

Host Agency Information

Advance Care Planning Volunteer Ambassadors Program



Advance Care Planning
Initiative
(East Hume and Border)

2016

Acknowledgements

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Host Agency Information

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1. General Introduction

The *‘Advance Care Planning – Volunteer Ambassadors Program’* arose out of feedback from community members attending an Advance Care Planning (ACP) forum organised by the Advance Care Planning Initiative (East Hume & Border) and Mercy Health Palliative Care Volunteers in late 2015. Feedback identified a preference for taking ACP information to the community through existing groups and meeting places; for example - retirement villages, chronic health support groups, service groups, Country Women’s Association, Men’s Sheds, University of the 3rd Age, Victorian Farmers Federation, Red Cross and RSLs.

The main aim of the *‘Advance Care Planning – Volunteer Ambassadors Program’* is to improve community awareness of advance care planning in an accessible and sustainable way by supporting volunteers to present *‘Introduction to Advance Care Planning’* information to interested groups in their local community

The Advance Care Planning Initiative (ACPI) is leading the program and developing training material and handouts, initial training and evaluation. The Advance Care Planning – Volunteer Ambassadors Program (ACP VAP) is being developed and implemented in partnership with Host Agencies interested in expanding their existing volunteer programs. Subsequent to feedback from the first ‘Introduction to ACP’ community sessions an ACP VAP toolkit will be available for use by other agencies and communities in the east Hume and border catchment.

The ACPI (East Hume & Border) is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services and focuses on the communities of Albury, Wodonga, Towong, Indigo, Alpine, Wangaratta, Benalla and Mansfield local government areas.

Mercy Health Palliative Care Volunteers were instrumental in identifying a need for this project and are continuing to be involved by providing input into the development of the project materials and piloting the initial training and ‘Introduction to ACP’ information sessions.

Our thanks go to Austin Health and Western Primary Health Network for sharing their volunteer programs material and experience.

Interest in the program has also been expressed by Tallangatta Health Service (volunteer and consumer advocates), the Alpine Independent Age Care Advocates, Northeast Health Wangaratta (volunteer program), and Benalla Health (palliative care volunteers).

The ACPI (East Hume & Border) Working Group and Central Hume Primary Care Partnership will oversee the project for 2016.

Please contact Tricia Hazeleger, ACPI Project Manager on tricia.hazeleger@centralhumepcp.org or Mobile: 0409 299 371 for further information.



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2. Agency Information

a. Agency participation

The ACPI (East Hume and Border) is inviting local agencies to partner with us in implementing the Advance Care Planning – Volunteer Ambassadors Program (ACP VAP).

Advance Care Planning has been shown to improve quality of care at the end of life and increase the likelihood of a person's wishes being known and respected. Advance Care Planning improves the end-of-life care experience. Clients and families report being more satisfied with the end-of-life care provided. Symptoms of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress in the surviving family members are reduced (Detering et al. 2010 in DHHS 2014: 18).

The ACP VAP is aimed to benefit Host Agencies by contributing to patient well-being and quality assurance commitments related to client directed care and community engagement.

It is important that the host agency have an existing volunteer program, including basic volunteer training, support, insurance, policies and procedures; to ensure the Advance Care Planning – Volunteer Ambassadors Program is well supported and sustainable.

In keeping with the ACP Volunteer Ambassadors – Expression of Interest (Attachment 1) and Position Description (Attachment 2) it is also anticipated the host agency will:

- Provide ACP Volunteer Ambassador training, induction and support
- Promote 'Introduction to ACP' sessions through local papers, newsletters, website and/or social media
- Provide an administrative booking system for 'Introduction to ACP' sessions in their catchment
- Collate the 'feedback form' data after each session and share this with volunteers and the Advance Care Planning Initiative (East Hume & Border)
- Support at least two peer support and debriefing meetings annually to provide ACP updates, identify 'what's working' and 'what needs improving' as a basis for continuous improvement

b. Ongoing volunteer support

In keeping with volunteer program 'good practice' it is anticipated the host agency will provide ongoing support to the ACP Volunteer Ambassadors once they are trained and delivering 'Introduction to ACP' sessions.

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c. Advertising for Volunteer Ambassadors and ‘Introduction to ACP’ information sessions

To assist in promoting Introduction to ACP sessions and encourage regional consistency in ACP language, advertisement and booking templates are provided – Attachment 3

d. GP letter template advising an ‘Introduction to ACP’ session will be held in their area and foreshadowing increased community interest in having the ACP conversation

An expected outcome of the ‘Introduction to ACP’ sessions is increased ACP conversations amongst family members and with health care professionals, especially GPs. To assist in alerting doctors and nurses in local General Practice clinics to be aware of a potential increase in enquiries about ACP a GP letter template (Attachment 4) is provided for host agency use prior to sessions.

e. Booking system for ‘Introduction to ACP’ sessions

Each host agency will need to develop a booking system that fits best with their administrative and/or volunteer program. As a minimum the booking system would include a contact telephone and email point for enquiries and a booking form. A booking form template (Attachment 5) is provided for your consideration.

One option is for an experienced host agency volunteer to organise and be responsible for booking. For example, the Austin Health ACP volunteers program is organised by volunteers themselves.

f. Consistent ACP language and information

To support consistent ACP language and messages to communities across the catchment ACPI is providing an ‘Introduction to ACP’ community information PowerPoint presentation and handouts (Attachments 7-11) for use and adaptation by Host Agencies and Volunteer Ambassadors.

The handouts are aligned with ACP resources developed by the ACPI Working Group.

g. Feedback and review data

We are keen to gather feedback from the ‘Introduction to ACP’ participants to support continuous improvement in the *ACP Volunteer Ambassadors Program*. An ‘Introduction to ACP’ session Feedback Form is provided (Attachment 12) for your use and feedback to the Advance Care Planning Initiative (East Hume and Border) in 2016.

3. Volunteer Information

It is envisaged ACP Volunteer Ambassadors will be people from the host agency existing volunteer program who have already undertaken basic volunteer training in confidentiality, volunteer roles and responsibilities, agency procedures etc.

An ACP Volunteer Ambassadors Expression of Interest (Attachment 1) and Position Description (Attachment 2) are provided for distribution to volunteers in the lead up to the ACP Volunteer Ambassadors training.

a. Volunteer criteria – skills and attributes

- An interest in promoting advance care planning (ACP)
- Effective communication skills, including listening skills and basic word processing
- A capacity to communicate ideas effectively to other people
- An ability to respond empathically to the experiences of local community members whilst keeping a focus on the core messages of the ‘Introduction to ACP’ material
- An understanding of when to refer a question to ACP health professionals
- Previous training in basic volunteering e.g. role of volunteers, confidentiality, volunteer insurance, ethics, communication, loss and grief
- Ability to work in a team and within host agency requirements
- Ability to recognise when additional supervision and debriefing is necessary.
- Completion of ACP Volunteer Ambassador training
- Availability and capability to present ‘Introduction to ACP’ information package to local community groups (5-30 people) with an ACP Volunteer Ambassador buddy
- Availability to participate in ongoing support gatherings and evaluation processes
- Agreement not to reveal to any person or entity any confidential information relating to patients and employees, policies, processes and dealings and not to make public statements relating to the affairs of the host agency without prior authority of the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Active participation in the ongoing identification, assessment, treatment and prevention of risks.
- Over 18 years of age and in good general health
- Hold a current driver’s license and use of a fully insured private vehicle

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4. Training & Ongoing Support

It is envisaged volunteers will have previously completed basic volunteer training (see agency and volunteer information above).

The ‘*ACP Volunteer Ambassadors*’ training is in addition to the host agency basic volunteer training and expected to be 3 hours duration including:

- General introduction to the ‘*ACP Volunteer Ambassadors*’ program (aims etc.)
- ‘Introduction to ACP’ presentation contents and handout resource materials
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Discussion and Questions

The initial ACP Volunteer Ambassadors training has been provided by the Advance Care Planning Initiative in conjunction with Mercy Health (2 June 2016) and the learnings included in the revised materials.

Further ACP VAP training is planned for the Wangaratta catchment – in conjunction with Northeast Health Wangaratta – Palliative Care (September 2016) and Alpine Health.

To ensure effective support for ACP Volunteer Ambassadors it is requested host agency volunteer coordinators attend the ACP VAP training with their participants.

Host agencies participating in the ‘*ACP Volunteer Ambassadors Program*’ will have a commitment (see 2a) to continue to support their volunteers by:

- Providing ACP Volunteer Ambassador training, induction and support
- Promoting ‘Introduction to ACP’ sessions through local papers, newsletters, website and/or social media
- Providing an administrative booking system for ‘Introduction to ACP’ sessions in their catchment
- Collating the ‘feedback form’ data after each session and sharing this with volunteers and the Advance Care Planning Initiative (East Hume & Border)
- Supporting at least two peer support and debriefing meetings annually to provide ACP updates, identify ‘what’s working’ and ‘what needs improving’ as a basis for continuous improvement

An ACP VAP booking template is provided for your consideration and adaptation to your agency’s administration system. It is also envisaged printing of handout material may be needed, although the suggestion is that each community group be emailed the handouts for printing for their session or an approach be made to a local service club to support the ACP Volunteer Ambassadors Program by funding printing.

5. ‘Introduction to Advance Care Planning’ Presentation

The Advance Care Planning Initiative (East Hume and Border) is committed to encouraging regional consistency in ACP language, policies and procedures. As such, an ‘Introduction to ACP’ presentation and handouts (H) (Attachments 7-11) are provided for use in the *ACP Volunteer Ambassadors* training and are the preferred material for the community information sessions volunteers provide to their local community groups. Consistency will help people and their health carers navigate the ACP pathways between agencies and locations by using similar ACP language.

a. ‘Introduction to ACP’ session outline

- i. Introduction – presenters and presentation
- ii. What is advance care planning? (H: regional ACP brochure)
- iii. Why ACP is important? (H: regional ACP brochure and video clips)
- iv. Having the ACP conversation (H: regional ACP brochure & Conversation Starters)
- v. What is an Advance Care Plan or Directive? (H: Victorian/NSW form)
- vi. Basic legal information about Substitute Decision Makers
- vii. Case study – if the booking is for a longer (i.e. 60 minutes+) session
- viii. Frequently Asked Questions (H: ACP Frequently Asked Questions)
- ix. Next steps – sharing your ACP/D, where to keep (H/O brochure)
- x. Finish - Feedback Forms, Support Services, Thank You

b. ‘Introduction to ACP’ PowerPoint presentation

An ‘Introduction to ACP’ PowerPoint presentation following the above outline will be provided to all participants on a USB at the training

c. Handout resource materials – regional ACP brochure, ACP Conversation Guide, ACP formats, Frequently Asked Questions and Feedback Form

The handouts mentioned in the ‘Introduction to ACP’ session outline i.e. regional ACP brochure, ACP Conversation Guide, ACP formats & letter, Frequently Asked Questions and Feedback Form were developed by the ACPI Working Group and will also be provided (Attachments 7-11) on the USB at the ‘*ACP and Volunteer Ambassadors*’ training

6. Continuous Improvement

The ACPI (East Hume and Border) is keen to learn from the ‘*ACP and Volunteer Ambassadors Program*’ so it can be shared and improved.

To enable continuous improvement the feedback from ‘Introduction to ACP’ sessions will be collated and reviewed for themes re: issues and ideas. The results of reviews will be fed back to the agencies and volunteers involved in the program.

An ‘*ACP Volunteer Ambassadors Program*’ (East Hume and Border) toolkit will be produced in late 2016 for use by local agencies and communities and for reporting purposes to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Thank you for your interest.

Please contact Tricia Hazeleger (ACPI Project Manager, Central Hume Primary Care Partnership) Email: tricia.hazeleger@centralhumepcp.org for any further information.