



## Peer Volunteers

### *What is a Peer Volunteer?*

A Peer Volunteer, for the purposes of the Sanguen Outreach Team, is someone who has experienced situations similar to those faced by the clients the agencies serve – for example, a history of substance use, poverty, marginalization, Hepatitis C infection, HIV infection, homelessness, and/or sex work. Some Peer Volunteers have a close family member who has experienced these situation(s).

Peer Volunteers will use their lived experiences and knowledge to assist Sanguen to provide outreach services to individuals in Waterloo Region who are living with, or at-risk, for Hepatitis C.

Peer Volunteers are not employees of Sanguen. Peer Volunteers may be paid an honorarium for their assistance with programming but will not receive an hourly wage or salary.

### *Qualifications for Volunteer Peer Workers*

There are many requirements for Peer Workers. Some of the requirements are:

- Complete an application and a successful interview.
- Be over the age of 18 (for safety and legal reasons).
- Attend all training sessions and supervision meetings.
- Adhere to all of the policies, procedures, and guidelines of Sanguen.
- Maintain confidentiality for patients, clients, volunteers, other Peer Volunteers and staff.
- Behave in a respectful, friendly, approachable and non-judgemental manner.
- Be reliable and on-time for scheduled shifts and activities.
- Represent Sanguen, ACCKWA, other partnering agencies, and themselves, in a positive and professional way.
- Agree to refrain from being under the influence of any substance while on a shift.
- Have personal knowledge of various issues that our client populations face, including, but not limited to, homelessness, drug use, involvement with the sex trade and/or HCV and/or HIV diagnosis and/or treatment.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and relationships.
- Have strong, appropriate social skills.
- Work as a part of a team.
- Have a desire for continuous learning and to contribute to the local community.
- Be willing to work with the Outreach manager, other staff, and other Peer Volunteers, to grow and develop the Outreach program for Sanguen.

### ***Potential Jobs for Peer Volunteers***

There is a wide variety of jobs/tasks available for Peer Volunteers, depending on their identified interests, skills, and confidence in those skills. Jobs are subject to change and are based on what is needed by Sanguen at any specific time.

All Peer Volunteers will be provided with training to ensure that they are aware of agency policies and procedures, the basic information about Hepatitis C and HIV, and an overview of harm reduction concepts and practices as they pertain to the Outreach activities of Sanguen. Peer Volunteers are expected to attend all monthly training meetings to maintain their knowledge of policies, procedures, Hepatitis C, HIV, harm reduction, and other important issues.

In addition to this basic training, Peer Volunteers will receive specific training that pertains to the job(s) that the Peer Volunteer will be performing. Some examples of jobs include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting with presentations and Hepatitis C/HIV education sessions - providing a lived experience perspective on HCV/HIV and treatment
- Street Outreach and Needle Exchange activities
- Kit making
- Assisting with agency support groups
- Information booths
- Office Work (e.g., answer phones, assist Clinic Coordinator)

Peer Volunteers will never be expected to participate in any task they do not feel comfortable in doing. Peer Volunteers are expected to speak to the Outreach manager if they feel triggered or uncomfortable with particular tasks, or if they feel they require further training in any area.

### ***More Information?***

If you need more information about working as a Peer Volunteer, speak to Violet! She is always happy to discuss how the Outreach program works, the part that Peer Volunteers play in its success, and to provide you with additional information.

Violet can be reached at 519-574-7222 or by email at [outreach@sanguen.com](mailto:outreach@sanguen.com)