



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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chcclynden.org

*“The tradition of **caring** continues.”*

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Welcome to CHCC

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Christian Health Care Center. Volunteers have always played a vital role here; they were even the driving force behind the establishment of CHCC in 1956.

Today, volunteers are an integral part of the care and support we provide residents. Whether it's serving on the board of directors, leading a Sunday worship service, assisting residents with bingo games or simply visiting on a regular basis, there is always a need for additional volunteers!

Rest assured that as a CHCC volunteer, your services are valued by our staff, residents and their families. Your visits are greatly anticipated, and your time and efforts are an important element of the quality of care we can deliver.

This handbook provides details important to your volunteer experience. Please take a few minutes to read this information, and please feel free to ask questions as they arise.

Contact and connect

You may contact CHCC's therapeutic recreation department by telephone or email or leave a note for us at the reception desk during normal business hours. In the event of a weekend or evening emergency, please ask to speak with therapeutic recreation staff or a nurse on duty. Our team:

- Director Emily Mooney
 - (360) 354-4434, ext. 6382
 - emooney@chcclynden.org
- Assistant Director Emily Anderson
 - (360) 354-4434, ext. 6329
 - eanderson@chcclynden.org
- Visitation and Volunteer Coordinator
 - (360) 354-4434, ext. 6328
- Therapeutic Program Coordinator Anna Clare
 - (360) 354-4434, ext. 6329
 - aclare@chcclynden.org

Follow CHCC on Facebook and Instagram and sign up to receive our monthly emails so you'll be on top of news updates and learn about activities and happenings that take place here.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/christianhealthcare>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/chcclynden/>
- Email newsletter: Opt in by filling out the form on the bottom of our website's homepage at <https://chcclynden.org/>.



About CHCC

Christian Health Care Center is a nonprofit skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility that serves Whatcom County residents. Our caring and knowledgeable staff provide a full range of health care services to people who are recovering from injury, overcoming illness or in need of long-term care.

We believe that each therapeutic rehab patient and long-term care resident deserves to live in comfort, with dignity and respect. This core philosophy is why your family, friends and neighbors have trusted Christian Health Care Center since 1956.

Our mission is to provide skilled health care services with compassion and love in Christ's name. To fulfill our mission, we pledge to:

- Communicate to all concerned that addressing the needs of patients, residents, clients and their families is our primary objective.
- Provide a comprehensive range of health, behavioral, pastoral, and supportive services without regard to age, religion, race, sex or national origin.
- Recognize the importance of providing quality care that meets or exceeds the generally accepted standards of the community, in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Uphold our charitable mission and strive to assure access to our services by all those in need while maintaining financial integrity.
- Provide a safe and well-maintained physical environment.
- Offer health-promotion services and educational programs to the community. Evaluate the needs of those we serve to determine if the existing array of services should be modified or expanded.
- Work cooperatively with appropriate service agencies, as well as churches and other religious organizations, to assure community needs are met.

CHCC rules, regulations and guidelines

Orientation. All volunteers will be invited to attend an orientation session before beginning their volunteer service.

Dealing with grief. When volunteering in a skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility, the possibility of befriending someone who may pass away is real. If someone you are visiting dies, you may go through a grieving process. Please let us know if we can be of assistance.

Insurance. All registered volunteers are covered by CHCC's comprehensive liability insurance policy while working in or on behalf of the care center.

Legal responsibilities. Check with nursing staff or the dietician before bringing food or drink to a resident. Volunteers will receive training on any equipment that is required. If you are unclear on any policy or procedure regarding any resident, please ask as soon as possible, before participating in the activity.

Personal belongings. Volunteers are cautioned not to bring valuables into the building. CHCC cannot be responsible for loss of personal property.

Confidentiality. Information learned directly or indirectly concerning a resident or their family must be respected as confidential and not discussed outside CHCC.

Signing in and out. Volunteers are required to sign in at the front desk before beginning their shift and sign out at the end of their shift.

Name tags. Volunteer name tags are an important security measure and must always be worn when volunteers are on duty. Please return your name tag to the reception desk after you shift.

Compliance and ethics. The purpose of the compliance and ethics program at CHCC is to prevent and detect violations of criminal, civil and administrative laws by developing the facility's culture and compliance. We expect volunteers to abide by the standards of compliance (following the rules) and ethics (doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do).

Dress code. Volunteers are expected to follow the staff dress code. No shorts or skirts may end above the knee. Wider tank tops are preferred over ones with spaghetti straps.

Injury while volunteering. An accident or illness experienced while volunteering should be reported to the manager of therapeutic recreation. If the manager of the department is not on site, please report to the nurse on duty immediately. An incident report must immediately be completed.

Drugs and alcohol. The use of drugs and alcohol is strictly prohibited while on duty as a volunteer. A volunteer must not be under the influence while on duty.

Lifting and transferring. To prevent injury to yourself or to residents, volunteers must not lift or transfer the weight of any resident. If someone asks you to help with this, please refer the request to a staff member.

Gifts and tips. It is CHCC's policy for volunteers and staff not to accept personal tips or gifts from residents or family members.

Photographs and videos. Laws are in place to protect the privacy of our residents; therefore, permission must be obtained from the administrator or volunteer coordinator before any photographs or videos are taken here.

Helpful tips for CHCC volunteers

Many of the residents at Christian Health Care Center live with impairments affecting their hearing, sight, mobility and/or ability to think and remember. Some residents experience periods when they are disoriented and confused. Following these tips will help make volunteering an enjoyable experience.

Personal communication. Communicating is something we do all day and often take for granted. It involves the exchange of factual information and of our values, attitudes and feelings. The messages we convey through body language are often as important as the words we speak.

Here are some guidelines for personal communication:

- Always knock before entering a resident's room.
- Introduce yourself each time you meet. Explain to the resident why you are there.
- Call the resident by their name unless otherwise requested.
- Sit near the resident on the same level. Look directly at them and lean forward to convey your genuine interest.
- Focus on what they say and give them your undivided attention.
- Do not force the person to speak if they do not want to; remember that this should be a pleasant experience.
- Always speak in a clear, slow voice.
- Try to maintain a positive mood. Keep a sense of humor and be cheerful. These qualities are contagious, and they usually generate a positive response in return. You will be amazed at how much your smile will be appreciated!
- Sometimes it may be impossible for you to make sense of things a resident is telling you. In these cases, you can communicate with the person by focusing on the emotions they express through their words and gestures.
- Many residents have poor short-term memory, dementia or Alzheimer's. It may be difficult for them to remember what they said or did just a few minutes ago. It is common for an elderly person to remember events from their past much more easily.
- If you see a resident enter another resident's room, please help redirect them. If the resident is not easily redirected, please find a staff member to assist. If you see a resident who wanders near an exit when you are trying to leave, please wait until that resident has moved on or is redirected so you are not followed out.

Conversation starters. As you begin your visits, remember that you are in a good position to encourage independence and self-respect. Avoid discussions that focus on disabilities and ill health. Try to emphasize the positive aspects of the resident's life and your own. Don't worry if you don't feel comfortable during your first few contacts; it takes time to establish trust and for a relationship to grow. Residents like to connect with you by learning about what you like to do.

Here are some questions you might ask in beginning a conversation with a resident:

- Where were you born? Tell me about your childhood, school, teachers and friends.
- Tell me about your adult life — your career, family and activities.
- How long have you lived in Lynden? Where have you lived in the past?
- What are your interests? What do you enjoy doing? What hobbies or activities do you like?
- Do you have children and grandchildren? Do they live nearby?

Other ways you can help

There will be times when you may ask yourself, "What else can I do to help?" Here is a list of suggestions:

- Cribbage, cards and puzzles. Staff members have many of these games available, and they provide meaningful interaction. Residents may need some help playing games. We also have scheduled times for table games in the activity room. Puzzles are fun, and they are easy to do with one resident.

- Share yourself. There are numerous ways to do this, including bringing a photo album from home and telling stories about yourself and your family. This helps stimulate conversation and is an interesting change of topic.
- Manicures and makeup. Staff and residents love assistance in this area. It helps the residents look and feel great and provides meaningful one-on-one interaction.
- Read aloud. This can help keep residents informed. Bring a newspaper, magazine or book to share while you visit or ask staff where you can access reading materials in the facility.
- Change of scenery. Take a resident for a stroll inside the building or out to the courtyard garden. Make sure to let the nurse know whom you are taking to the courtyard, and ensure the resident is dressed appropriately with a sunhat or sunscreen, if needed.
- Other ideas. Visit residents who are room-bound, talk, ask questions, play cards, sign up for a specific activity program such as bingo or bowling, sit with residents in the courtyard, listen to music, help gather and bring residents back from an activity, assist with a craft activity. We need help with a wide variety of activities every week!



Wheelchair etiquette

- When speaking to a resident in a wheelchair, sit or kneel to get yourself on the same level as the chair. Be sure to introduce yourself.
- Always ask wheelchair users if they would like assistance before you help them. Let them know you are going to move them before you get started.
- Check to ensure that the resident's arm, hands and fingers will not be injured by the wheel spokes.
- Ensure that scarves, blankets and clothing are away from the wheels.
- Avoid pushing on the back of the chair, as you would be pushing on the resident's back.
- If the resident is wearing a safety belt, do not undo it.
- Release the brakes before moving the wheelchair. A fast start with the brakes on may throw the resident from his or her chair.
- Use caution when wheeling a resident up to a table. Make sure feet and hands are not bumped or pinched.

Infection control

Do not come to the facility with an infectious illness such as a cold or the flu. If you feel unwell, do not come to volunteer until you are feeling better.

Do not enter a resident's room that has isolation signs on the door until you have checked with the nurse in charge.

The single best way to stop the spread of infection is to thoroughly and frequently wash your hands using soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand-sanitizing gel. All volunteers must complete proper hand washing training with the volunteer coordinator during orientation.

Volunteers should wash their hands or use hand-sanitizing gel:

- On arrival and before leaving the facility to go home.
- Before and after entering a resident's room.
- After pushing a resident in a wheelchair.
- After using the bathroom.
- Before eating or handling food.
- Before and after contact with residents.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever your hands appear dirty.

Depending on guidance from federal, state and local health authorities, volunteers may be required to wear a well-fitting mask (provided at entry) when inside CHCC, especially if engaged in close proximity to residents. The volunteer coordinator or therapeutic recreation staff members will keep volunteers advised of current facility protocol regarding mask requirements for volunteers.

Safety in the courtyard

- Confirm with the nurse that the resident may leave the unit.
- Make sure the resident is dressed appropriately — sweater, hat, shoes, etc.
- Observe whether the resident is tiring. Do not keep him or her out too long.
- If the resident is in a wheelchair, make sure he or she stays on the sidewalk, for safety.
- Do not leave a resident unattended in the courtyard. Communicate with staff if you need to leave and the resident wants to remain in the courtyard.

Resident falls

Please do not help a resident up after a fall. There may be injuries that are not apparent to you. Reassure the resident and call a staff member to help. Stay with the resident until help arrives.

Confidentiality agreement

As a Christian Health Care Center volunteer, you will have access to confidential information. Resident, patient and personnel information in any form is strictly confidential. Access to confidential resident, patient and personnel information is permitted only on a need-to-know basis. It will be considered a violation of this agreement if you are found to have disclosed or discussed any confidential information outside of the appropriate environment.

Violation of this agreement will constitute grounds for corrective action, up to and including termination of the volunteer relationship. Unauthorized release of confidential information may also have personal, civil and/or criminal liabilities and legal penalties attached.

Resident rights

Residents of nursing homes have rights guaranteed to them under federal and state laws. The laws require nursing homes to treat each resident with dignity and to respect and care for each resident in an environment that promotes and protects their rights.

Among others, residents have the following rights:

- Right to a dignified existence
- Right to self-determination
- Right to be fully informed
- Right of access
- Right to voice grievances
- Right to privacy
- Rights regarding financial affairs
- Rights during discharge and transfer

For more information on resident rights, including a complete list of rights, please ask at the reception desk.



Fire and earthquake safety

Fire safety. Our facility practices fire drills on a monthly basis to prepare for a real emergency. It is normal procedure, and a state requirement, that these practice drills routinely occur during different shifts. A fire drill is announced by the charge nurse at Cascade Harbor nurses' station as "code red (with location)." This is repeated three times over the public address system.

During fire drills, volunteers should report to the nurses' station closest to their location. The automatic fire doors will close. The nurse in charge of the drill will put on a fluorescent orange vest so you may identify who is in command. Please wait calmly for any instructions from this nurse only. During a drill, we ask that you do not use telephones.

When the fire drill or threat has been checked and there is no danger, you will hear an announcement, "all clear" over the public address system. Only when you hear the "all clear" message may you return to normal activities. You may be asked to sign an attendance form that indicates you were present for the drill.

If you cause or discover a fire, remember **RACE**:

- **R**escue residents
- **A**ctivate the alarm
- **C**onfine the fire; close doors
- **E**xtinguish and evacuate

To extinguish a fire, remember **PASS**:

- **P**ull the pin on the fire extinguisher
- **A**im at the base of the fire

- Squeeze the handle
- Sweep side to side

Earthquake safety. In the event of an earthquake, take immediate cover under a table or against an inside wall. Do not leave cover until the shaking stops. When shocks and tremors have subsided, follow the directions of CHCC staff.

Map of CHCC

