Supporting Volunteer Opportunities For Those with Dementia

An intrical Part of Designing Dementia Friendly Communities

Linking Older Adults with a Caring Community Since 1975
Amy Dedow

Greater Tosa Neighborhood Outreach Director
1. The positive outcomes for volunteers with dementia/Alzheimer's and the research that has been done so far on the topic.

2. How to approach organizations regarding accepting a volunteer with dementia/Alzheimer's

3. Basic educational materials related to working with a volunteer that has dementia/Alzheimer's
What is the research regarding benefits to the Volunteer with Memory Loss?
Volunteering: Meaningful Engagement for People with Dementia

A pilot program done through Alzheimer’s Australia from March 2010-July 2011, completed by Tara Stringfellow and Desirée de Graaf.
• increased energy
• better mood
• improved communication
• something to look forward to
• something to be proud of
• an opportunity to provide care for others
Volunteering and Dementia in Bristol

Bryony Campbell, 2013

Over the past two decades there has been a growing body of research that not only recognizes the benefits of services provided by the voluntary sector but also acknowledges the strong relationship between volunteering and health.
Anticipated Outcomes for People with Dementia and their Caregivers

- Increased quality of life
- Respite for caregivers
- Reduction of isolation and loneliness
- Increased mental and physical health
- Increased feelings of confidence, and independence
- Increased empowerment and wellbeing
- Increased choice and control
- Increased practical and emotional support
- Increase in caregivers ability to continue caring
Anticipated Outcomes For the Wider Community

- increased community cohesion
- Increase in social value
- Increased volunteering opportunities
- Stronger communities
- Increased intergenerational cohesion
- Increased choice over level of participation
- Increased choice over level of volunteering
Anticipated Outcomes Related to Health and Social Care

- Prevention of hospital admission or readmission
- Reduced dependency on all health and social care services including avoidance of residential care
- Increased capacity within healthcare systems
- Increased partnership working
- Reduction in social service referrals
- Evidence that the service is good value for money
Mac Davis, who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, volunteers at The Intergenerational School, working on biography projects with students like Arlando Davidson-Bey (left) and Nia Perry-Richardson.

*Joseph Shapiro/NPR*

**NPR Story**
Five Variables:
1) Cognitive Functioning
2) Depression
3) Stress
4) Sense of Purpose
5) Sense of Usefulness

“Restoring the Person to a Place of Meaning”
Logotherapy: Finding Meaning

According to Victor Frankl, "We can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: (1) by creating a work or doing a deed; (2) by experiencing something or encountering someone; and (3) by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering" and that "everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances".
What is the benefit to the organization that accepts volunteers with dementia?

Public Image
Funding
Moral benefit
Choose an Organization That You Want to Approach

How will you make first contact with this organization?

How will you set up a face to face meeting?

What will you pitch be? (Why is it good for the organization, volunteers and other staff)

What will be your next steps to make it happen?
What Are the Next Steps?

What do we need to set up volunteer opportunities for early stage dementia community members once we have organizational buy in?
Guidelines:

1. Support Partners/Personal Assistants
2. In the Moment Jobs
3. Frequent Supervision
4. Flexible Scheduling
5. Clear, Realistic, and Flexible Positions
6. Individualized Orientation and Training
7. Divide larger tasks into smaller steps
8. Avoid multi-tasking
9. Keep the area distraction free as possible
Volunteer Opportunities

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Warning Signs:

Memory loss that disrupts daily life.

Challenges in planning or solving problems.

Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.

Confusion with time or place.

Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.

New problems with words in speaking or writing.

Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps.

Decreased or poor judgment.

Withdrawal from work or social activities.

Changes in mood or personality.
Offer Support and Security
Any Final Questions?
Thank you!

Connect with us at interfaithmilw.org.