

# ***ASHBURTON SUPPORT SERVICES***

## ***Volunteer Guidelines***

**2003**

**ASHBURTON SUPPORT SERVICES  
296 HIGH STREET ASHBURTON 3147  
PHONE: 9885-6443 FAX :9885-1239  
Email [asserv@netspace.net.au](mailto:asserv@netspace.net.au)**

We wish to welcome you to the Ashburton Support Services volunteer programme and take this opportunity of advising you of our role in the community, and your role as a volunteer.

The aim of our organisation is to provide quality, cost effective services to the aged and incapacitated residents of our community and their carers. Additionally, support to our volunteers is of equal importance. Should you have any concerns or ideas that you feel would be of benefit to either our clients, volunteers or programmes please feel free to share them with the Staff. You are a valuable part of this organisation, without the volunteer network many services would cease to exist.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY**

In 1961 the Senior Citizen's Club was formed and met in the R.S.L. Hall in Ashburton. Whilst appreciating the use of this facility it soon became evident that the building was not adequate for their needs. The members approached the Mayor of Camberwell in 1962, with a view to securing suitable accommodation and enlisting assistance for the running of the Club. The Mayor called a meeting of interested persons and the Ashburton & District Senior Citizen's Welfare Association was formed. The use of the old Post Office building on the corner of Welfare Parade was secured and a Committee formed to operate an Opportunity Shop. Thirty eight years on, funds raised by the shop are still continuing to meet the needs of Ashburton residents.

With many fund raising ventures in addition to the Opportunity shop and a lease from Camberwell Council for land on the corner of Warner Avenue, the Centre came into being. The building was opened on 19th March 1967, by the Mayor, Cr. Dawson. In addition to the Meals on Wheels service, socialisation, podiatry, hairdressing and welfare services for the aged are an integral part of the operation of the Centre.

Meal-on-wheels had been delivered by Ashburton volunteers from the Canterbury Centre for some time. With the new building completed and Canterbury becoming overloaded by the number of meals required, it was considered that our organisation could take over this role for the South Ward of Camberwell. To this end a Meals supervisor and driver were employed to work alongside volunteers in developing the service. A contract entered into with the Southern Memorial Hospital to provide meals on a daily basis commenced in December 1969. In November 1998 we changed our supplier and now obtain our meals from Samarinda Lodge. This is not only convenient due to their location next door to our building it has also proved to be very popular with clients. The quality of the food is good and the staff are totally committed to excellence of service provision, it is a pleasure to work with such dedicated people. During the past thirty years, as the aged population has increased, the service has grown tremendously. We now provide over 36,000 meals per year and use 100 volunteers a week for delivery.

With meals and socialisation catered for the organisation turned its attention to the need for Independent Living units in the area for financially disadvantaged residents in our community. With the assistance of Camberwell Council and the Ministry of Housing, we now have 24 specially designed units in Stocks Avenue, opposite the Centre. The second stage of which was completed in 1989.

As our clients moved into the next stage of their lives and needed more than the care which could be offered in the community, it became apparent that aged residents of the South Ward, who could no longer maintain themselves in their own homes, were having to move out of the area for hostel accommodation away from family and friends. The organisation took this as the next logical step for the continuum of care for clients and launched an appeal for \$1.3 million to build a Hostel for the Aged in the local area. With the assistance of our Patrons Mrs. Felicity Kennett and the Hon. Lindsay Thompson the appeal was officially launched on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 1993. Thanks to the commitment once again of the community and several large sponsors Samarinda Lodge was opened in October 1995, providing state of the art accommodation for forty residents.

On 8<sup>th</sup> January 1994 we were successful with an application for funding through the Home and Community Care Programme, to develop a programme for socially isolated persons. The Inner East Social Support service provides transport, outings and activities covering seven days per week. This has been a very successful programme and has changed the lives of many of the older residents in our community, allowing them once again to participate in community life. The service is jointly managed with BassCare.

In July 1997 we commenced an early dementia programme at the Centre. This was a free programme which operated on a daily basis aimed at those suffering short term memory loss and their carers. We provided transport, activities and outings specific to the needs of the clients. This was of inestimable value to carers who are either working or need 'time out' from their caring duties. In July 2000 this programme became generic rather than dementia specific allowing for the care of frail aged persons. Activities are planned for the client group and some charges apply to assist in cost recovery.

In April 1998 the organisation decided on a name change to Ashburton Support Services. It was felt that the name better reflects what we are all about, that is, enabling clients to remain in their own community by providing the support services they require.

Commencing in July 2000 the Volunteer Alliance programme funded by the Department of Human Services commenced at Ashburton. It is an alliance of four organisations providing a range of volunteer services to the community. With the implementation of the programme we have been able to recruit and train additional volunteers for a range of services. It has also allowed us to initiate new programmes such as gardening and handyman services.

We continue to monitor for service gaps and provide ways to enhance the lives of the large number of aged residents living in the community. The services provided by the organisation give a real alternative to residential care and allow residents to remain in their own homes for a longer period of time.

## **STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The State and Federal governments jointly fund the Home and Community Care Programme, which is specifically for the provision of services for frail aged and younger disabled persons in our community, and their carers. The aim is to provide quality services to enable the client group to remain living independently in their own homes. The need for agencies to provide high standards of service and be responsive and flexible in meeting client needs is paramount in service delivery. National Service Standards have been developed by the Department of Human Services covering client's rights and responsibilities which our organisation supports.

### **CLIENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Client rights include the right:

- to be respected for their individual human worth, dignity and privacy
- to be assessed for access to services without discrimination
- to be informed of available services
- to choose from alternatives.
- to pursue any complaint about service provision without retribution
- to authorise exchange of private information between agencies
  
- and
  
- to involve an advocate of the choice.

Client responsibilities include the responsibility:

- to respect the human worth and dignity of the service provider staff, volunteers and other clients
- for the result of any decisions they make
- to refer any concerns directly to the agency providing the service
- to advise the agency of any changes in their circumstances which may affect service delivery
- and;
- to play their part in helping the service provider to provide them with services.

## **INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

- Ashburton Support Services has an over-arching policy and procedure manual covering all areas of management. All volunteers are encouraged to read the manual, particularly in relation to the management of volunteers and clients rights.
- Volunteers are provided with a comprehensive position description, the organisation's privacy policy and grievance procedure and other information relevant to their position.
- Volunteers are responsible to the Supervisor of the programme for which they are working.
- Drivers must hold a current drivers licence and have comprehensive car insurance. The organisation reserves the right to retire drivers over the age of 80 years or if it is deemed in the best interest of clients.
- Volunteers between the ages of twelve and ninety are covered for insurance purposes under the Department of Human Services and Health.
- Any injury sustained by any person or damage to property incurred whilst working for this agency must be reported as soon as possible to the Chief Executive Officer and an incident form filled out. When necessary the Department of Human Services and the Insurance Company must be notified.
- Volunteers must retain confidentiality of clients at all times. This is of paramount importance to ensure the security of the frail aged and terminally ill clients suffering from infectious diseases. Information on a clients condition is only advised where it will affect volunteer duties.
- Whilst it is permitted for volunteers to undertake small tasks for clients such as, putting out a rubbish bin, bringing in mail etc. it is unacceptable to involve yourself in their direct care, unless under instruction from the office. Should a client need further assistance please refer the matter to the office on your return.
- Please sign the confidentiality agreement and return it to the office.
- Should you have any concerns about contact with infectious clients please see the Chief Executive Officer. All discussions will be confidential.

## **VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteers are an integral part of the staffing profile of Ashburton Support Services. Volunteer involvement in the organisation is managed through:

- volunteer role statements
- a volunteer policy
- rights and responsibilities.

## **Role**

Volunteers contribute to the organisation in a number of ways, dependent on the area in which they work. Volunteers provide:

- social support to clients
  - companionship, friendship and opportunities for social interaction
  - a link between the client and the organisation
  - facilitation and encouragement for client access and participation at ASS
  - support for client needs pertaining to organisational goals, including meals, socialising, transport, running or participating in groups
  - monitoring of client well-being
- and;
- communication with staff regarding client needs, and changing needs.

The work of the volunteer is governed by the following principles:

- the work is conducted according to the organisation's requirements, eg. adherence to staff directives, job descriptions, policies, guidelines and protocols
  - services provided by volunteers occur within clearly defined boundaries
  - volunteers must have a commitment to the organisation and the client
  - maintenance of confidentiality and duty of care
- and;
- the role of the volunteer is different to the role of paid staff.

Volunteers will be advised on a need-to-know basis only regarding any special needs of clients.

## **Volunteer Rights**

A volunteer can expect:

- information about the organisation
  - a clearly written job description
  - knowledge of whom they are accountable to
  - to be oriented, trained and supported in their role
  - a healthy and safe work environment
  - to be covered by insurance
  - to say no if they feel they are being exploited
  - to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses
  - to be informed and consulted on matters directly and indirectly affecting their work
- and;

- a grievance procedure for volunteers.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

The organisation expects a volunteer to:

- be reliable
  - respect and uphold confidentiality be accountable for their actions
  - be committed to the organisation
  - undertake training as required
  - ask for support when it is needed
  - give notice before leaving the organisation
  - value and support other team members
- and;
- undertake the work agreed to responsibly and ethically.

## **Volunteer Protocol**

Volunteer involvement will be encouraged in the organisation, in keeping with the ASS commitment to being a community organisation. It is recognised by ASS that volunteers contribute enormously to the organisation in terms of skills, experiences and community presence. Volunteers enable the provision of many more services than paid staff would be able to support, and for this reason also, they are highly valued and treated with appropriate respect.

### **Distinction between paid and unpaid work**

The organisation recognises a distinction between paid and unpaid work. Volunteer roles will not undermine or replace paid staff, but will be complementary and supportive of staff roles. Volunteers are obliged to concede to lawful staff directives and have greater options for voluntary refusal of duties, absences and leaving the service. Volunteers will refrain from offering advice to clients or accepting monetary or other rewards for services offered on a volunteer basis.

ASS staff will recognise the contribution of volunteers to the running of programmes in an appropriate and timely manner. While staff ultimately have greater authority than volunteers, staff recognition of the contribution of volunteers, and a democratic basis within the organisation, mitigates the felt effects of this on a day to day basis, except where directives are necessary, or questions/concerns require addressing.

### **Conditions of Engagement**

Volunteers will be recruited for designated positions only, and provided with clear job descriptions. Placement of volunteers will be determined by skills, abilities and willingness to train for the position. Selection will include the ability of the volunteer to commit to a minimum six months' service and to work semi-autonomously. Target time for volunteer placement is a maximum of five weeks from initial interview and there is a three-session trial period for positions before placement is confirmed. Volunteers will give the maximum notice possible in the case of absence, holidays, illness or termination of volunteer contract.

### **Confidentiality**

Maintenance of confidentiality is of the utmost importance to the organisation. Volunteers will be trained as to the nature and extent of confidentiality issues and, in the event they are unsure as to this policy, should speak with the CEO. All concerns regarding clients must only be discussed with the relevant staff member, who will enact follow-up procedures appropriate to the case. No volunteer has the right to breach confidentiality without the consent of the client. As with paid staff, **failure to adhere to this principle could result in instant dismissal.**

### **Orientation**

Orientation is provided to volunteers in the first instance by either the Volunteer Alliance Coordinator. Activity or task-specific orientation will be provided by the staff member overseeing the activity or task in which the volunteer is participating.

### **Training**

Comprehensive training will be provided to all volunteers commensurate with the particular area in which they are working. Feedback and questions are welcome. Volunteers are entitled to not undertake work for which they feel they are not suitably trained.

### **Supervision and Support**

Supervision is provided by staff dependent on the activity. Should a volunteer require supervision for tasks usually not supervised, s/he should communicate with the relevant staff member in order for this to be negotiated.

Any concerns regarding support should be addressed to the Volunteer Coordinator and, if unresolved, the CEO.

### **Equal Opportunity**

Volunteer work is on an equal opportunity basis and volunteers are recruited without discrimination as to gender, culture or religious affiliation.

### **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Authorised volunteer expenses will be reimbursed by ASS providing a receipt is provided.

## **Insurance**

Insurance is provided to volunteers between the ages of 12 and 90 through the Department of Human Services Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance.

Volunteers are covered for personal accident and accidents occurring while volunteering, or travelling to or from authorised volunteer activities.

Insurance applies for:

- temporary total disability caused by injury (a percentage of average weekly earnings to a maximum of \$1 000 for a period not exceeding 104 weeks)
- temporary partial disability caused by injury for 25% of average weekly earnings to a maximum of \$250 for a period of 104 weeks
- death and capital benefits:
  - between 12 and 18 years, \$30 000
  - between 18 and 80 years, \$85 000
  - between 80 and 90 years, \$45 000
- medical expenses up to \$10 000 (excluding medical expenses recoverable, in part or total, from Medicare)
- medical expenses in excess of \$50 for above benefit
- \$3 000 in respect of any one loss or series of losses arising from one cause
- occupationally-acquired HIV or AIDS
- domestic help extension of \$100 per week for up to 104 weeks - 7 day excess

The insurance does not cover volunteer cars or the children of parents who accompany their volunteering parents on their work.

All accidents and injuries must be reported to ASS within 24 hours and an Accident Report completed.

Traffic offences incurred, whether owner driver or in the ASS vehicles, will be the responsibility of the volunteer, including any demerit points imposed.

## **Police Check**

All volunteers who provide direct service to clients or have access to client files are required to undergo a Police Check at the expense of ASS prior to their commencing work.

## **Health and Safety**

Volunteers share the entitlements of staff and clients in their right to expect a safe, clean and appropriate environment applicable to particular activities/events.

### **Grievance Procedures**

Refer to brochure *Privacy Policy and Grievance Procedures - Staff and Volunteers*.

### **Disciplinary Policy**

Wherever possible, the ASS takes a positive and constructive approach to areas of concern regarding volunteer performance and/or behaviour. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to improve performance to the level required within an appropriate time frame and with adequate support.

The CEO has final responsibility for the hiring and firing of volunteers. A volunteer has the right to utilise the grievance procedure where s/he considers correct dismissal procedures have not been followed.

The procedure for discipline in relation to volunteers is:

- the volunteer is given an explanation of the problem and a verbal request for improvement. This request is conducted in an informal manner by the designated supervisor of the volunteer, specifying the behaviour/performance causing concern and clearly articulating the change required. Appropriate ways of achieving the desired performance will be explored, including further training/support needs
- if the problem persists, a formal interview will be arranged. The Volunteer Coordinator will have a witness to this interview, and the volunteer will have a right to an advocate of their choice. In the case of failure to resolve the problem, the volunteer may be dismissed or offered another role at the CEO's discretion. A written explanation for the reason/s for dismissal will be provided to the volunteer on request.

In cases such as theft, physical, sexual or verbal abuse and breach of confidentiality, instant dismissal applies.

Where the formal dismissal process is required for a volunteer, the above policy will subsequently be reviewed.

### **SERVICE PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Our organisation embraces responsibilities including the responsibility to:

- enhance and respect the independence and dignity of clients

- ensure the client's access to a service is determined on the basis of need and the capacity of the service to meet that need
- inform the client about options open to him/her
- inform the client of his/her rights and responsibilities in relation to HACC services
- involve each client in decisions about their assessment and service delivery plan
- negotiate with client regarding any change to services
- be responsive to the diverse social, cultural and physical experiences and needs of clients
- inform clients about the details of the service and any fees charged
- inform clients of the standard of service they can expect to receive
- allow the clients to access information about him/her held by the organization
- to deliver services in a safe manner and with the changing needs of clients in mind
- to respect the right of refusal of service
- to deal with complaints fairly and without retribution
- mediate and attempt to negotiate a solution in the case of conflict regarding services
- accept the client's choice of advocate to represent his/her interests
- take into account the client's view when planning, managing and evaluating HACC service provision

**POLICY STATEMENT**  
**SERVICE DELIVERY TO HIV/INFECTIOUS DISEASES CLIENT**

**Service Delivery**

- No resident will be denied access to services due to HIV/Aids or other infectious diseases.
- Any member of the paid or volunteer staff who is informed of the above must maintain a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory and confidential approach to the client at all times.
- When sharing of confidential information is concerned necessary the information may be related only with the written consent of the Client.
- Any concern of volunteers should be related to the Chief Executive Officer only and dealt with appropriately.

**Management Plan**

- To provide information sessions for staff and volunteers to cover confidentiality practices for all clients and issues regarding approach by volunteers to clients with infectious diseases.
- Appropriate action will be taken where staff or volunteers breach the guidelines.
- Staff to be made aware of the referral procedure for HIV/Aids clients.

**Referral Procedure**

- All referrals requesting service should be made to the Chief Executive Officer only.

- Medical information must be excluded from administrative files relating to clients.
- Notation of all infectious diseases to be made by sign only on client data card.

This information to be available on a “need to know” basis only to staff and volunteers