

# How to Utilize College Interns Effectively to Benefit a Respite Program

Presented by:

Lynn Easterwood, Volunteer Coordinator  
Hospice of North Alabama

- ▶ Developing and recruiting Respite workers and volunteers is time consuming and challenging.
- ▶ Due to overextended budgets, often there are not enough employees to complete all the necessary tasks needed to expand and operate respite programs.
- ▶ Many employees are asked to perform several duties, which divides their time.
- ▶ Lack of adequate time can cause employee stress and Interns can help reduce that stress.



# College Students Offer

Interns offer free labor to assist the agency and free staff members.



Interns can do a variety of activities to encourage exercise while providing respite.





Interns can speak to groups and assist in recruiting volunteers to provide respite. Places to speak are at churches, senior groups and civic organizations.

Students can stay and offer respite services during recruitment meetings and trainings.



# How can Interns impact a Respite Program?

- ▶ Assist in locating resources in the community
- ▶ Correspond with organizations and/or church groups to share information about the need for more volunteer respite services
- ▶ Arrange and schedule speaking engagements
- ▶ Provide actual respite care to relieve caregivers
- ▶ Use computer and social media

# Creative Respite Programs Ideas for Interns



College students can visit war veterans and give them the opportunity to share their war stories while the caregiver takes a break.



Students can participate in a ceremony to honor the Veteran.





# Provide Comfort Touch

**Interns can be trained to perform Comfort Touch while providing respite services.**



**Requires specialized training but does not require a message therapist to perform.**



# What is Comfort Touch?

Comfort Touch is a method of massage that gives special consideration to the physical and emotional needs of an elderly and/or ill client. Primary intention is to provide comfort through techniques that promote deep relaxation and relief from pain. Volunteers can be used to perform Comfort Touch.

# COMFORT TOUCH BENEFITS

- ▶ RELAXATION
- ▶ PAIN REDUCTION
- ▶ RELEASES GENERAL AND/OR SPECIFIC MUSCLE TENSION
- ▶ INCREASES CIRCULATION
- ▶ INCREASES FLEXIBILITY
- ▶ EASIER BREATHING
- ▶ IMPROVES QUALITY OF SLEEP
- ▶ IMPROVES APPETITE AND DIGESTION
- ▶ INCREASES ENERGY AND MENTAL ALERTNESS



**Materials about Comfort Touch was authored by:  
MARY KATHLEEN ROSE, BA,CMT**

**To order Comfort Touch book and DVD visit:  
[www.comforttouch.com/resource.htm](http://www.comforttouch.com/resource.htm)**

**write to:**

**Wild Rose, P.O. Box 2455, Longmont, CO 80502 USA  
or call: 888-927-9903**

**The type of Intern used depends on the need of the agency and the University. Intern's degree program could be:**

- ▶ Social Work**
- ▶ Physical Therapy**
- ▶ Nursing**
- ▶ Special Education**
- ▶ Pre-Med**
- ▶ Counseling**
- ▶ Early Childhood Education**
- ▶ Pastoral Care**

Alabama Respite's signature volunteer community-based program called, *Sharing the Care (STC)*, is compiled of service providers, caregivers and others interested in promoting respite services within a local area.



Interns can be used to assist *STC* initiatives. Madison County *STC* utilized a student volunteer from a local university to film caregivers telling their struggles and challenges. A video was created sharing their stories and how they could benefit from respite services. The video was shown at a Legislature Event hosted by the *STC* where caregivers, community agencies and legislatures were invited for round table discussion.

# How does the Intern Benefit

- ▶ Learns interviewing skills and how to build relationships with clients
- ▶ Provides opportunity to network with agencies and organizations in the community
- ▶ Trains the Intern to locate resources in the community, make referrals and implement services
- ▶ Demonstrates services provided by the agency including required documentation
- ▶ Provides the Intern hands-on service application
- ▶ Teaches work ethics and program policies

# What is expected of the Agency?

- ▶ Supervise the Intern and assign duties
- ▶ Complete a Learning Contract
- ▶ Weekly supervision and sign logs
- ▶ Complete mid-term and final evaluations
- ▶ Share opportunities to attend training seminars
- ▶ Meet with Field Coordinator from the University
- ▶ Provide an educational experience to assist the Intern to be prepared for employment



# VOLUNTEER HOURS

- ▶ SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIPS REQUIRE 480 HOURS EITHER IN A YEAR OR A SEMESTER
- ▶ CHECK WITH LOCAL UNIVERSITIES, COMMUNITY COLLEGES, TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND SEE IF THEY REQUIRE VOLUNTEER HOURS OR INTERNSHIPS
- ▶ COLLEGE CLUBS AND GREEK ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN REQUIRE VOLUNTEER HOURS

# IS IT WORTH IT?

- ▶ **Definitely!** How better can students transition their book knowledge to practical application but by experiencing implementation of services?
- ▶ Students learn by practice, and then application.
- ▶ Universities are responsible to teach techniques, ethics, and theories, but internship teaches how to implement knowledge into real work experiences.
- ▶ Responsible for training effective employees to ensure our future is something each of us can do to help.

# Questions ?

Lynn Easterwood  
Volunteer Coordinator/Social Worker  
Hospice of North Alabama  
3311 Bob Wallace Ave. Suite 101  
Huntsville, Alabama 35805

[Lynn.easterwood@hospiceofnorthalabama.com](mailto:Lynn.easterwood@hospiceofnorthalabama.com)

256-303-0781 cell 256-533-4300 office