Hello!

Summer is over and 2014 is nearing its end. Seems so surreal, repeat this with me, 2014. Yes . . . two thousand and fourteen! Where have all the years gone? Time flies by so quickly, without really noticing, even our days seem to be shorter!

But let me get back to the key word . . . time. This is what so many of you offer to Mater Dei, ‘our’ hospital. Time, is a precious thing which is so abstract, it cannot be seen and it cannot be felt, but it exists and is priceless. How we all wish we had more of it.

VolServ volunteers dedicate a minimum of four hours weekly to Mater Dei Hospital. That is twelve hours monthly. Several of our volunteers dedicate much more than this and some even serve ‘full-time’ hours. An hour for you may be the same as six hours for someone else. All time is valuable and each individual knows his or her priorities. In the end, the main attributes of a volunteer is the generous contribution of his or her time.

Besides volunteering by assisting at Mater Dei, volunteers use their time to help out in VolServ fundraising events held at the hospital. Equally important as raising funds during these events, is the noticeable camaraderie and coordination between the volunteers. We are all part of the VolServ Family after all. Special thanks to the wonderful Fundraising team and beneficiaries whose selfless time and care go into these activities, many hours of which are unseen.

Another aspect where you contribute time is through your attendance at any of the feedback/support groups. We need to hear your voices—positive or negative—we cannot move forward without your feedback.

Finally, there are the specific training sessions which are available to all, not only for your benefit but for VolServ in general. Taking the time to attend these much thought-out sessions, allows us to be more optimistic about future session planning.

So time is in your hands, you decide how to use it. It is better to have quality time, rather than wasted time.

Thank you ALL for your time . . .

Pat

WHAT IS PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It focuses on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of a serious illness whatever the diagnosis. The goal is to improve the quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient’s other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment.

WHO ARE PALLIATIVE CARE VOLUNTEERS?

Volunteers have long been an integral part of palliative care with same services owing their very origins to volunteers.

These volunteers are people from local communities who give their time freely to provide compassionate support and practical care to those living with a life limiting illness and their carers. Palliative care volunteers provide respite, emotional and social support to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. They also assist with the governance of palliative care organisations, fundraising, projects and promotion of palliative care principles. Palliative care volunteers are constantly interacting with their wider community and influence public attitudes to palliative care, death and loss.

PALLIATIVE CARE AT MDH

VolServ is developing a care team of volunteers to be ready for the new Oncology Unit at Mater Dei. The first training in Palliative Care was given in May and June of 2014. The volunteers will be part of the team approach to care, they will spend time with the patient and their family and support them every step of the way. Those interested should contact our office on 2124 4123.

CTE
Greetings Colleagues,

As Pat has reminded us Time Flies, our year is more than half over and it has been a very eventful time for VolServ this far!

Early January 2014 saw VolServ Management, both at SOS Malta Premises and Mater Dei returning to work. The usual activities continued running and preparations started for the necessary tasks of recruitment, fund raising and training.

Three sessions of recruitment for adults were held and a good number of new volunteers joined our ranks. Sixty students from various schools attended training during their Easter holidays to volunteer at Mater Dei as part of their SOK project or Community Service during the summer months.

VolServ Management organised several fund raising activities which required much preparation. The activities, though facing tough competition from other organisations, proved to be very successful.

Preparations for the Easter fundraising involved selling the traditional figollu and kwaresimal, together with other seasonal sweets like Easter eggs. This activity also involved a lot of work at the SOS Malta premises and the Psychiatric Unit, where Easter eggs were made more presentable by packing them with mugs and toys. A small group of volunteers led by Geoffrey and Mary Fisher are to be commended. Again, this activity was very fruitful to VolServ and the products made were appreciated by the customers.

The following fundraising event was organised for Mothers' Day and again the small group of volunteers this time prepared cards and jewellery for sale. The small group of volunteers who manned the stalls was very hard-working and this proved a success in the end as well. The next fund-raising activity will be around Christmas. We need all the help you may offer, so please keep this in mind.

Several Feedback/Support sessions were held both at Mater Dei and SOS Malta premises during which VolServ volunteers discussed difficulties with Catherine Conti Caligari, and suggested improvements for our services at Mater Dei. The last meeting was preceded by a survey made through a questionnaire prepared by Catherine. Next issue will hold a follow up to this survey.

Summer is over and preparations are already being made for the recruitment and training of new volunteers, while those who were with us for the summer, have gone back to their routine work. Its business as usual!

Joe Micallef

1. The average body temperature is 40° C. False – 36.5 / 37.5
2. During a heart attack, the heart stops beating. False
3. Heart disease kills more men than women. True
4. Heart disease is the No. 2 killer of women in the U.K. False
5. Quality of sleep is better than quantity. True
6. Fish oil has many positive health benefits. True
7. Exercising also assists blood circulation. True
8. During a heart attack, the heart stops beating. False
9. Aspirin and Paracetamol reduce inflammation. True
10. Aspirin and Paracetamol reduce inflammation. True
11. Quality of sleep is better than quantity. True
12. Plain dark chocolate in moderation is beneficial. True
13. Too much pasta and rice can have a severe bloating effect. True
14. Caffeine is a recognized medicine. True
15. Three glasses of wine a day is recommended. False
16. The first book of the bible is Exodus. True
17. The last book of the bible is Revelation. True
18. The four gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke and Peter. True
20. James doubted Jesus had risen. False – John (not Peter)
21. False – Luke was a doctor
22. Peter was a fisherman. False – Thomas
23. Jesus was crucified on the hill of Golgotha. True

Welcome to… All New Recruits to Volserv

Mission Statement

VolServ is an SOS Malta service in partnership with the Ministry of Health. VolServ aims at developing and organising voluntary health services to support patients and relatives in the main general hospital. The project was set-up in April 2007 when a service agreement was signed by the two parties.

Telephone: 2124 4123 – Email: volservnet@sosmalta.org

www.sosmalta.org

VOLSERV TRAINING

Specific Training

Tuesday 21st October
Health and Safety
Support / Feedback Group (MDH)
Tuesday 28th October

Basic Training

Monday 3rd November: 09.00 – 13.00
Introduction to Volunteering in Healthcare
Tuesday 4th November: 16.00 – 19.00
Communication Skills I
Wednesday 5th November: 16.00 – 19.00
Communication Skills II
Thursday 6th November: 12.00 – 14.00
Hospital Visit and Placement

Times for training are approximate. Kindly always check location and time at the VolServ room at Mater Dei Hospital.

Certificate Ceremony and Gratitude Reception

Friday 5th December
at The Westin Dragonara Malta, St. Julians at 19.30 hrs

Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass; it’s about knowing you can still dance in the rain!

Volunteer and make a difference!

The Server Team
Margaret Andrews, Ron Johnston, Joseph Micallef, Josephine Sammut, Mary Lani, Mary Anne Tolu

QUIZ Answers

16. False – Genesis
17. True
18. False – John (not Peter)
19. False – John (not Peter)
20. False – Thomas
21. False – John (not Peter)
22. False – Thomas
23. True