



# Celebrating TBRHSC's 20th Anniversary: *Tell us your story*



Name of your Program/Service:  
Volunteer Services

Name and title of submitter:  
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### 1. Briefly describe your program/service.

Volunteers play an important role at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. They enhance the programs and services we offer and assist staff in providing exceptional Patient and Family Centred Care (PFCC). These dedicated and loyal volunteers provide service in a number of different areas including reception, administration, greeting, patient care areas, and retail sales.

### 2. How has your program/service grown or evolved over the past 20 years?

I have only worked with this department since 2015, close to 9 years, but I can say the volunteers have always been integral to the hospital. Many new volunteer roles were developed over the past 20 years to meet the needs of patients, families, and staff, ex. O.R. Liaison, Genetics, Adult Mental Health, and the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) in 2014. Thanks to the delirium prevention interventions by trained HELP volunteers, more elderly patients are returning home following hospitalization.

### 3. What is your most cherished accomplishment, milestone or memory?

The impact of the HELP program on elderly patients has been an extraordinary accomplishment.

I would also highlight the fundamental role that volunteers had in the lead up to the hospital's move into this building, the actual move, and afterwards. Please see below the speaking notes from former Volunteer Services Manager, Liz Straiton, at the April 28, 2004 Volunteer Appreciation & Awards Dinner. Dr. Rhonda Crocker-Ellacott was in attendance in her role then as VP Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer.

"For the past 8 dinners I have been saying wait until next year and we will be at our new site, well finally we are at the new location, and what a great place it is to be. I think we all agree that our new facility is a great improvement from the old sites. Our new volunteer services office area and meeting room is beautiful.

The office area is like Grand Central Station, with volunteers coming and going, from early morning to the evening. It is exciting seeing volunteers meeting volunteers from the other sites and working together.



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Tonight it is our turn to show our appreciation and thanks to you for all your help in supporting us in the last year. You are the people who make a difference at the hospital. Besides the work you do every day your participation you're assistance with the patient move was very much appreciated. In fact, the patient move couldn't have taken place without you and your assistance. A total of over 2000 hours of service was given by volunteers on or around the move.

Volunteers helped as greeters and tour "sweeps" who helped out during the hospital's orientation program. Every day for three months volunteers came to greet the attendees and followed behind the tours to keep staff from wandering away from the group. Volunteers helped with The Mock Move. 80 volunteers acted as "mock patients" and attended two Mock Move Sessions. The Mock Moves were essential in the planning of the actual patient move. Your assistance and suggestions were greatly appreciated.

During the two day move we had volunteers who turned up very early and were with us for the whole day. You assisted in phoning the families to tell them their patient had arrived, you helped the patients getting settled in their rooms, by putting their belongings away, and many other caring tasks to make the move comfortable for patients. In the evening visiting times, we had about 40 volunteers who came during the special visiting hours to escort the family members to the patient's rooms.

I cannot forget the volunteers who assisted in handing out the ID tags to staff. We had about 30 volunteers who came faithfully, sometimes really early in the morning to manage the big job of distributing the id tags.

Wait, I haven't finished yet, I also want to express my sincere thanks to the volunteers who moved the Craft Rooms from both sites, the Volunteer Association office, Gift Shops. Your planning and assistance was beyond the call of duty. You measured, packed, and unpacked and did an awesome job in getting us ready for the new site. So would all the volunteers who helped in the move, please stand and take a bow for all your great effort and help.

In the weeks since our move, I am so overwhelmed by your willingness to take extra shifts, to come in and help out at in many areas of service, such as Couriers, Information Desk, Day Surgery, ER, Paeds, Admitting, Ambulatory Care, temporary Gift Shop. It has been a very big job, and I am so thankful for all your help."