

Sengkang General Hospital's Volunteer Programme: Empowering Volunteers to become Healthcare Ambassadors



Singapore Healthcare Management 2023



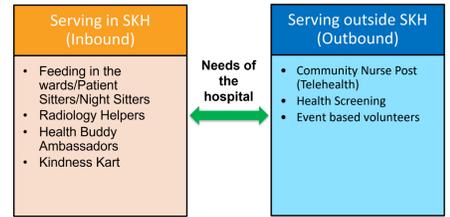
Bryan Ravie Bai Heng, Communications & Patient Experience

Barnabas Kan, Communications & Patient Experience

Bernard Chan Teck Hock, Service Planning & Care Integration

Introduction

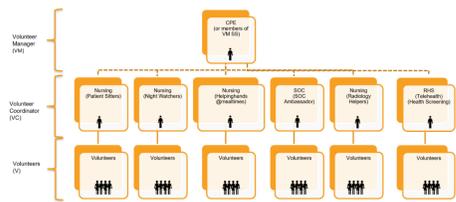
The presence of volunteers in hospitals is crucial as they perform vital roles in supporting healthcare staff by taking on non-clinical tasks so that our staff can focus on patient-care that requires their skills. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when volunteerism at SKH had to be suspended, we took the opportunity to re-design our Volunteer Management Programme. When volunteers were allowed back into service, SKH managed, within the short span of nine months, to deploy **100 unpaid volunteers** who contributed **1,211 hours of service**, benefiting more than **7,000 patients**. With the launch of Healthier SG, there is also a growing need for volunteers to support volunteer programmes in the community. Currently, SKH has **12 volunteer programs**, with more in the pipeline.



Methodology

A robust methodology allows for clear communication, tracking of volunteer hours, and evaluation of their impact, leading to improved programme outcomes and overall success in engaging and retaining volunteers.

Structure



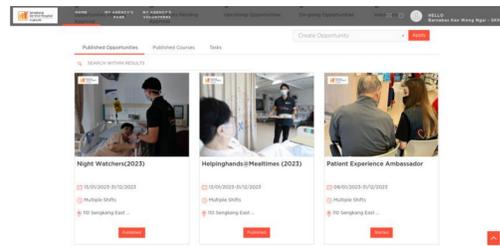
A tripartite collaboration structure between the Volunteers, Volunteer Coordinator (VC) and Volunteer Manager (VM). Volunteers are tagged to a VC, who is from the requesting department and oversees the daily operations of a specific volunteer programme while the VM has oversight of all volunteer programmes in SKH. This optimizes volunteer management by providing organization, coordination, and efficient use of manpower for effective engagement and productivity.

Engagement Model



This model assigns responsibility to different parties, ensuring effective coordination, motivation, and retention of volunteers. Having a platform for volunteers to express their opinions and ideas helps us refine our programme. It also boosts the morale of volunteers by demonstrating that their input is valued and taken into consideration.

SingHealth Volunteer Shared Service



SKH is also a founding member of the SingHealth Volunteer Shared Services (SS), which brings together Volunteer Managers from across the SingHealth cluster. The Volunteer SS is a useful forum to share best practices and expertise amongst member institutions.

In line with the Volunteer Shared Service's vision of "Volunteer. Ambassador. Family.," a harmonized identification kit allows for consistency and gives volunteers a sense of belonging.

SKH also leverages on the SS's cloud-based attendance tracking system which improves efficiency by automating calculations, enabling decentralized location tracking, and preventing double counting of entries

Results achieved in 9 months

>100 unpaid volunteers

>1,211 hours of service

>7,000 patients benefitted

>12 Volunteering Programmes



Helpinghands@Mealtimes/Patient Sitters/Night Sitters (Jul 22) 66 volunteers deployed 383 hours contributed > 3000 beneficiaries	Radiology Ambassadors (Oct 22) 5 volunteers deployed 130 hours contributed > 2600 beneficiaries	Outpatient Clinics (Feb 23) 6 volunteers deployed 20 hours contributed > 300 beneficiaries	Community Health Screening (Nov 22) 7 volunteers deployed 49 hours contributed > 300 beneficiaries	Event Based (Mar 23/Adhoc) 5 volunteers deployed 20 hours contributed 300 beneficiaries	Volunteer Orientation (18 Feb 23) 77 volunteers Orientated Attended by CCO and COO	Volunteer Appreciation (14 Jan 23) Awards for Top 3 Volunteers (2022) Attended by CEO, CCO and CN
---	---	--	--	---	---	--



Mindfully Me (May 23) 4 volunteers deployed Requested by OT	Patient Experience Ambassadors (Oct 22) 2 volunteers deployed 27 hours contributed 180 beneficiaries	RSVP @ ED (Oct 22) 5 volunteers deployed 532 hours contributed	Centre-based Telehealth (Dec 22) 7 volunteers deployed 34 hours contributed 29 beneficiaries	Volunteer Orientation Specific Training by Staff catered to the programme	Profiling our volunteers on Social Media Shawn Lau, From Patient to Volunteer & Adeline Lau SKH Volunteer
--	--	---	--	---	--

Quotes

"The seniors here used to have doubts on teleconsultation as they prefer a face-to-face session with the nurse on duty. However, after trying it out themselves, the seniors have told us that the volunteer team have made the teleconsult a smooth and pleasant experience for them (e.g setting up the zoom sessions etc). As such, we would like to thank the volunteer team on behalf of the seniors and MWS as a whole" – **Methodist Welfare Services @ Fernvale - Telehealth Volunteer Programme**

"The volunteers rushed down from school and while they do not know dialects, they try to communicate with the patients nonetheless in dialect" – **Sis Hui Fung**
SNM Ward 38 - Helpinghands@Mealtimes/Patient Sitters/Night Sitters Programme

Conclusion

SKH believes that the fostering of community volunteers is important for many reasons: Apart from supporting the efforts of SKH staff, it also fosters a sense of affinity with the hospital, a sense of shared ownership in healthcare, and increased capabilities and confidence in the general population. Through immense dedication and effort, SKH has successfully deployed over **100 volunteers** within a short span of **9 months** (Q2-Q4, FY22). These volunteers contributed **1,211 hours** of their time and effort which benefitted over **7,000 patients both inside & outside SKH**. With the launch of Healthier SG and a greater focus on Population Health, there is also a growing need for community volunteers to support hospital initiatives in the neighbourhood. Hence, the number of programmes and volunteers needed is expected to increase over time. Hospital staff will be better able to focus on tasks which they are specially trained for, whilst community members have an opportunity to be involved in healthcare and take these skills home to serve their families and friends. These initiatives actualise the spirit of collaboration and partnership between the community and the hospital.

Future Plans

