



## Volunteer Roles at Island Health

*At Island Health we work with each applicant to find a role that fits well with their skills, experience, interests, and schedule. For this reason, applicants apply to a site, not a specific role. A general application is submitted, after which we set up an initial conversation or interview to explore opportunities and best fit.*

*Typical volunteer roles at Island Health focus on improving the patient, resident, client, staff, and/or visitor experience. Some of our most common roles are listed below.*

*Please note that this list is not comprehensive;  
other roles exist and not all roles are active at all sites.*

### Activity Volunteers



In Long-Term Care Homes, Activity Volunteers support staff with events for residents. There is a wide variety of events that take place throughout the year and may include activities such as Bingo, Sing-A-Longs, Art, and Tea & Entertainment. Volunteers help with setup and cleanup, engage with residents during the event, and support residents to participate in the event.

### Clinic Volunteers

Clinic Volunteers are typically found in Acute Care Hospitals, Public Health Units, or Children's Health Facilities. They help ensure patients/clients can navigate directions and receive the necessary information to feel informed and clear about next steps as they move through the clinic. There are many different types of clinic volunteers:



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- One example is the Medical Imaging Clinic Volunteer program. In this program clinic volunteers greet patients/clients and any visitors they have with them. They show them where to check in, where to get changed, and where the exam room is located. They may have additional duties such as folding patient gowns.
- Another example is Child Health Clinic Volunteer program, where volunteers greet clients and their families, assist parents in measuring and weighing their babies, including recording the data, and providing direction about next steps as the families move through the clinic.

### Emergency Department Volunteers



Emergency Department Volunteers help the Emergency Department patients and their visitors, along with staff, by assisting with wayfinding, providing water, engaging in friendly conversation, providing a warm blanket to a patient, and being a calm presence in a difficult environment. This role isn't suitable to everyone. We work with applicants to determine if it is the right fit.

### Entertainment Volunteers

At both Acute Care Hospitals and Long-Term Care Homes, Entertainment Volunteers bring the gift of music to patients, residents, staff, and visitors. Some volunteers have portable instruments such as violins and cellos, while other volunteers play pianos that are already located in the facility.



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### Experience Volunteers

At some Acute Care Hospitals, we have volunteers who are a presence in the main hallways. Frequently, visitors to the hospitals have difficulty finding their way, or have to sit and wait a long time. Experience Volunteers watch for visitors, or anyone who appears in need of support, and help them find their way, or lend a friendly ear to someone who would like to talk.



### General Support Volunteers



At Island Health we do have a few roles that do not have direct patient, resident, or client interaction. These roles may be administrative, they may involve sorting items or putting packages together for a specific program or department, or they may involve supporting other volunteers.



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### Social Engagement Volunteers



Found in both Acute Care Hospitals and Long-Term care Homes, Social Engagement volunteers engage patients / residents / clients in friendly conversation or one to one activities (i.e. cards/games).

In hospitals, this engagement helps pass the time and distract from worries that are often present when admitted to a hospital. In Long-Term Care Homes this program contributes positively to the resident's quality of life.

### Step Up Youth Volunteers

Step Up Youth Program (SUYP) volunteers contribute through social engagement, helping support patients / residents / clients through one to one visits or small group interactions. Youth volunteers aged 15-18 make a difference to the patient / resident / client experience while exploring careers in healthcare.



There are three components to the program:

- Step Up and C.A.R.E. develop an excellent understanding of Island Health's C.A.R.E. Values (Courage, Aspire, Respect and Empathy).
- Step Up and LEARN - have an opportunity to learn about careers in healthcare.
- Step Up and LEAD - have an opportunity to lead a project to support patient care.

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### Therapy Support Volunteers



This role can be found in Public Health Units, Acute Care Hospitals, some Long-Term Care Sites and some Children's Health Facilities. Volunteers in Therapy Support roles typically support and encourage residents / patients / clients to participate in individual or group therapy programs. These roles are often under the direction of Therapy Services (Occupational, Physical, Music, or Speech & Language Therapists).

There are a wide variety of Therapy Support Volunteer Roles.

A few examples of Therapy Support roles include: exercise class support (assisting group leader to maximize long-term care residents' participation), yoga (lead yoga classes - requires certification), geriatric psychiatry (engage with clients during group activities such as colouring or keep-fit class), and speech therapy support (help with creation of therapy materials and support with group activities and therapy sessions).

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**To learn more about all of our volunteer roles, including those not listed, please apply and we will set up an interview, or you can email [Volunteer@islandhealth.ca](mailto:Volunteer@islandhealth.ca).**

The following section explains additional roles that are available for our active volunteers who are experienced in their role, or are available through our partnerships with community organizations.

### Leadership Volunteers (additional opportunities for our active volunteers who are experienced in their roles)

Leadership Volunteers support and mentor new and returning volunteers. This includes leading orientations to the volunteer program, providing site tours, supporting volunteers during their first few shifts, and/or leading groups of volunteers during their shifts.

Through their guidance, Leadership Volunteers ensure that volunteers are well supported to engage patients / residents / clients / staff and visitors through meaningful interactions. Leadership Volunteers help foster a positive and collaborative environment, enhancing the overall volunteer experience.



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### Partner Program Volunteers (volunteers who come to us through partner organizations and volunteer within Island Health sites)

Island Health's Volunteer Resources & Engagement Department partners with several community agencies across our region. Partner Program Volunteers come to Island Health through the community associations with whom they have received specialized training. Examples include: Hospice Volunteers, Animal Therapy Volunteers, Heart Health Volunteers, and Brain Injury Peer Support Volunteers.



A list of our partner agencies can be found in our [Impact Report](#) or by reaching out to us at [Volunteer@islandhealth.ca](mailto:Volunteer@islandhealth.ca).

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**Auxiliary Volunteers** (volunteers who have a fundraising component to their role)



Auxiliary Volunteers often have a role in the Gift Shops of Acute Care Hospitals or Long-Term Care Homes. Some Auxiliaries also have a Thrift Shop in the community that raises funds for a specific Island Health site or grouping of sites.

Auxiliary Volunteers apply directly through their local Auxiliary.

A list of Auxiliaries and Associations can be found [here](#) or by searching Auxiliaries on [www.islandhealth.ca](http://www.islandhealth.ca).

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Questions about volunteering can be directed to: [Volunteer@islandhealth.ca](mailto:Volunteer@islandhealth.ca).