

Volunteer Voice

Helping People Live at Home Safely

November 2011 – Fall Edition

Information Desk: (416) 481-6411

SPRINT volunteers appreciate diversity training

On September 13th, 2011, “Working with a Diverse Population” Training was held for our volunteers. There was a great turnout for this session. Mario Tsokas (BSW, RSW), a Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant, facilitated the session.



Volunteers found it very informative and interactive. They said that this training increased their knowledge of this particular topic and expressed that they will use the information from this workshop in their own lives, at work and in their volunteer role.

Diversity – understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing individual differences including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies -- was presented in a new and different light. The training addressed particular differences as well as pointed out the fact that we often jump to assumptions based on our own stereotypes and prejudices.

In order to increase our cultural competency, four tools of cultural competency were presented:

- 1. Awareness** - Consciousness of our personal reactions to people who we feel are different than ourselves.
- 2. Attitude** - Carefully examination of our own beliefs and values about cultural differences.
- 3. Knowledge** - Knowledge of a client's culture, values and beliefs. What do we know about the person

- 4. Skills** - Communication is the fundamental tool by which people interact. Communicate to learn, gain understanding, break down assumptions.

So what are the benefits of cultural competency?

- Helps the agency and its volunteers/staff deliver effective equitable service.
- Reduces the risks and challenges due to cultural misunderstandings and barriers
- Helps problem solve with new perspectives, ideas and strategies
- Produces more trusting relationships with the client

The training session turned out to be very interactive and enjoyable as Mario presented the group with a gestures exercise which increased much awareness. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgendered) issues were also presented to help volunteers understand the oppression that this population has faced and the physical and mental strains that this oppression has caused.



What's INSIDE this Issue?

"Diversity is the one thing we all have in common"

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Through the Eyes of a *Meals on Wheels* Volunteer

Judit Pesci shared some words on her volunteer experiences at SPRINT.

“My name is Judit Pecsí and I have been volunteering at SPRINT since March 2010. I am truly enchanted by my volunteer position!”

Prior to retiring, I had worked as a Personal Support Worker for 10 years. Although I enjoyed my job, it was lonely at times. I helped seniors take baths and perform other essential tasks, but never really found the time to chat with anyone, or truly get to know them.

When I started volunteering at SPRINT, another world opened up for me. From the very first moment I felt very happy and joyful. I volunteer three days a week with SPRINT. On Mondays, I help out with the Meals on Wheels program at Sunnybrook hospital, alongside Eileen (Supervisor of Meals on Wheels) and Tiziana (Coordinator of Meals on Wheels). On Wednesdays, I volunteer with Tamara (Community Dining Team Leader) in the Community Dining program at North Toronto Memorial Community Centre and one Friday a month, I help out with SPRINT’s Farmer’s Market.,

I love the people I work with and am honoured to be amongst them. They are excellent company and I enjoy every minute that we are together. I came to Canada “only” 13 years ago and the last 1 1/2 years that I have volunteered at SPRINT has helped me improve my English skills.

The SPRINT staff and my colleagues are absolutely understanding and bear with me when I (involuntarily) use long, foolish sentences or use incorrect grammar. EVERYBODY, without exception, is nice, friendly and patient with me. I love this amazing ‘volunteership.’

If you would like to share your volunteer experience with others, please contact the volunteer department to share your piece of the puzzle.



Donating to SPRINT

SPRINT is a non-profit United Way member neighbourhood agency that provides a wide range of home and community support services to help seniors and persons with disabilities live independently in the community. If you feel the need to donate more than your precious time, donations are always welcomed and much appreciated!

YES! I want to make a donation to help North Toronto seniors live at home safely and independently.

METHOD:

I enclose my cheque for \$ _____
(cheque payable to SPRINT)

Please charge my VISA card

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$10 or more. Please cut out this form and mail it with your cheque in the enclosed envelope. You can also donate on line at:

www.sprint-homecare.ca/donate



Friendly Visiting Coffee Clutch

Feedback from the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey, conducted earlier in the year, told us that Friendly Visitors and Security Check volunteers would like to be in touch more regularly with our SPRINT Volunteer Department. The friendly visiting/security check positions can sometimes feel isolating due to the nature of the role. Volunteers in this position are visiting with clients in their home and often they don't have regularly opportunity to interact in person with a SPRINT staff member.

In order to increase communication and allow friendly visitors/security check volunteers to interact with each other and SPRINT staff, the Volunteer Department invited all volunteers in this program to a *Coffee Clutch*.

On October 13th at 2 pm, a group of volunteers came together to meet each other and share their experiences in this program.

It was a very productive afternoon and a great way to discuss concerns out in the open. Many issues were shared and some procedures were clarified. SPRINT will be hosting this *Coffee Clutch* quarterly. Watch out for the next date!!

If you are friendly visitor and/or have suggestions on good training topics for the next *Coffee Clutch*, give the Volunteer Department a call.

Available Volunteer Positions

Transportation Drivers - Help take clients to and from their shopping trip. Flexibility is available on the day. Personal vehicle not necessary.

Meals on Wheels Drivers - Deliver hot meals to clients within the SPRINT catchment area.

Community Dining Volunteers - Help to set up tables, welcome clients, serve meals and clean up afterwards at one of our Community Dining sites.

Friendly Visitors - Visit isolated seniors weekly in their home. Become a special friend to someone who has become socially isolated and help them feel like they are a part of the community again.

Looking to Give Back? Donate to the Client Food Bank



SPRINT is always accepting non-perishable food items for our food cupboard. This food is helpful to clients who are in need of basic food supplies.

Donation items include:

- canned goods
- beverages
- supplements
- toiletries (toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant)
- or other items (pastas, rice, jam etc)

To make your donation, contact SPRINT



Editorial Contacts

Volunteer Voice is published by SPRINT

Writer: Menaka Kulendran, Coordinator, Volunteer Services

Editor: Naomi Ziegler, Manager, Social Work & Volunteer Services

We welcome your comments or story ideas.

Contact the Volunteer Department at 416- 481-0669 x 252

