-service or Organizational Volunteers. As such they are subject to the same screening and registration process as all other volunteers. If the Healthcare Auxiliary chooses to act as an Organization, members must be screened and registered according to the standards established by the Island Health, as outlined for Organizational Volunteers.
- 3.4 An approved representative of the 'Organization' must screen all Organizational Volunteers. Screening measures will be based on the risks involved in the service provided and according to the Standards agreed upon between Island Health and the Organization. The volunteers will be referred to the Island Health Volunteer Resources and Engagement Department to complete the Island Health Volunteer Resources and Engagement Organizational Volunteer Registration Form, and Confidentiality

Pledge/Statement of Understanding. Additionally, these volunteers will complete the online training modules identified as necessary for the volunteer role to which they are assigned.

- 3.5 Organizations and those Auxiliaries choosing to act as Organizations, placing volunteers in Island Health facilities and programs are required to provide proof of appropriate screening measures consistent with those of Island Health.
- 3.6 For purposes of insurance coverage, all Island Health volunteers must be registered with the Island Health Volunteer Resources and Engagement Department. Legally separate Auxiliaries and Foundations and other Organizations who choose to register their volunteers as Organizational Volunteers must provide Island Health with proof of adequate liability insurance coverage for their organization/members before engaging in activities on Island Health property.
- 3.7 Community Groups will not be required to register as individuals. A staff member of a facility department utilizing the services of Community Groups is required to record a contact name and phone number for each group.
 - It is understood that members of Community Groups will not be interacting directly with individual patients/residents.
 - If the service being provided requires direct interaction, then an Island Health Volunteer Resources and Engagement representative will provide a general orientation to the 'Do's and Don'ts for Volunteers' for the group.
 - If members of the group will be in direct unsupervised contact with individual patients/residents the individuals will be registered as an In-Service Volunteer.
- 3.8 Child volunteers (under 15 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or another adult volunteer while providing volunteer service. The adult accompanying the child must also be accepted as an In-Service Volunteer. Child volunteers must have signed consent of the parent or guardian.
- 3.9 Special case volunteers: Island Health also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing programs, employee volunteering programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, however, a special agreement must be in effect with the agency, school, company, or program from which the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and support of the volunteers.
- 3.10 Employees as volunteers: Island Health accepts the services of its own staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided the volunteer service is provided without any coercive nature, involves service that is outside the scope of normal staff duties, and is provided outside usual working hours.

Staff will not be assigned to a volunteer service where they work as an Island Health employee. Retired staff members wishing to return as a volunteer within the program area in which they were previously employed must wait a minimum of six months before their volunteer application will be considered. Retired staff members may apply to volunteer in other areas (unrelated to their previous employment) at any time.

- 3.11 Family members of staff are allowed to volunteer with the organization. When family members are enrolled as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direction of or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees or volunteers.
- 3.12 Clients as Volunteers: Clients will only be accepted as volunteers when they meet the eligibility requirements of the volunteer assignment and it does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provision of services to the client or others.
- 3.13 Family members, caregivers, advocates, friends of clients may also serve as volunteers but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationship to members of their family who are receiving services.
- 3.14 On occasion, Island Health staff may provide information to a client/patient who is at home, about resources available to them through other voluntary agencies. If the follow-up of that information is made by the client or their family and a volunteer is subsequently recruited, the volunteer is considered a representative of the voluntary organization, not of Island Health. The volunteer will therefore not be registered by Island Health nor will Island Health be responsible for their actions.

4.0 Screening

- 4.1 Every volunteer assignment will be outlined in a written assignment guide. Volunteer Resources and Engagement department staff, in cooperation with the staff contact for the Assignment, shall assess each volunteer assignment for potential risk to patients, resident and clients.
 - Minimum screening procedures will include, but are not limited to, personal interviews, reference checks, criminal record or driving record checks, assessments, etc.
 - Ministry of Justice Criminal Record Checks including Vulnerable Sector Checks are required for all Island Health volunteers providing service in Island Health Long-Term Care Homes, and all other Island Health volunteers whose service brings them into unsupervised contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. This includes youth volunteers and adult volunteers who are working with youth volunteer programs. Ministry of Justice Criminal Record Checks may be required, at the discretion of the Volunteer Administrator in consultation with the

- relevant program leader, for other volunteer assignments where a risk assessment indicates that this would be appropriate.
 - A volunteer's suitability for an assignment will be determined by a match of the applicant's qualifications and experience with the requirements for the assignment and the results of the screening required for the assignment for which the applicant is applying.
 - During the interview process, Volunteer Resources and Engagement will assess the maturity and reliability of prospective child/youth volunteers to ensure a suitable placement and level of accountability will be followed.
- 4.2 The prospective volunteer will not provide service without direct staff supervision until the results of the additional screening steps are received and assessed.
- 4.3 If a prospective volunteer is not accepted for service, the Volunteer Resources and Engagement Department will advise, at the individual's request, the reasons why they were not accepted.
- 4.4 All volunteer information collected at the time of application (digital or paper format) will remain confidential. Disposal of these documents shall be handled according to Island Health procedure.

5.0 References

"Standards of Practice"

Administrators of Volunteer Resources of British Columbia - 2001

"Beyond Police Checks

The Definitive Volunteer & Employee Screening Guidebook" - Linda Graff, 1999.

"Screening Handbook

The National Education Campaign on Screening" - Canadian Association of Volunteer Bureau and Centres, 1996

Health Care Protection Program Insurance Policy

British Columbia Health Care Risk Management Society (BCHCRMS)

"Volunteer Management - Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community" - Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch. 1996