



4107 Spicewood Springs Road, Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78759
www.hospiceaustin.org

Media Contact: Melinda Marble
342-4726; mmarble@hospiceaustin.org

Hospice Austin to Hold Volunteer Training

Hospice Austin will be holding its semi-annual volunteer training starting September 16 for people who would like to offer companionship and assistance to hospice patients and their families.

Hospice Austin needs volunteers in Austin and particularly in the Round Rock/Hutto/Cedar Park area. The training will be held from Sept. 16th through the 27th at the Hospice Austin office on Spicewood Springs. The two-week training will occur on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

“Volunteers make a huge difference in the lives of our patients and their families,” said Gayle Smith, Hospice Austin volunteer coordinator. “They each bring their own unique talents to enhance our patients’ quality of life.”

Volunteers offer emotional support as well as non-medical practical assistance such as accompanying patients to appointments, running errands, fixing snacks, and providing respite for caregivers. Most of all, they offer understanding and friendship to people who sometimes feel increasingly isolated from society.

Volunteers are assigned one patient at a time, usually someone who lives nearby. Most volunteer about four hours a week. Some volunteers provide their professional services such as acupuncture, massage therapy, hair-styling and building wheelchair ramps.

Continuing education forums are held each month for volunteers. They may cover such topics as cultural diversity, relaxation techniques, being a good listener, and patient life reviews. There are also open forums where volunteers can brainstorm about ways to help patients and their role as a volunteer.

Volunteers are always needed in the Austin area, but are especially needed in Round Rock, Pflugerville and Bastrop. “We only have one patient-care volunteer in Round Rock, and she just told me she’s moving back to Austin,” Gayle said. “Unfortunately, I have patients in that area asking for volunteers.”

Volunteers are also needed in Buda, Kyle, Luling, Lockhart, the Lakeway area, the corridor east of I-35, Del Valle, Hutto, and Cedar Creek.

Carolyn Whittington has volunteered with Hospice Austin in Georgetown for more than four years. “I wouldn’t trade what I do for anything,” she said.

Many patients request volunteers who can visit during a weekday, when family or caregivers may be at work. For more information about volunteer opportunities or for a volunteer application, please contact Gayle Smith at 342-4735 or gsmith@hospiceaustin.org. Volunteer applications may also be found at www.hospiceaustin.org. Volunteer trainings are held in September and February in Austin; call 342-4735 for volunteer training dates in Georgetown.

###