



VIRTUAL VISIT VOLUNTEERS - TRAINING SUPPLEMENT

Volunteer goal:

- Provide compassion to senior citizens living in long term care communities – many suffering from dementia and cognitive decline.
- Be patient – whether the senior you meet with has dementia or not, they all have good days and bad days. If you are meeting with a senior who has dementia, remember that each person who is suffering from cognitive decline has different manifestations of the illness. Each time you meet with the senior, he/she may show different symptoms of cognitive decline, or no symptoms at all.
- Don't be combative - just agree with what the senior says or change the subject.
- If the senior has a form of dementia where they are not experiencing the same reality as the rest of us, join them in their reality. Do not correct them.
- Have a positive and cheerful disposition. Maintain high energy during the call.

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Be on time which means joining the call 5 minutes before the scheduled start time and attend all of your scheduled visits.
- If you are unable to attend a virtual call, you must contact Conversations to Remember as early as possible. Even if just one of the volunteers for a session will be absent, please notify us. We will not have 1 volunteer on a call, so if there are only 2 volunteers assigned, if 1 cannot attend, the call will be canceled for that week unless we have sufficient time to find a substitute.
- Review and keep handy the “Dos and Don'ts” sheet & the tip sheet that you have been provided.
- Complete the volunteer feedback form within 24 hours of your video call:
<https://conversationstoremember.org/volunteer-feedback/>.
- Feedback forms are required by every volunteer after every call. Additionally, if you ever need your volunteer hours certified, it will be done based on the feedback forms. Feedback forms CANNOT be backdated - fill them out at the end of the call.
- If a senior says something that raises your concern or makes you feel uncomfortable, IMMEDIATELY report it to Conversations to Remember.
- Once you have completed the training, and completed the required forms, you will register for our chatting service. Once you are on the chatting service:
 - Make sure that you download the app and enable notifications from the app
 - During your weekly call you must have the chatting service either open in a browser on a split screen or open on your phone.
 - All communication should be done through the chatting service, including alerting us when you cannot attend your call, or if there are any issues during the call.
- Conversations to Remember contact information for you to use:
 - Business Telephone: 862-243-5331.
 - Cellphone for Executive Director, Eve Lefkowitz: 201-247-1863 – you must use this number for anything that is urgent or time sensitive.
 - Email: info@ConversationstoRemember.org.



What to expect from a senior suffering from cognitive decline:

Dementia can present in many ways and in varying degrees. Typical symptoms you might notice:

- Short-term or long-term memory loss.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Confusion about where they are and when they are:
 - A senior may tell you that it is the 1990's.
 - A senior may tell you that they are in the shopping mall.
 - A senior may tell you that they are in a hotel.
- Mood changes.
- Becoming withdrawn or shy.
- Movement problems.
- Drowsiness.
- Some seniors with dementia don't always realize that they have dementia.
- Some seniors with dementia are very aware that they are changing and are scared.
- Some want to leave the communities that they're in.
- Some want to die.
- Some don't appear to have any symptoms of dementia.
- Like the rest of us, they will have good days (or moments) and bad ones.
- Some will ask you the same questions repeatedly.
- Some may tell you that they want to go home.
- The virtual visit is scheduled for 1 hour, but sometimes the senior will not want to talk that long. Do not get upset or take it personally, it is the nature of the disease. You will still get credit for the hour that you committed to - but you should try to encourage them to remain on the call and let them know how much you want to speak with them.

Emergency Protocol:

In the highly unlikely event that a senior passes out, falls, gets sick, or any other EMERGENCY occurs during your virtual visit:

1. Contact the emergency contact from the facility, which you will be provided.
2. Contact the emergency contact from Conversations to Remember: 201-247-1863.

Conversations to Remember is always here to support you, and to provide answers to any questions that you have. Never hesitate to call us or email us.