



Volunteer Resources & Engagement

Trusted. Included. Valued.

Impact Report

April 2023 through March 2024





Territorial Acknowledgement

The Volunteer Resources & Engagement team respectfully acknowledge the traditional, never surrendered territories of the three Indigenous cultural families of Vancouver Island: the Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw people, on whose lands we live, work and volunteer. Our team supports volunteer programming in Island Health facilities established on the unceded lands of many of the First Nations in our region. We recognize that Indigenous People are disproportionately impacted by health disparities and face reduced access to health care services as a result of cultural assimilation, residential schools, and ongoing colonial practices.

Our team is committed to growing our awareness and understanding of cultural safety and taking action to address Indigenous-specific racism. We are also committed to ensuring our volunteers understand the importance of Cultural Safety within the healthcare setting, and we work to include all our volunteers as we continue on our learning journey.

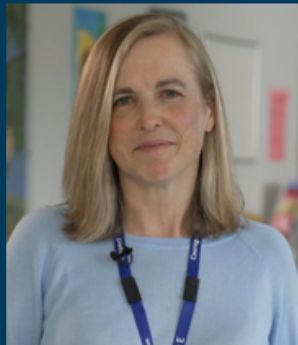


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Message from the Director



Andrea Pipes
Director,
Volunteer Resources &
Engagement



Island Health Volunteers bring boundless **energy, compassion**, and a strong desire to have a positive impact. Whether they're sharing laughter with residents in our Long-Term Care Homes, providing comforting blankets to patients in the Emergency Department, or guiding new mothers through the process of baby measurements at Public Health Units, our volunteers **leave a lasting impact** on everyone they encounter.

This year our department expanded significantly, introducing **38 new programs** and supporting **over 1500** volunteers across nearly 50 sites throughout our region. Notably, we've seen a rise in applicants aged 30 and under, with 56% of our volunteers falling into this category. Our **commitment to engaging youth** volunteers remains steadfast, with continued growth in our Step Up Youth program (for volunteers aged 15 to 18, and youth leaders up to age 25).

In recognition of the dedicated youth who volunteer with the hope of a future career in healthcare, this year Island Health introduced the **Step Up Youth Scholarship** Program. Awarding the first ten deserving youth with scholarships to support their **educational journey** was both exciting and fulfilling.

We also continue our commitment to **staff-focused programming**. Our animal therapy program tailored to reach Island Health staff is thriving and we've increased our support for additional staff-led initiatives promoting self-care. In light of the demanding nature of healthcare work, we are **proud** to directly support the dedicated healthcare professionals who do so much for all the communities in our region.



The **Volunteer Resources and Engagement team** is a dedicated group of individuals who regularly demonstrate Island Health's **C·A·R·E** values. They are innovative and full of **courage**; they **aspire** to be the best at what they do; they **respect** all the people they work with; and they create strong volunteer programs that are founded in **empathy** for Island Health's patients, residents, and clients.

Coordinators, Volunteer Engagement

Corinna Adams
Janet King
Zinnia Clark

Consultants, Volunteer Engagement

Daria Patterson
Erin Henneberry
Jerri-Lyn Whitney
Lindsay Meissner
Michelle Creedon
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Victoria Snow

Specialist, Youth Volunteer Engagement

Erin Scott

Managers

James Scott
Jennifer Doyle

Message from the Director continued

While we support staff, they also support us; we're not able to do our work alone. Across the region our **staff partners** - the many unit or program staff who provide the day-to-day oversight for the volunteer programs in their area - ensure our volunteers are **supported and valued**. We deeply appreciate the investment of time and effort our staff partners put in to ensure volunteering at Island Health is an **exceptional experience**.

In fact, the volunteer experience is always the most important focus for our team. We have dedicated ourselves to ensuring each volunteer has the right **support, placement, training, and recognition**. Our team is incredibly proud that **94.5%** of volunteers reported having a **good or excellent experience** volunteering with Island Health.

Volunteers come to Island Health for a multitude of reasons, but a common thread unites them: a **deep desire to assist others**. We strive to **honour** their efforts by ensuring they have all that they need to continue contributing to our healthcare system with the **compassion** and **C·A·R·E** they bring each time they walk through our doors.

Thank you to our volunteers, our staff partners, and to the Volunteer Resources and Engagement team for **making a difference** each and every day!

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Volunteer Involvement

April 2023 through March 2024



- Over **1500** Active Volunteers
- **56,898** Volunteer Hours
- **135** Volunteer Programs
- **50** Facilities Served
- **309** Step Up Youth Volunteers
- **10** Community Partnerships

What our staff partners say:

I **appreciate** our NRGH volunteers greatly, especially our Step Up Youth volunteers. Their eager faces in the hallway **brighten my day** and their projects and visiting with patients is greatly appreciated. Thank you!!

Breyanna, Social Work Clinical Coordinator NRGH

All of our volunteers are incredibly **committed** to helping our patients, answering patient and family questions, guiding them to areas of our department, providing warm blankets and comfort, and **helping** us with communicating about patient needs...Our volunteers are **valued members of our team** and we sure do appreciate them. **Juvena, MI Lead CVH**



Volunteer Programs

- Emergency Department
- Social Engagement
- Activity Support
- Clinic Support
- Therapy Support
- Experience
- Cancer Clinic
- Medical Imaging
- Child Health Clinics
- Paediatrics
- Mental Health & Substance Use
- Animal Therapy
- Surgical Daycare
- Entertainment
- and more...



The Goal of Volunteer Programs at Island Health:

Volunteers support Island Health's vision of 'excellent health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time' by enriching the experience of patients, residents, clients, visitors, and staff through the gifts of time, experience, and compassion.



Supported sites:

Acute Care Hospitals

- Campbell River
- Cowichan District
- Nanaimo Regional General
- Royal Jubilee
- Saanich Peninsula
- Tofino General
- Victoria General
- West Coast General

Long-Term Care Homes

- Dufferin Place
- Eagle Ridge Manor
- Lady Minto
- Saanich Peninsula Extended Care
- The Summit
- Yucalta Lodge

Community Health Centres

- Ladysmith

Step Up Youth Program

The Step Up Youth program was created to provide youth opportunities to develop **new skills**, gain **experience**, give back to their **community**, and help grow the **next generation** of healthcare workers.

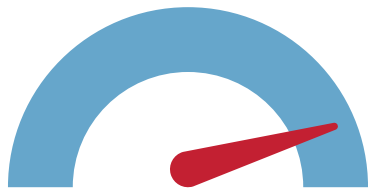
Youth participants aged 15 - 18, and youth leaders up to age 25, Step Up and: practice Island Health's **C•A•R•E** values, **learn** about clinical and non-clinical healthcare careers, and **lead** through sharing of ideas, leading projects, and growing into volunteer team lead roles.

Volunteers not only spend time **volunteering in-person**, but also meet **online** monthly to connect with **guest speakers** in the healthcare industry. This year they learned from Island Health **Remote/Rural Physicians, Dietitians, Mental Health Professionals, Pharmacists, Speech Language Pathologists**, and **Climate Change Strategists**.



Step Up Youth Impact

10,292 Total Volunteer Hours



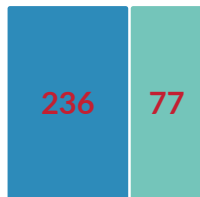
Patient/Resident Visits

6,155

1,671

Visitor/Family Interactions

Hours of Rec Therapy
Activities Supported



Hours of Musical
Entertainment



6 Long-Term Care Sites,
8 Acute Care Hospitals,
& 1 Community Health Centre
Supported



What the youth have to say:

- “The most **rewarding** part about volunteering in a hospital is seeing an **improvement** in the mood of the patients I interact with. Seeing their **faces light up** when I give them a handmade card or noticing that they seem more at ease after I have a conversation with them always makes volunteering a fulfilling experience”. **Haimavathy, Victoria General Hospital**
- “Every shift, the residents we visited would tell us how much they **loved spending time** with us. Our presence made them so **happy**, and they were excited to see us each new week.” **Leah, Saanich Peninsula Hospital**
- “I have developed new **appreciation** for healthcare positions. Volunteering has allowed me to gain more **insight** on the various roles necessary to keep a hospital functioning”. **Payton, Campbell River Hospital / Yucalta Lodge**

Youth Scholarships

Investing in youth is a **priority** for Island Health.

A new Scholarship Program provides **\$19,000** in funding to **ten** dedicated **youth** who have demonstrated their commitment to healthcare by:

- volunteering in the **Step Up Youth program**,
- dreaming of a **career in healthcare**, and
- applying and being **accepted** to a post secondary program that **supports their career aspirations**.

Two \$3500 awards and **eight \$1500 awards** were granted.

The program **prioritizes** at least one recipient from the each of the following:

- living in a **remote / rural area**,
- **Indigenous identity**,
- time spent in the program as a **Youth Team Leader**.



Pictured:
Rishab & Tanvi,
two of this year's
Youth Scholarship Award Recipients

Congratulations to the 2023 Scholarship Award Recipients

- Isabella Baan *
- Gagandeep Gurm*
- Ava McConechy
- Jashashanpreet Sandhu
- Lul Teklemariam
- Rishab Sharma
- Seoyoon Lee
- Tanvi Sharma
- Taran Gill
- Wendy Wu

* \$3500 award recipient ~11~

Spotlight - Youth Volunteer



Opportunities to volunteer in **remote and rural areas** has been a focus for the Step Up Youth program since 2022. **Isadora** was the first youth volunteer to step up in the **Port Hardy** area; she volunteers at Eagle Ridge Manor, a local Long-Term Care Home.

Erin Scott, Youth Volunteer Engagement Specialist, was immediately impressed with Isadora's **passion for helping others**. "Part of why Isadora really stands out is because of her continued **dedication** to staying involved. She always attended our online guest speaker sessions and came prepared with insightful questions. Her interest and **excitement for the future** of healthcare is very clear, which is something we want to foster, especially in our remote and rural communities."

Her role includes helping with bingo nights, but Isadora maintains that her passion lies in cheering up residents with her art. "I really like to give my art away because it makes me really happy. I just want to help as much as I can."

For Isadora, the most **rewarding** part of volunteering is feeling **fulfilled**. "Getting to forget about myself and just help others. I believe that people should have their emotional needs met – and helping others accomplish that - even if just a little is the



Isadora and her art

best feeling. My **greatest hope** is that I can continue this for years to come so I can make a bigger **impact on the world** around me."

And lucky for Island Health – Isadora is considering a **health care career**. "I have grown so much over my time here at Eagle Ridge Manor in ways I would have never thought of. When I applied I did not know what to expect, but have truly **grown** to understand another layer of healthcare I've never seen which makes the field seem more **accessible** as a career path and has allowed me to grow my skills while learning about the residents."

Step Up Youth

C•A•R•E

Learn

Lead

Working in Partnership



We partner with **trusted** community organizations to engage **shared** volunteers in roles that support a **common** goal.

Our **240** partner volunteers receive **specialized training** through the partner organization as well as the core training provided to all Island Health volunteers.

We value our Community Partner relationships and thank them for their support.

Partner Volunteer Programs:

- ABI/Stroke - Peer Visitation
- ABI/Stroke - Group Support
- Heart Health Volunteer
- Hospice Volunteer
- Superheroes Special Guest Visitor
- Animal Therapy Volunteer



Angela and her
therapy dog Ellie



*"The Nanaimo St. John Ambulance (SJA) Therapy Dog Program provides comfort and compassion through the **unconditional love and companionship** provided by our **specially trained** therapy dog teams, impacting the well-being of countless individuals in need of some emotional support. Thanks to the **partnership** with Island Health, Nanaimo SJA Therapy Dog Program teams are spreading moments of **joy and compassion** to individuals at NRGH and local Long-Term Care Homes, a recognition of the positive impact that **human-animal bonds** can have on one's well-being. Personally, I have the opportunity, alongside my dog, Ellie, to **uplift spirits** in various environments within Island Health, fostering a **sense of community** in places that can be far removed from home environments."*

Angela, Partner Volunteer

Our Thanks To:

- Association of Community Living (Campbell River)
- Companion Paws Therapy Dogs (The Lifeline Canada Foundation)
- First Open Heart Society of British Columbia
- Island Heart to Heart
- Nanaimo Brain Injury Society
- Pacific Animal Therapy Society
- St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program
- Superheroes of Victoria
- Vancouver Island Federation of Hospices
- Victoria Brain Injury Society





Volunteer “Guardian Angel” A Volunteer Story

“Volunteering is the greatest gift you can give”. This humble volunteer asks not to be named, but always knew that once she retired, she’d volunteer in some way to help others. In 2010, three months after retirement, she began as a wayfinding volunteer at Royal Jubilee Hospital.

“As a volunteer, you can greet someone and put them at ease. It makes a big difference, **it’s comforting to the patient to see a friendly, smiling face,**” she says.

One of her many tasks as a volunteer is to greet patients with appointments at the Bone Marrow Biopsy Lab. “The bone marrow lab is one of the most difficult places for patients to find at RJH. I know that **the patients going for this procedure are very scared and anxious, I want to relieve some of their fear...** because when you are scared you cannot follow directions nor maps. This is my honour and privilege to be able to do for these dear patients.”

And you don’t have to take her word for it. **A patient wrote our Patient Care Quality Office** about how she helped through a recent visit to the bone marrow lab. “My husband and I were following the signs trying to find the way,” the patient wrote. “Once he said we were there for bone marrow, (the volunteer) was waiting for me! She took us where we needed to go next. **She was very comforting, and so upbeat. I am so thankful for her today.** I was scared, didn’t need to be lost on top of it. She is a wonderful lady. **My kinda guardian angel** today. Please tell her thanks again!”

This volunteer says service to others is the greatest gift we can give. “**I also want to be able to help our beloved angel staff, that give of themselves every single day of the year, for us.** I will do this volunteer position as long as I have the good health to do it, I am very blessed to have great health at age seventy-seven. I am so honoured to be a volunteer at the Royal Jubilee Hospital.”

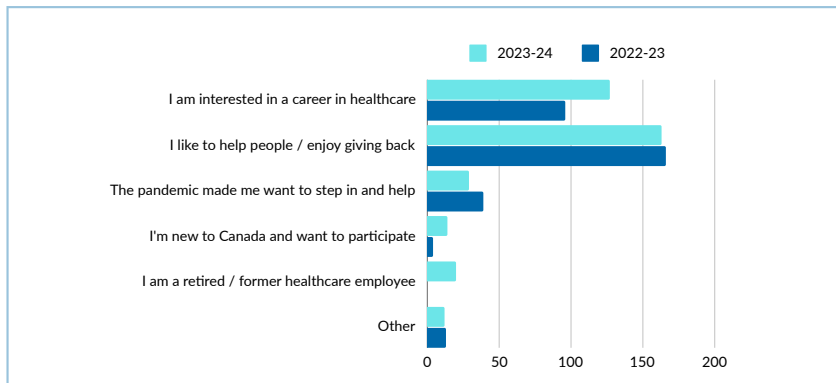
*To respect the volunteer’s wish to remain anonymous, this image does not depict the ‘Guardian Angel’ volunteer.

Volunteer Experience

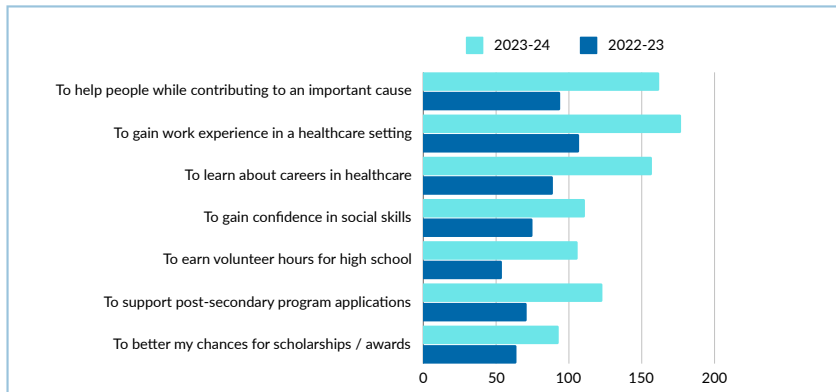
Survey Data



Why our adult volunteers choose to volunteer



Why our Step Up Youth choose to volunteer



1580

**Volunteers
Active**

April 2023 -
March 2024



30% ↑

The number of
volunteers at Island
Health grew 30% in
this fiscal year

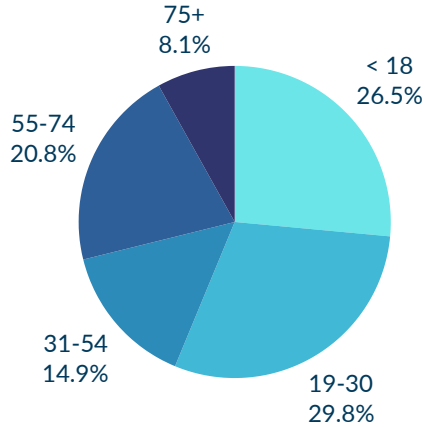


67

Four legged
volunteers

Survey Data

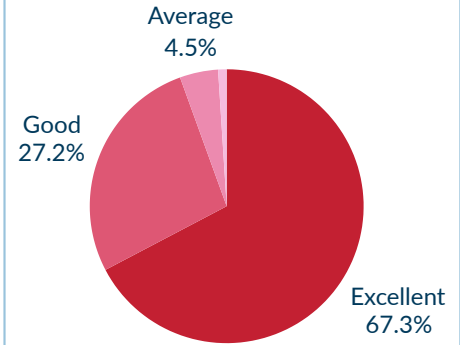
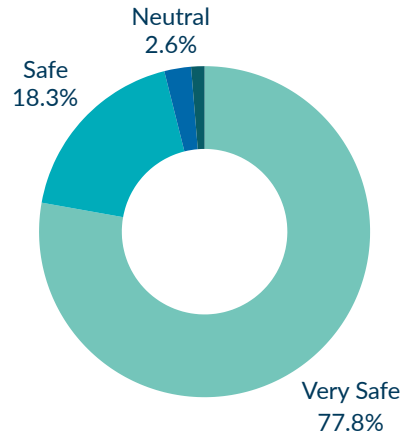
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**Age demographics of
Island Health Volunteers**

56.3%
are aged 30 and under

96.1%
of volunteers **feel very safe or safe**
when asked if they feel
'psychologically, culturally and
physically safe' when volunteering
with Island Health.



94.5%
volunteers who responded to our
survey rate their overall
experience as excellent or good.

Survey Data

Continued

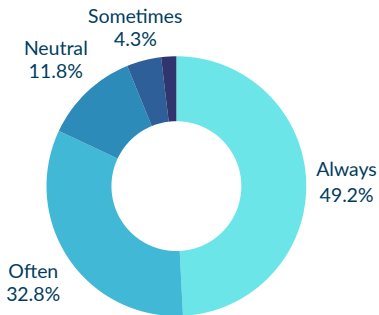
92.1%



of volunteers feel recognized and appreciated in their role

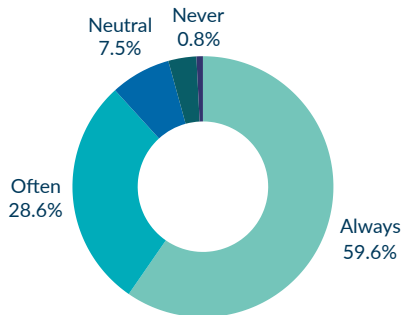
96.2%

of volunteers feel their training prepared them for their role



82%

of volunteers feel that their contributions are making a difference to staff in the program area they support



89%

of volunteers feel that their contributions are making a difference to patients/ residents/clients

Continued

[illegible]

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