

Therapies • Clinical • **Patient and Family** • General

Home Support

Volunteer-led support in the home



Alison - PAFS



an introduction to Home Support

It's important to stay as independent as possible throughout your illness, and our Home Support service can help you with this.

Our team of volunteers visit our patients in their homes, to assist them in any way they are able. From taking patients out shopping, helping around the home or just offering companionship over a chat and a cup of tea, our volunteers are

available to help with what is needed on the day they visit, helping you to maintain normality in your life and feel in control of things.

This booklet provides details of Home Support (HS) and what we have to offer.



Alison Knight

Home Support Co-ordinator



what does HS do?

HS provides volunteers to help support patients and their families at home. Being seriously ill, or looking after someone who is, can cause anxiety and stress, and can be lonely and tiring too. Our team of volunteers can help you and your family in many practical ways:

- shopping,
- taking patients on short outings,
- allowing carers a few hours' break.

Often the greatest help we can give is just to sit and listen.

We can offer you a volunteer to visit for up to 3 hours, once a week.

how does it work?

Now that you have met the HS co-ordinator and discussed what you need, we will allocate a volunteer whom we feel will suit you. They will then make contact to arrange to visit you.

After six visits, the HS co-ordinator will give you a call to see how things are going with your volunteer and if you are happy with the service. Volunteer support is limited to 12 months, but during this period reviews will be carried out by the HS co-ordinator to ensure all is well.

Once you have had a year's support from HS, we will discuss with you what other support may be available from other organisations.



confidentiality

We recognise that trust is very important when it comes to your relationship with your volunteer. Our volunteers adhere to our strict confidentiality policy, and will not disclose or discuss any personal information with anyone outside of PT. They sign confidentiality agreements to that effect when they start their HS volunteering. General information about you and your HS visits will be recorded on our database so that other professionals who are supporting you are aware that a volunteer visits you.

There are however rare occasions when, for legal or safety reasons, information may need to be disclosed to certain other people within PT. Your HS volunteer will share any such issues with our HS co-ordinator, who will progress the issue should it need to be escalated.

Our HS volunteers are required to attend support sessions with other volunteers. These sessions are run by our HS co-ordinator and help our volunteers with any issues or queries they may have. Anything which is discussed in these sessions is anonymised, to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

boundaries

Our volunteers are happy to take you shopping or help you with what is important to you on the day they visit. That may be sitting and having a chat, or helping you run errands. They are not able to assist with medication, oxygen, personal hygiene, financial advice or support, or undertake any manual handling. They also

are unable to assist you with feeding or drinking. If you need help with these things, please let us know and we will advise you on where you can access other services outside of Phyllis Tuckwell.

Our volunteers are given limited information about our patients, as we feel it is up to you to decide how much or how little you wish them to know.

Once a volunteer is no longer supporting a patient, we advise volunteers not to remain in contact with those patients or their families.

HS will ensure that your needs are met as far as we are able to. Should you have needs which we cannot meet or which could be better met by another organisation, we will offer to refer you to them. This may be another department within Phyllis Tuckwell, or it may be a separate organisation. We would discuss this with you before making any referral.

friendships

We hope that you and your volunteer get on well. You may wish to speak in confidence with them about your personal circumstances. This is fine, they will listen and take an interest in your life. However, the volunteer is not there to share their own life stories; this is your time to talk about you and your situation, if you choose to.

You may feel that your volunteer becomes your friend after a few months of visiting, and you may want to extend this friendship, for example by inviting them to social events. This would not be appropriate, as your volunteer is not a friend in the normal sense of the word. Once the volunteer has finished their time visiting you, they take on another patient and end their relationship with you.

frequently asked questions

How long can I have the support of a volunteer?

We usually offer volunteer support for up to 12 months. There will be a six month review and your needs will be assessed at this time. If there are changes in your circumstances, the HS co-ordinator may complete another review in case your care needs have also changed.

Who are PT volunteers?

Our HS volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds. All will have undergone a DBS check and will have attended in-house training before being allocated to support you. They also attend monthly support groups and ongoing training sessions throughout the year.

What happens once the support is due to finish?

Our HS co-ordinator will discuss this with you at your six-month review. If you require further support, we will help you look at other organisations who may be able to help.

What if I need to cancel a volunteer visit?

You can cancel a visit by contacting the HS co-ordinator. We ask that patients and family do not contact their volunteers directly. Contact details for our HS co-ordinator can be found on the back of this booklet.

What if I need help with personal care?

Your volunteer can refer this back to the HS co-ordinator, with your permission, or you or a family member can contact the HS co-ordinator directly if you prefer, to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. The HS co-ordinator will be able to give you information and where appropriate refer you to the Social Work team at Phyllis Tuckwell.

What if I don't get on with my volunteer?

The HS co-ordinator will make contact with you, usually after six weeks of your volunteer starting, to see how things are going. If at any time before or after this you feel you are not getting on with your volunteer, please contact the HS co-ordinator, who will talk this through with you.

How can I give feedback?

We welcome all feedback, both positive and negative. You can give feedback by emailing us at **pafs@pth.org.uk** or writing to **Maria Abellan**, patient, family, carer team manager, at Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice, Waverley Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 8BL. All complaints are treated seriously, and we can give you information on how to make a formal complaint if you wish to.

Do I have to pay for this service?

No. The service is available, free of charge, to anyone in our community who is being cared for by Phyllis Tuckwell.

What is Phyllis Tuckwell?

Phyllis Tuckwell is a local charity which cares for and supports patients and families living with an advanced or terminal illness. We support over 250 patients, relatives and carers every day, across the whole of West Surrey and part of North East Hampshire.

Our services are provided free of charge to patients and their families, but as the NHS/Government only cover about 25% of our costs, we have to raise over £30,000 a day, through fundraising and retail activities, to enable us to provide this important care. It is heartening to know that you are supported by a caring and generous community.

if you need help from
our Home Support service,
please contact:

**Patient and Family Support
team administrator**

pafs@pth.org.uk
01252 729430

***Large print version
available on request.***

Phyllis Tuckwell

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