Dear Volunteers,

I want to personally welcome you to the Houston Methodist Hospital Volunteer Services team. We understand that you have many options for volunteering, and we are honored that you have chosen Houston Methodist Hospital for your volunteer service. Each of you brings a unique set of experiences, skills and talents to our organization, and we value each individual for their contribution. You give us the irreplaceable gift of your time, and for that, we are extremely appreciative.

Although motivations for volunteering differ for each person, we all share the common goals of providing outstanding patient service and meeting the needs of the people we serve. Through your volunteer service, you have the opportunity to directly or indirectly touch lives in a very special way.

We strive to match your preferences, experience and skills with one of the many service positions available throughout the organization. Our volunteers are well-trained to fulfill the requirements of their assignment so that they begin volunteer duty with confidence. We trust that your volunteer experience will prove to be rewarding and fulfilling.

Welcome aboard!

Elizabeth DeFranco, MHA
Director, Volunteer Services
Houston Methodist hospital
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Background Information
Welcome to the Houston Methodist Hospital Family! Houston Methodist Hospital (HMH) has served the Houston community with compassion and high quality care for over 100 years. HMH is one of the nation’s best teaching and research hospitals, with patient satisfaction scores consistently among the highest in the country. HMH has received millions of dollars in research funding each year to advance health care. For more than 20 years, U.S. News & World Report has ranked us as one of America’s “Best Hospitals.” In 2016, we earned the distinguished Honor Roll, ranking No. 19 in the country. This honor was given to us again in 2019 and 2020. In addition to having some of the nation’s best doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals on staff, our volunteers are also a vital part of our care team. It is for this reason that HMH invites you to become an integral part of its care team through volunteering. Our volunteers unselfishly give time, effort, and compassion to enhance our healing environment and benefit our patients and guests.

Mission of Houston Methodist Hospital:

To provide high quality, cost-effective health care that delivers the best value to the people we serve in a spiritual environment of caring in association with internationally recognized teaching and research.

What we believe:

Houston Methodist, a Christian organization established by the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, exists to provide high quality health care services. As it fulfills this purpose, Houston Methodist participates in the redeeming activity of God that makes the world a better place for all humankind. This health system is based on the belief that God can heal through the lives, actions and words of persons, regardless of various religious perspectives. Therefore in all endeavors Houston Methodist strives to treat everyone as a person sacred worth and value, created by God.

Values of Houston Methodist Hospital: I CARE

- **Integrity:** “We are honest and ethical in all we say and do.”
- **Compassion:** “We embrace the whole person and respond to emotional, ethical and spiritual concerns as well as physical needs.”
- **Accountability:** “We hold ourselves accountable for our actions.”
- **Respect:** “We treat every individual as a person of worth, dignity, and value.”
- **Excellence:** “We strive to be the best at what we do and a model for others to emulate.”
The Volunteer Services Department

The Volunteer Services Department provides assistance to hospital departments and staff as requested. Volunteers are trained and educated in each area of the facility where assistance from volunteers has been requested and are scheduled accordingly. Each department manager or individual requesting volunteer assistance has the responsibility to orient and educate the volunteer on the tasks required to perform their duties in a specified area.

Every effort will be made to place you in a volunteer position that meets your interests and fulfills the hospital’s needs. The Volunteer Services Department is committed to ensuring you are comfortable with your assignment before you begin volunteering.

Elizabeth DeFranco, Director  
eidefranco@houstonmethodist.org  
713.441.3352

Lindsey Perryman, Project Specialist  
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713.441.3359

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713.441.3339

Alina Smithe, Volunteer Coordinator  
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713.441.8993

Stephani Villaloboz, Volunteer Coordinator  
srvillaloboz@houstonmethodist.org  
713.441.6264

Contact Us:

HMH Volunteer Services  
6565 Fannin Street, F127  
Houston, Texas 77030

Office Phone Number  
713.441.3351

Office Fax Number  
713.441.1292

Office Hours  
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Volunteer Guidelines

Attendance and Tardiness:
It is your responsibility to notify your mentor or supervisor in your assigned area if you are going to be late or cannot make your scheduled shift. The departments of the hospital depend on your volunteer hours. You are not required to report to duty on days employees are not required to work (i.e. holidays). However, if you need to complete your service hours, check with your area of service to ensure your department will be open. ¹(VS60 Volunteer Status)

In Case of Illness:
If you are ill, please do not come in for your scheduled volunteer shift. Email your mentor or supervisor and volunteer coordinator to inform them that you cannot come to the hospital due to illness, and let them know when you think you will return. Additionally, please cancel your shift in the volunteer portal. If you do come, you will be asked to leave by the Director of Volunteer Services and/or the department manager of your assigned location. This is for the safety of our patients as well as for your own wellbeing. ¹(VS60 Volunteer Status)

Volunteer Status:
Please notify Volunteer Services and your mentor or supervisor for your service area if you are taking a vacation or if you need to take extended time off from volunteering. This will change your status to Leave of Absence (LOA) and will give you 90 days of inactivity without requiring you to update competencies. Thereafter, should volunteers wish to return, it is imperative that all volunteer competencies are updated (background check, drug screen, seasonal flu vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine, orientation, safety exam, and TB test).

The Volunteer Services Department reserves the right to reject a request to return from any volunteer who reaches Inactive status before meeting their volunteer commitment of four months for Education Experience or six months for Long Term volunteers. ¹(VS60 Volunteer Status)

Volunteer Compliance:
All volunteers must be compliant with background check, drug screen, seasonal flu vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine and booster, orientation, safety exam, and TB test. Your Flu vaccine and TB test can be completed off-site but records must meet the guidelines below.

The flu (influenza) vaccine must have been administered within the current flu season. Our clinic will always need the flu documentation to include manufacturer, lot number, expiration date, route given, and signature. For the Tuberculosis (TB) skin test, it must have been administered within the last 12 months. Our clinic will always need the TB documentation to include the date & time of the TB placement, date & time of TB reading with results, and the test results. All drug tests must be taken at the HMH Employee Health Clinic. The COVID-19 vaccine can be completed offsite. Please follow the steps your volunteer coordinator will give you to submit your vaccine card to the Volunteer Services Department and the HMH Employee Health Clinic.

COVID-19 Protocols:
Volunteer Services follows the requirements set forth by our Houston Methodist System Incident Command. Volunteers are subject to the screening process and expectations of employees. Please be sure to wear your mask and hospital photo I.D. badge as you enter the building and complete the screening process when required. All volunteers must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and receive the booster to participate in volunteer programs.
Volunteer Guidelines continued

Telephone Calls and Cell Phones:

Please do not use the telephone in the department where you are volunteering to make or receive personal phone calls. We understand that you may experience emergency or other reasonable needs to make a personal phone call, such as obtaining transportation to and from the hospital, receiving calls from schools, child care, etc. Although calls of this type are acceptable, you should not use HMH telephones for these phone calls. Instead, you may excuse yourself and take a call in an off-stage area (i.e. breakroom, private office, empty conference room, etc.). **Cell phone ringers should be turned off at all times to reduce the noise on patient units and throughout the hospital.** If you absolutely must make or receive a phone call on your cell phone, please excuse yourself and take the call in an off-stage area. Refrain from sending or receiving text messages, or playing games on your device.

Gifts:

Volunteers are not permitted to accept monetary gifts or gifts that have a large monetary value from staff, patients, or visitors. Politely decline the offer and explain that you cannot accept gifts due to hospital policy. Please contact your Volunteer Coordinator for any questions.

Personal Items:

Volunteer Services has small lockers available for purses and backpacks. Please remove your personal items from the lockers before the volunteer office closes for the day. Volunteer Services is not responsible for lost or stolen items. *(VS53 Volunteer Personal Items)*

Photo Identification Name Tags:

HMH provides you with a photo I.D. badge. Once you are accepted into the Volunteer Services Program, you may submit a photo of yourself for the badge. Photos should be passport style (headshot), solid color background, and without filters applied. The hospital photo I.D. badge must be worn in plain and obvious view (above the waist on your lapel or shirt) whenever you are volunteering in the hospital. *(VS55 Volunteer I.D. Badge)*

Signing In and Out:

You are **required** to sign in and out at either the Volunteer kiosk located directly outside of the Volunteer Services Office at Fondren 127, or the kiosk in Smith Tower on the second floor near the elevator bank and across from Alonti. It is your responsibility to report all of your hours to the Volunteer Services Department. Your signing in and out is important for accurate volunteer recognition, proof of hours, and most importantly, to ensure we have an accurate headcount of who is in the hospital in the event of an emergency.

Smoking:

As of May 1, 2006, the Texas Medical Center, including Houston Methodist Hospital, is a smoke-free environment. Please refrain from smoking on TMC premises.
Volunteer Guidelines continued

Safety:

Always be aware of your surroundings. If you see something that is unsafe, please report it to your department manager immediately. You may also contact any member of the Volunteer Services staff for immediate assistance. The safety of our patients, visitors, staff, and volunteers is of utmost importance. ⁶(VS17 Volunteer Accident Program)

Back Safety:

For your safety, always use proper body mechanics when lifting or moving objects. Lift with your knees, and avoid bending when lifting or twisting while carrying a load.

Security:

Safety of patients, visitors, staff, and volunteers is the responsibility of everyone. If you see someone or something that looks suspicious, do not hesitate to call Security. If you are volunteering outside of regular business hours and are not comfortable with walking to your car, please call Security for an escort. The Security telephone number is 713.441.9511.

Accident/Injury:

If you experience any type of accident or injury, let your department manager and the Director of Volunteer Services know immediately. The department manager will help you complete an Incident Report Form. Incident Report Forms must be completed less than 24 hours after the injury occurs. ⁶(VS17 Volunteer Accident Program)

Sexual Harassment:

Houston Methodist Hospital does not tolerate any form of harassment (sexual, or otherwise). Documented occurrences will result in actions being taken by hospital administration. ⁷(VS34 Volunteer Workplace Violence)

Termination:

You are directly responsible to the Director of Volunteer Services. The Director of Volunteer Services reserves the right to terminate your status as a volunteer if your performance or actions are not in the best interest of HMH.

Healthcare Regulations:

Accreditation surveys

DNV GL is an accreditation organization that ensures the organization is compliant with CMS guidelines.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – Quality Management System that HMH uses to make sure we are meeting all requirements. The CMS Conditions of Participation are supported in the DNV GL Accreditation Standards which include both CMS and ISO 9001. Together, they make up the National Integrated Accreditation for Hospital Organizations (NIAHO).
Volunteer Guidelines continued

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

Houston Methodist is committed to providing, promoting and ensuring an environment that celebrates our diverse backgrounds, cultures, traditions and beliefs. The Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) supports this mission by providing education and resources that help to create and foster a culture that is equitable and inclusive and encourages our employees to grow their careers here.

Increasing and reinforcing anti-racism and anti-bias and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion through a variety of activities and initiatives related to cultural awareness, openness, compassion, humility and competency benefits our patients, employees and the communities we serve.

The DEI training team creates resources for all employees to learn and develop skills to discuss and understand anti-racism, anti-bias, diversity, equity and inclusion at Houston Methodist.

The DEI office has chartered five employee resource groups (ERGs), employee-led, voluntary groups that join together based on common interests, backgrounds or demographic to create a diverse and inclusive workplace.

These groups provide safe, neutral spaces for employees at all levels to share common interests, discuss issues or challenges, offer developmental opportunities, and to brainstorm strategies and solutions that will support diversity and inclusion goals.

For more information on how you can get involved, please visit houstonmethodist.org/dei.
Uniforms

Volunteers must wear a volunteer jacket or polo shirt and hospital photo I.D., badge so that patients, visitors and staff may identify easily. Uniforms generally are purchased during one of your onsite appointments or on your first day for $27.06 and are a tax-deductible item. You will purchase your uniform in the Gift Shop and bring your receipt to the Volunteer Services Office to receive the uniform.

Dress code regulations for volunteers are the same as those of the paid staff. The volunteer uniform is worn with the appropriate length of dress, skirt, or slacks. Volunteer uniforms consist of blue volunteer jacket or volunteer polo shirt. Shirts worn under jacket must be plain with no inappropriate logos. Photo I.D. badges must be worn at all times on the uniform above the waist, and in plain view. Denim, capri pants, shorts, athletic wear and open toe shoes are not permitted. Please wear comfortable shoes with a rubber sole. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, masks are a required part of your volunteer uniform for the safety of yourself and those around you. Volunteers with patient contact must wear hospital approved masks, which include ear-loop or tieback masks and face shield. Volunteers with non-patient contact assignments may wear a cloth masks or hospital approved masks, and are not required to wear a face shield.

Please do not wear scented cosmetics, perfumes, aftershave, hairspray, or colognes. These items may cause discomfort and/or allergic reactions to our patients. Volunteers that have patient contact are not permitted to wear artificial nails due to requirements set forth by infection control in our hand hygiene policies.

Volunteers who fail to meet the dress code requirements will be asked by their mentor, supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator to return home. *(VS52 Volunteer Personal appearance) *(VS55 Volunteer I.D. Badge)

Personal Appearance and Hygiene:
Examples of approved personal appearance:
- Business casual attire with approved uniform top/jacket
- Clean and neatly pressed shirts/blouses/skirts/slacks
- Clean shaven or neatly trimmed facial hair
- Neatly trimmed hair
- Clean and neatly trimmed finger nails; clear or subtle nail polish
- No artificial nails in patient contact areas
- Appropriate stockings/leg wear
- Appropriate mask and face shield
- Tattoo visibility should be subtle and inoffensive

Examples of poor appearance (Not Allowed):
- Blue jeans or other denim, capri pants
- Flip flops or open toe shoes
- Unclean or wrinkled clothing
- Blouses/shirts with open collars that provide inappropriate exposure
- Bare midriff tops, halter tops, or mini-skirts
- Untrimmed beards, sideburns, or mustaches
- Shaggy and unsightly hair; non-traditional hair coloring (blue, purple, pink, etc.)
- Excessively long and/or brightly colored finger nails
- Excessive number of rings, bracelets, necklaces, and earrings
- Exposed body piercing, facial or tongue studs (except for religious purposes)
- Hats/head coverings unless required for safety, hygiene, or religious purposes
Parking and Directions

Parking validation from the Volunteer Services Department is only available for volunteers. Spiritual Care must report to their department to request parking validation.

Volunteer Services will only validate parking for the following areas:

1. Outpatient Center Garage
2. Smith Tower Parking Garage
3. Scurlock Tower Parking Garage
4. Fannin Valet

While we ask that all volunteers use the self parking options, valet is available to anyone who may need it. During business hours, volunteers may come to the Volunteer Services Office to get their parking validated. After hours, volunteers can go to the Smith Tower security desk. Please note that there is no valet after hours. We are unable to validate parking for TMC Garages 1 or 7.

Directions from Outpatient Center Garage: Take the elevator to the Crosswalk on the second floor. Walk through the lobby. Turn right at Starbuck’s and left after passing the front of Starbuck’s down the walkway to Smith Tower. Turn left at the information desk, walk past the elevator bank and take the bridge that crosses over Fannin Street until you come to another hallway intersection. Make a right at the hallway intersection and continue until you reach a bank of elevators. Take the elevator to the lobby level and look for the Volunteer Services sign (Fondren 127).

Directions from Smith Tower Parking Garage: Take the elevator to the Crosswalk on the second floor. Pass the information desk and take the bridge that crosses over Fannin Street until you come to another hallway intersection. Make a right at the hallway intersection and continue until you reach a bank of elevators. Take the elevator to the lobby level and look for the Volunteer Services sign (Fondren 127).

Directions from Walter Tower Valet: From the first floor valet counter, you will take a right and go straight down the long hallway with showcases of model boats. At the very end of the hallway, you will take a left. You will then see signs that you are entering the Fondren/ Brown/ Alkek Building. Once you see the bank of elevators, you will take a right to enter the small hallway. Look for the Volunteer Services sign (Fondren 127) to your left.

Directions from Scurlock Garage: Take the elevator to the Crosswalk. As you exit the elevator, make a left by Christy Optical, and then make a right when you see a bank of elevators. Go straight and you will take the bridge that crosses Fannin Street over to Dunn Tower. Once you pass the information desk in Dunn Tower, make a left down the hallway. When you get to a bank of elevators, go to the lobby level. When you exit look for the Volunteer Services sign (Fondren 127).

Directions from the Main Entrance Valet: As you go through the glass doors, you will face the Crain Garden/ Dunn Lobby. Go through Crain Garden/ Dunn Lobby until you get to a hallway on your left (near the escalators). Take a left down this hallway; you will pass the HMH Gift Shop on your left. Follow the hallway until you reach a bank of elevators, and then make a left at the elevators and you will see the Volunteer Services sign (Fondren 127).
**Departments and Services at Houston Methodist Hospital**

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<td>Chaplain’s Office</td>
<td>713.441.2381</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Department</td>
<td>713.441.1016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Nutrition Services</td>
<td>713.441.2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Information</td>
<td>713.394.6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security/Public Safety</td>
<td>713.441.9511</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>713.441.5009</td>
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<th>Building Address</th>
<th>Valet Location (Hours)</th>
<th>Self-Park (Location)</th>
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<td>West Pavilion</td>
<td>6447 Main St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Smith Tower Garage Enter from Fannin St. or University Blvd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Bldg. / Dunn Tower</td>
<td>6565 Fannin St.</td>
<td>Fannin St. Entrance 24 hours</td>
<td>TMC Garage No. 1 Enter from Fannin St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fondren-Alkek-Brown Bldg.</td>
<td>6535 Fannin St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>TMC Garage No. 7 Enter from John Freeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurosensory/ Jones Bldg.</td>
<td>6501 Fannin St.</td>
<td>John Freeman Entrance 5:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.</td>
<td>TMC Garage No. 7 Enter from John Freeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith Tower</td>
<td>6550 Fannin St.</td>
<td>University Blvd. Entrance 5:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Smith Tower Garage Enter from Fannin St. or University Blvd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scurlock Tower</td>
<td>6560 Fannin St.</td>
<td>Fannin St. Entrance 5:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.</td>
<td>Scurlock Tower Garage Enter from Fannin St. or Main St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Outpatient Center</td>
<td>6445 Main St.</td>
<td>6445 Main Street 5:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.</td>
<td>OPC Tower Garage Enter from Main St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Tower</td>
<td>6551 Bertner Ave.</td>
<td>6551 Bertner Ave. 4:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. M - F 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sat - Sun</td>
<td>TMC Garage No. 7 Enter from John Freeman</td>
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*Valet hours are subject to hospital changes*
Benefits for Volunteers

While the greatest benefit to volunteering is the rewarding experience of helping others in giving your time and energy, Houston Methodist Hospital wants to recognize your time and volunteer service by extending the following benefits:

**After Completion of 100 hours:** *Subject to change due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols
- Letters of recommendation (these may be written for employment, education, or scholarship)
- Become a member of the 100 hours club
- Houston Methodist Hospital Volunteer Services T-Shirts

**After Completion of 300 hours:** *Subject to change due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols
- Q-card for Metro transportation
- Access to Wellness Facilities (available to long-term volunteers, excludes Caring Teens volunteers)
- Receive employee rate when purchasing massages available through HMH
- 20% discount in HMH Gift Shop

**FREE:** *Subject to change due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols
- Classes (CPR classes are available to volunteers)
- Flu Shots (given annually at the beginning of flu season; notification will be sent to inform Volunteers of the date, time, and location)
- Parking (parking will be provided to volunteers during volunteer shifts)
- TB Screening (will be scheduled prior to beginning volunteer work, and updated annually as needed)
- Meal Ticket (a meal ticket valued at $8.00 will be provided to volunteers that volunteer four hours or more in one shift. Tickets are only available after completing four hours of the shift and will include one per day. This excludes Caring Teens, Spiritual Care volunteers and Visitor volunteers)
- 15% off purchases at hospital dining areas (valid at The Market Place, Texas Sky Café, Einstein’s Bagel, and Blue Water Café). Please be sure to wear your hospital photo I.D. badge for this discount.

**Invitations to Events:** *Subject to change due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event
- Holiday Volunteer Celebrations

Please note, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and changes to policies, some in-person activities will not be available due to safety. Please contact your Volunteer Coordinator for specific questions.

**For Retirees...Did you know?**
Recent studies show that volunteering can yield high rewards. For many, retirement is becoming a transition to another work life, although in a more relaxing atmosphere. Volunteering offers retirees the chance to channel work skills, education, and networking into a relaxing and rewarding environment. It has been shown that volunteering is physically and mentally stimulating. It is a chance to start something new, invest your time in something you enjoy and discover endeavors you never knew you could experience. Start building your network now so that you can get the most out of your volunteer experience for years to come.
Volunteer Bill of Rights

Every Volunteer Has:

THE RIGHT TO A SUITABLE ASSIGNMENT
Which will reflect personal preference, education and employment background, personality and life experience.

THE RIGHT TO TRAINING FOR THE POSITION
Well planned and effectively presented, which includes information on the organization, its policies, people and procedures.

THE RIGHT TO CONTINUING EDUCATION ON THE JOB
As a follow-up to initial training, information about new developments, and training for greater responsibility.

THE RIGHT TO A VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES
Through advancement to assignments with responsibility, through transfer to another service area presenting new opportunities and through special assignments.

THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD
To feel free to make suggestions and to have respect shown when offering an honest opinion.

THE RIGHT TO RECOGNITION
To be viewed as a contributing member of the health care team through day-by-day expressions and annual volunteer recognition events.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Houston Methodist Hospital Code of Conduct is applicable to volunteers as well as to paid employees. The following warrant immediate dismissal from the volunteer program:

1. Being under the influence, being in possession, or transporting intoxicants or controlled substance onto the premises of the institution.
2. Committing theft on institution or patient property including medical records and confidential information.
3. Possessing a weapon on institution property. A weapon is defined in Section 46.01 of the Texas Penal Code, including but not limited to handguns, illegal knives or clubs.
4. Using abusive, harassing or discourteous language or behavior to patients, visitors, employees or volunteers (including behavior consistent with sexual harassment).
5. With specific respect to patients:
   a. Breaching the confidence of a patient’s condition or treatment.
   b. Discussing treatments or counseling with patients in the guise of professional advisement.
6. Discussing anything related to a patient or family member with a physician.
7. Smoking or using smokeless tobacco is prohibited on Houston Methodist Hospital and Texas Medical Center premises.
Safety and Infection Control
Safety and Infection Control

The following pages highlight major safety and infection control initiatives at HMH.

Emergency Procedures

Should Houston Methodist Hospital activate Severe Weather or Disaster Plan, volunteers will be notified by an email communication, HMH social media, and a phone call if needed. Volunteers may also call the Volunteer Services Office at 713.441.3351 for information. Volunteer involvement will be based on the nature and size of the disaster. In the event of an anticipated disaster, volunteers are not considered critical and therefore will not be activated. *(VS20 Volunteer External Disaster)*

**NOTE:** Proper identification is necessary to gain entry into the hospital.

The following are codes Houston Methodist Hospital uses for specific emergency situations. All volunteers should be knowledgeable of these codes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Code</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code Red</td>
<td>Fire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Blue</td>
<td>Cardiac Arrest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Pink</td>
<td>Infant/Child Abduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Orange</td>
<td>Bomb Threat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Purple</td>
<td>Security Needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Yellow</td>
<td>Disaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Silver</td>
<td>Active Shooter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Gray</td>
<td>Severe Weather</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code Gold</td>
<td>Accreditation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Did you know?**

**Safety,** when it is a factor, has the highest priority in all decisions.
Fire Safety

Always be observant no matter where you are in the hospital. Make sure you know where the exits, fire alarm stations, and fire extinguishers are located. Be aware of the evacuation route maps located on every patient care unit and throughout the hospital.

The proper response to fire or smoke is R.A.C.E.

- **R** - *Rescue* patients in immediate danger from fire or smoke area. Rescue individuals from the immediate fire or smoke area and go to a safe place. Always rescue people before pulling the fire alarm.

- **A** - *Alarm* Pull fire alarm station and call emergency number (713.441.3300) to give exact location.

- **C** - *Contain* the smoke or fire by closing all doors to rooms and corridors and clearing hallways of people and equipment. The doors to the fire exit stairway must ALWAYS remain closed unless you are moving through them.

- **E** - *Extinguish* the fire (when it is safe to do so). If you can do so safely, and you feel comfortable using the fire extinguisher, use it. If not, don’t put yourself at risk.

To use a fire extinguisher, follow the P.A.S.S. procedure

- **P** - *Pull the pin* at the top of the extinguisher out. This is the pin that keeps the handle from being accidentally pressed when not needed.

- **A** - *Aim the nozzle* of the hose toward the base of the fire.

- **S** - *Squeeze the handle* to discharge the extinguisher standing approximately 8 feet away from the fire. If you release the handle, the discharge from the extinguisher will stop.

- **S** - *Sweep the hose and nozzle* back and forth at the base of the fire. You must watch the fire carefully to assure it is completely extinguished, as fires may re-ignite.

**Did you know?**

You must act quickly if you discover a fire since they can double in size in about 2 minutes.
Infection Control & Hand Hygiene

How to handrub?
WITH ALCOHOL-BASED FORMULATION

Gel hands for hand hygiene! Wash hands when visibly soiled.

Minimum duration of entire procedure: 20-30 seconds

1a. Apply a palatal of the product in a cupped hand and cover all surfaces.

1b. Rinse out with a cupped hand and cover all surfaces.

How to handwash?
WITH SOAP AND WATER

Wash hands when visibly soiled! Otherwise, use hand gel or foam.

Minimum duration of entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

1. Wet hands with water and apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.

2. Rub hands together.

3. Rub between fingers with fingers interlaced.

4. Rub palms with fingers interlaced.

5. Rub backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlaced.

6. Rub rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.

7. Rotational rubbing, backwash and forward with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.

8. Rinse hands with water.

9. Dry thoroughly with a single-use towel.

10. Use towel to turn off faucet.

All staff members and volunteers of Houston Methodist Hospital should do everything they can to prevent the spread of infection. One of the most important ways you can do this is to always follow standard precautions, mask ordinance, and wash your hands. Please watch the Houston Methodist System Hand Hygiene Video that details how to properly perform hand hygiene and when hand hygiene is indicated.

Hand Hygiene video: https://vimeo.com/558636405/deea7fb1b9

*please note you will need to copy and paste the video link into your web browser
Houston Methodist Patient Safety Goals

It is everyone’s responsibility, including volunteers, to ensure the safety of our patients. The following are the Houston Methodist Hospital Patient Safety Goals that we should abide by.

Patient Identification
- Use at least two unique identifiers, such as name and date of birth
  - DO NOT USE ROOM NUMBER AS A PATIENT IDENTIFIER
- Volunteers are not permitted to place an identification arm band on a patient.

Improve Communication
- Volunteers should immediately notify a staff member of patient safety issues (e.g. at-risk fall behavior, actual fall, difficulty breathing, pain, flushed or perspiring skin, and/or unresponsive behavior)
- Hand-off communications
  - Volunteers who answer the phone should immediately notify staff in patient care areas if the call is related to patient care
  - Volunteers are not permitted to receive patient testing results or provide updates on patient statuses

Medication Safety
- Volunteers should never administer medications (prescriptions or over-the-counter)
- Volunteers should never label medications
- Volunteers should not handle or dispense medications, or comment on patient medication information at any time
- Transportation volunteers may inquire if the patient has all medications, prescriptions, and discharge documents upon discharge

Achieve Zero Infections
- Volunteers should adhere to Hand Hygiene Guidelines
- Volunteers must adhere to isolation guidelines (e.g. mask, gloves) when appropriate
- Volunteers are encouraged to receive vaccinations
- Volunteer should cover a sneeze (e.g. use a tissue or sneeze into the bend of the elbow)
- Volunteers who are sick should not report for duty until they are completely well

Identify Patients At-Risk for Suicide
- Volunteers who encounter individuals who express harmful intentions should immediately notify a member of the healthcare team

Alarm Management
- Volunteers should notify staff of any significant or persistent alarms (e.g. bed or cardiac alarms)
Fall Prevention

A patient fall is a sudden, unintentional decent, with or without injury to the patient, that results in the patient coming to rest on the floor, on or against some other surface, on another person, or on an object.

Fall facts:
- A fall may result in fractures, lacerations, internal bleeding, and/or lead to increased health care attention
- Research shows that close to one-third of falls can be prevented
- Common conditions that cause falls include:
  - Physical, mental, and cognitive impairment (altered mental status)
  - Unable to rise from sitting independently,
  - Urgency of urine/incontinence and toileting
  - Ambulating without assistance when needed
  - Medications
  - Vision problems, including poor lighting

How to identify fall risk patients:
- Patient has on yellow non slip socks
- Patient has on a yellow arm band
- Patient has a red or yellow fall risk sign on their door

What you can do to prevent our patients from falling:
- Remind all patients to call for help before getting out of bed
- Keep beds in a low position
- Keep floors dry and free from clutter
- Ask family members to alert staff when they are leaving the room
- Remind patients to wear non slip shoes, socks or slippers while ambulating
- Remind patients not to wear bathrobes or pajamas that drag on the floor
- Offer assistance to a patient who seems unsteady on their feet

What should you do if you see a patient fall?
- If possible, attempt to ease the patient gently to the floor
- Call nursing staff first and then the Operator to page the CERT team to make an assessment of the patient
- Remain with the patient until help arrives
- Once it is determined that the patient is unharmed, call Central Dispatch (713.441.4246) for patient lifting equipment to assist with transporting the patient
- Report the incident to your supervisor—please report all details as this can assist with identifying potential injury

High Risk Falls:
- In effort to support patient safety initiatives for fall prevention, volunteers should assist in helping leave patient room doors open when exiting if there is a red fall risk sign outside.
- This intervention is an important part of keeping our patients safe by allowing staff to have quick, visual access to those who are at high risk for fall.
Confidentiality
Confidentiality

It is the policy of Houston Methodist Hospital to maintain an individual’s right to privacy and confidentiality of information.

All staff members and volunteers of Houston Methodist Hospital having access to information concerning patients must hold all information in strict confidence and shall abide by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations. There are strict penalties (including steep fines) for persons and/or hospitals that violate HIPAA privacy regulations.

In the course of performing volunteer responsibilities, information is considered confidential with regard to patients, their families, their physician and/or the hospital. As a condition of working at Houston Methodist Hospital, all staff and volunteers are cautioned not to discuss any such information with others. Casual comments with fellow coworkers in the hallways, lobby, or cafeteria may be overheard and violate the trust others have place in our staff.

In addition, a volunteer’s personal life and problems should not be discussed with patients, their visitors or the medical staff. Staff and volunteers are asked to conduct themselves with professional poise and dignity.

Newspaper, magazine, TV and radio reporters and photographers requesting information about patients or personnel via phone or in person at the hospital are to be referred to administration.
## HIPAA Privacy Rule - Quick Help Tips for HMH Volunteers

**Quick Tips for Volunteers**
**Prepared by Methodist Privacy Practices Office**
**April 2003 rev. February 2022**

### Notice of Privacy Practices

A patient has questions about the Notice or Acknowledgment for receipt of the Notice.

- See the Notice Quick Tips. The answer will likely appear on that sheet.
- If you cannot determine the answer from the Notice Quick Tips, refer the patient to your Business Practices Officer for handling.

### Patient Inquiries

Someone calls or a visitor comes to the Information Desk to ask about a patient.

- Do not release any information if a visitor or caller does not provide the patient’s name.
- If you are given the patient’s name, unless the patient is listed as “No Information/Confidential Patient,” you may: 1. Take the guest/visitor to an information desk/screening station for assistance locating a patient; 2. Transfer a call to a patient’s room.
- *Never* give out a patient’s room telephone number.
- Questions regarding a patient’s general condition must be referred to the nursing unit.

If the patient is listed as “No Information/Confidential Patient,”

- Do not release any information.
- You may tell the caller or visitor, “I’m sorry, we do not have any information on that person.”
- If the caller is insistent, you may say “We understand you are concerned. We would suggest you contact a family member for any information about the person to whom you are referring.”
- If the caller or visitor is unsatisfied that you cannot release any information, please refer the caller or visitor to a supervisor in Admitting Services.

### Patients of the same name

The visitor or caller provides the patient’s name, but there is more than one patient with the same name.

- Ask the visitor or caller to confirm the town or city in which the patient resides, or the patient’s age.
- Do not volunteer information to an individual inquiring about a patient.

### Media Inquiries

A member of the media calls asking about a patient.

- Do not release any information directly to the media, even if the media provides the patient’s name when calling.
- Refer all media inquiries to Houston Methodist Public Relations Department for handling.

### Clergy Requests

A member of the community clergy wants a religion census list.

- Refer community clergy members who want a religion census list to the Spiritual Care and Education Office.

### Talking to patients

A patient wants to talk about their health condition, however, other are nearby.

- Tell him/her that you are not a health professional and should not be discussing his/her care.
- If he/she insists on talking to you, do not repeat any of the conversation to others who are not involved in his/her care and use reasonable precautions such as lowering your voice.
- *Never* photograph, discuss, or post patient information on the internet.

### Filing Complaints

A patient who wants to file a complaint about the handling of his/her health information.

- A patient has the right to file a complaint about his/her health information.
- Refer the patient to your entity’s Business Practices Officer.
**HIPAA Privacy Rule - Quick Help Tips for HMH Volunteers**

| What is PHI? | • Protected health information (PHI) is patient identifiable information, such as demographics and financial information. |
| What is the Notice of Privacy Practices? | • The Notice of Privacy Practices describes individuals’ health information rights at HMH; how individuals can act upon these rights; HMH’s legal duty and responsibilities to protect health information; and how HMH is permitted or required by law to use and disclose health information. |
| Where can I find the Notice? | • The Notice is publicly posted and is posted electronically on Houston Methodist’s internet website. |
| When does the patient receive the Notice? | • The Notice must be given to the patient at the time of first services at HMH. |
| How do you document that the patient received the Notice? | • The patient must sign an Acknowledgment of receipt of the Notice. • A good faith effort must be made to obtain an acknowledgment of receipt of the notice, but if the patient refuses to sign the acknowledgment you may continue with treatment. |
| When do I have to get the patient’s permission to use his/her protected health information (PHI)? | • A patient’s authorization is required for any use or disclosure of PHI that is not for treatment, payment or health care operations, and permitted or required by law. This includes your family members. |
| What is use? | • Use refers to what HMH does with PHI internally. |
| What is meant by disclosure of information? | • Disclosure refers to how PHI is released to outside entities and anyone internally accessing without a patient’s authorization on file (whether they were requested by the patient or not. |
| What does minimum necessary mean? | • Limit access to the minimum amount of information necessary to accomplish your duties when using or disclosing PHI. |
| Who is a qualified personal representative (QPR)? | • A QPR is a person who has the legal authority to act on behalf of the patient. |
| Who is responsible for HIPAA compliance at Houston Methodist? | • The Corporate Business Practices Officer is the Privacy Official and is responsible for overseeing all ongoing activities related to privacy of health information practices. |
| Who handles complaints? | • The HMH Business Practices Officer (BPO) is the contact person to handle communications and complaints related to privacy. |
| What government agency is enforcing HIPAA? | • The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for enforcement of the Privacy Rule. |
| What happens if Houston Methodist or its employees don’t comply with HIPAA? | • There are civil and criminal penalties for failure to comply and for wrongful use and disclosure of PHI. |
| Don’t Repeat | • Anything that you observed or learned about a patient to family, friends or others. • Anything heard during the treatment of a patient when you are away from the patient treatment area. If you are discussing the treatment of a patient in a treatment area, always lower your voice and never discuss a patient in the hallways or elevators. |
| Don’t Copy | • Any documents containing Houston Methodist’s patient information. |
| Don’t Take | • Any documents pertaining to any Houston Methodist’s patients or information. • Do not email patient information to your personal email. |
| Don’t Share | • Any user ID(s) or password(s) with anyone. • Any access codes to entrance doors of secure areas. • Never photograph, discuss, or post patient information on the internet related to our patients. |
HIPAA Privacy Rule—Quick Help Tips for HMH Volunteers

18 Patient Identifiers:

- Names of the individual, and relatives, employers, or household members of the individual
- Geographic identifiers of the individual, including:
  - Subdivisions smaller than a state
  - Street addresses
  - City
  - County
  - Precinct
- Zip code - at any level less than the initial three digits (e.g., NNNxx-xxxx). However, if the initial digits cover a geographical area of 20,000 or less people, then it has to be reported as 000
- All elements of dates (except year) directly related to an individual, including:
  - Birth date
  - Admission date
  - Discharge date
  - Date of death
  - All ages over 89 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such ages and elements may be aggregated to a single category of age 90 or older.
  - Telephone numbers
  - Fax numbers
  - E-mail addresses
  - Social security numbers
  - Medical record numbers
  - Health plan beneficiary numbers
  - Account numbers
  - Certificate/license numbers
  - Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate numbers
  - Device identifiers and serial numbers
  - Web Universal Resource Locators (URLs)
  - Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers
  - Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints
  - Full-face photographic images and any comparable images
  - Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code
Customer Service
Houston Methodist Experience Service Standards

Expected Behaviors for all Patient & Guest Interactions

**Houston Methodist Experience Service Standards**
- Heads Up, Phones Down. **Be present in the moment.**
- Smile, make eye contact, **greet all our guests** using the 10/5 rule.
- Listen with your ears and eyes and **take action to address needs.**
- Remember **you are “on stage.”** Ensure your behaviors reflect this.
- **Be inclusive** and celebrate diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- Understand preferences and **personalize the experience.**
- **Manage up** your co-workers, the department and yourself.
- **Masks covering the nose and mouth are required in all public areas.**
- **Face shields and masks are required in patient facing areas at all times.**

**Elevator Etiquette**
- Allow people to get off the elevator before attempting to get on
- Hold the elevator door for someone trying to enter
- Always allow patients and guests to take the elevator first and wait for the next one
- If you are on the elevator and a patient on a gurney needs to enter, please get off and take the next elevator
- While social distancing may not be possible in the elevator, be sure you are wearing your mask
- If you feel unsafe, exit and wait for the next elevator. If riding with other people, allow for as much social distancing as possible

**Customer Service Scripting Examples**

**Opening and Closing:**
- “Hello, Mr./Mrs. (insert name). Welcome to Houston Methodist Hospital. My name is (insert volunteer name) and I will be your (service area) volunteer today.”
- “How are you feeling? Don’t worry, we will take excellent care of you.”
- “Is there anything else I can do for you before I leave?”
- “What is the most important thing I can do for you before I leave?”
Customer Service Scripting Examples continued

Handling Bad News:
- “I appreciate your understanding.”
- “I will take care of this for you.”
- Use words like “obstacle” or “hurdle”

Refusing a Patient Request:
- “I hear what you are asking, but I don’t think I am the right person to give you the help you need. If you don’t mind my suggestion, let me get in touch with your patient liaison, who can better assist you.”
- “Safety is a very important part of our culture here at Houston Methodist, and I don’t want to compromise your safety. I hope you can understand that.”

Dealing with Difficult Patients:
- “First and foremost, how are you (is your family member) feeling? Are you o.k.?”
- “Thank you for bringing this to my attention. I will discuss this issue with the appropriate staff.”

General Guidelines:
- Be mindful of what you are saying in the presence of your patient or guest. Avoid statements like “I don’t know how to do this,” “I don’t know what’s wrong with this machine,” or “I don’t know how to fix this.” Instead, “I will get this taken care of for you.”

Scripting - Telephones

Greeting the Caller:
- “Good morning/afternoon, (department name), this is (your name). How may I assist you?”
- “I can help you with that.”
  - If there is a problem, acknowledge it and apologize for the inconvenience. Find a solution.
Scripting - Telephones continued

Transferring the Caller:
- Ask the caller if he/she minds being transferred.

- “Let me transfer you, and thank you for calling (department name).”
  - Tell the person you are transferring the call to the caller’s name and nature of the call.
  - NEVER blind transfer.

Placing Call on Hold:
- “Let me check if (____) is available. Are you able to hold?” (Wait for caller to respond yes or no.)
  After the caller responds “yes,” say “thank you,” then place the person on hold.

- “Thank you for holding. (____) is not available. May I transfer you to his/her voicemail or would you like to leave a message?
  - If the caller needs to be placed on hold for more than 1 minute.
  - Return to the caller, explain the delay, ask him/her to continue holding, or ask if you can call him/her back.

Ending the Call:
- “Is there anything else I may assist you with today?”

- “Did I answer all of your questions?”

- “Thank you for calling.”

Scripting - Information Desk/Front Desk

Greeting Walk In
- “Hello, how may I help you?”

- “I can help you with that” (then take appropriate action)

Closure Walk Out
- “Is there anything else I can help you with?”

- “Did I answer all of your questions?”

- “Thank you.”
Houston Methodist Experience

Houston Methodist Experience is made up of three important Components:

- I CARE Values
- Culture of Safety
- Personalized Service

Patients are expecting consistency throughout their stay at HMH. Interactions with staff and volunteers should be positive and in line with the I CARE Values. The Methodist Experience is not just customer service, it is about our culture. Patients and guests are looking for a “WOW” experience in healthcare.

I CARE for Safety Behaviors

- Support Team Members
  - Showing commitment, respect and appreciation to other individuals on the team
  - Encourage participation in acts of safety
  - Acknowledge

- Act Courageously
  - Doing the right thing in the face of opposition, either internal or external
  - Speak up for patient safety: STOP THE LINE

- Focus on the moment
  - Maintaining a central focus point during an activity while minimizing distractions
  - Understand the task and the potential risks to patient safety

- Eyes wide open
  - Constantly observing the environment and the people interacting with it for safe practices

- Talk to one another
  - Communicate essential information vertically and horizontally so that the intention of the message is clear to all
  - Ask for clarification if you feel unsure about what was communicated

- You are not alone
  - Realizing that you are part of a team that creates a safe environment that identifies and corrects risks to patient safety
Houston Methodist Experience

Expected Behaviors for All Patient and Guest Interactions

- Honor diversity; we are all individuals.
- Take five minutes everyday to go above and beyond for our patients and guests.
- Anticipate patient and guest needs and address them.

Responding with Service Recovery

Houston Methodist Hospital Communication Service Recovery Process: Be L.A.S.T.

Be the last person to hear a customer’s complaint

- Be aware of concerns
- Listen, actively
- Apologize, blamelessly
- State the concern, resolve, and act
- Thank the customer
AIDET

Acknowledge - Introduce - Duration - Explain - Thank

**Acknowledge examples:**
- Eye contact
- Knock on the door
- Smile
- Appropriate touch
- Make the patient and family feel that you expected them. How would you do this? What could you say?

**Introduce examples:**
- Give your name, department, your role, how long you have volunteered at the hospital
- If appropriate, skill set, experience, training, manage up yourself, coworkers and their skills
- Other departments and their competency and technology

**Duration examples:**
- How long will the interaction be?
- Give a time expectation that will surely be met

**Explanation examples:**
- Why are you doing this?
- What will happen, what you are doing, and what I should expect?
- What questions do you have?

**Thank examples:**
- Allowing you to serve them
- For cooperating
- For being patient
- Choosing HMH
Patient Visitation Guidelines and Tips

Houston Methodist Hospital Patient Visitation is designed to help improve the quality of life for patients and their families. The following are tips for those volunteers who represent Houston Methodist Hospital:

1. Always knock before entering a room, even if the door is open or ajar.
2. Always ask permission to visit upon entering the room. Respect a patient’s wishes if he or she does not want visitors.
3. Any discussion with a patient or family member must be held in confidence. Any information you learn through visitation is strictly confidential.
4. A pleasant, positive demeanor is essential.
5. Be sensitive to the mood of the patient. Avoid talking too much and concentrate on being a good listener. Maintain a calm and confident presence without being overly cheerful or overly somber — aim to be quietly present.
6. Keep your curiosity in check and avoid asking questions about tubes, devices, etc. unless necessary in order to carry out your responsibility.
7. Always observe hygiene and personal infection control. Wash your hands before each visit and avoid contact with potentially contaminated items.
8. Do not enter a patient’s room if a doctor or nurse is with the patient. If a doctor enters while you are there, excuse yourself from the room.
9. If a person is too sick to be visited, respect his/her need for undisturbed rest. Do not wake a sleeping patient.
10. Avoid giving medical advice and comparing stories. Don’t compare doctors or judge the quality of medical care received. Such activities may discourage the patient or upset him or her.
11. Do not ask doctors or nurses for medical information or professional services for yourself or family members.
Patient Visitation Suggested Interactions

Introduction

- “Good morning/afternoon/evening! I’m (your name), a volunteer. May I visit with you for a few minutes?”

Helpful phrases:

- “Is it okay if I come in?”
- “What is this like for you?”
- “It sounds as though this has been difficult for you.”
- “Would you like for me to sit with you.”

Phrases to avoid:

- “I know just what you mean” or “I understand.”
- “So-and-so had the same thing happen to them and it was awful.”
- “What you really need to do is think positive.”

It’s time to end a visit when:

- A nurse or doctor enters the patient’s room.
- The patient is more interested in doing something else than speaking with you.

Remember:

- There are problems related to entering the hospital (trauma of coming, depersonalization, etc.). Patients often respond the way they do because of what they are going through, not necessarily because of the volunteer.
- Physical illness dramatically changes ones life. The impairment of freedom of movement and physical strength is difficult to accept, so patients may appear touchy, angry or just plain “grouchy” and out-of-sorts.
- Each person responds to pain uniquely. Physical pain and the misery often inflicted by medical treatment may leave a person feeling helpless.
- Physical illness creates anxiety about finances, loss of job, and the ability to earn a living.
- Physical illness also affects the world of the patient’s family, often creating financial and emotional anxiety for them as well.
- When volunteering on inpatient units, please be mindful of isolation signs on patient room doors. Remember that volunteers are not permitted to enter isolation rooms.
- Volunteers must adhere to the hand hygiene policy. Please be sure to practice hand hygiene and use hand sanitizer when entering patient rooms. Remember: gel in and gel out!
Effective Listening

Volunteer patient visitors aim to be good listeners, and the most important skill of communicating is to be an effective listener. Effective listeners focus their attention in the speaker and concentrate on how to be facilitative to him/her. When we listen, we give the patient an opportunity to share their feelings. Therefore, silence on the part of the listener will give the patient the opportunity to reflect on what they are going to say.

**Sympathy:** sharing the feelings of another.  
**Empathy:** identification with and understanding of another’s situation, feelings and motives. Understanding why people feel the way that they do.

In general, patients want to be heard, understood and accepted as they are. Most patients don’t want sympathy. They want empathy. Empathy is listening with your heart as well as your head. Many patients resent being told, “I know how you feel,” for no two people have the same experience nor same histories; therefore, there is no way anyone can know how others feel. But it is helpful to know that a person cares how you feel and has some understanding of what you are going through.

Show understanding and prove that you heard the patient by mirroring what you understand:

A. Ask a question about what the patient said.  
B. Summarize the patient’s words.  
C. Validate the patient’s feelings.  
D. Share your thoughts if appropriate.

**Good Listening Body Posture**

1. Lean toward the speaker  
2. Face the speaker  
3. Establish eye contact  
4. Put yourself on the same level as the speaker. Sit when talking to patients in beds or chairs.  
5. Position yourself at an appropriate distance (3 feet is recommended)  
6. Avoid distracting movements such as playing with coins, drumming fingers, swinging a crossed leg up and down, or tapping a pencil
Professional Boundaries in Healthcare Relationships

A boundary is a system of setting limits that enhances a person’s ability to have a sense of self, and to protect and take care of the self. Boundary systems have two parts: external and internal. An external boundary allows us to physically choose our distance from other people, and enables us to give or refuse permission for them to touch us. An internal boundary protects our thinking, feelings and behavior and keeps them functional.

Self-awareness is key to establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries. Pay close attention to the situations when you lose energy, want to avoid the person or situation, or find yourself over-doing, feel a knot in your stomach or want to cry. Identifying where you need more space, self-respect, self-care, energy or personal power is your first step.

When Boundaries Become Blurred:

- **Self-Disclosure:** Although in some cases self-disclosure may be appropriate, volunteers need to be careful that the purpose is for the patient’s benefit. Avoid shifting the focus from patient to volunteer.
- **Giving or receiving significant gifts:** Giving or receiving gifts of more than token value is contrary to professional standards because of the risk of changing the nature of the relationship, and the volunteer could feel pressured to reciprocate by offering “special care.”
- **Becoming friends:** Although there are no explicit guidelines that prohibit friendships from developing once the volunteer assignment is complete, you must use your judgment in assessing the appropriateness of this for the individual patient.
- **Maintaining established conventions:** Ignoring established conventions that help maintain a necessary distance between volunteers and patients can lead to boundary violations. Examples include blurred boundaries about availability as a volunteer vs. being a friend with unlimited phone and home access.
- **Physical contact:** Volunteers must be cautious and respectful when any physical contact is involved, recognizing the diversity of cultural and generational norms with respect to touching, and cognizant that such behavior may be misunderstood.

Questions to Consider in Examining Potential Boundary Issues:

- Is this in the patient’s best interest?
- Whose needs are being served?
- Will this have an impact on the service I am delivering?
- How would this be viewed by the patient’s family or significant other?
- How would I feel telling a peer or mentor about this?
- Am I treating this patient differently?
- Am I taking advantage of this patient?
Caring Teen Volunteer Program
The **Caring Teen Program** is a highly sought after program which allows high school students (ages 15 - 18) the opportunity to volunteer and interact with healthcare professionals. Volunteers chosen for this program are expected to adhere to the same guidelines as the adult volunteers. Maturity and compassion are essential to successful completion of the program. We are excited you will be joining the volunteer team!

**Program Requirements:**
Each teen has been conditionally accepted into the program pending the completion/passing of the required background check, health screen, and orientation. The health screening for teen applicants requires completion of a TB test, drug test, flu vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine and booster. There will be two summer sessions that require a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer work for successful completion or 80 hours for both sessions. The summer sessions are longer than the program requirements to allow time for other obligations during the summer break. Each teen must meet both requirements for duration and number of hours. Any commitment not met can be cause for the teen to either be not accepted into the program or not be invited to return in the future. Please note, you are responsible for reviewing the handbook in its entirety, as all information is relevant to the program.

**COVID-19 Protocols**
Volunteer Services follows the requirements set fourth by our Houston Methodist System Incident Command. Volunteers are subject to the screening process and expectations of employees. Please be sure to wear your mask and hospital photo I.D. badge as you enter the building and complete the screening process when required. All volunteers must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and receive the booster to participate in volunteer programs.

**Meals:**
Caring Teen volunteers will receive a 15% discount on all meals from the Houston Methodist Hospital’s Marketplace. You must be wearing your hospital photo I.D. badge to receive the discount.

**Attendance and Tardiness:** Please see page 7

**Termination:**
You are directly responsible to the Director of Volunteer Services. As such, we reserve the right to terminate your status as a volunteer if your performance or actions are not in the best interest of Houston Methodist Hospital. We must adhere to the I CARE values in all that we say and do! Teen volunteers who engage in fighting, have issues with electronic devices, cell phones, dress code, loitering, attendance, tardiness, or smoking are subject to termination at the discretion of the Director.
Physical Violence:
The hospital does not tolerate any form of physical violence in the hospital. Documented occurrences will result in actions being taken by administration.

Bullying/Harassment:
The hospital does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment in the hospital or social media. Documented occurrences will result in actions being taken by administration.

Sexual Harassment:
The hospital does not tolerate any form of harassment, sexual or otherwise. Documented occurrences will result in actions being taken by administration.

Volunteer Status: Please see page 7

Gifts: Please see page 8

Volunteer Bill of Rights and Code of Conduct: Please see page 16

Telephone Calls and Cell Phones: Please see page 8

Signing In and Out: Please see page 8

Personal Items: Please see page 8

Safety: Please see page 9

Back Safety: Please see page 9
Uniform Requirements

Photo Identification Name Badge: Please see page 8

Uniform Information:
Caring Teens are required to purchase a Caring Teen polo shirt. You will also be required to wear blue or black slacks, or khaki pants. Volunteers are required to wear a face mask while on campus. Volunteers with a patient-facing assignment must wear a hospital approved face mask and face shield. Volunteers found to be out of uniform may be asked to leave for the day. Volunteers must wear their hospital photo I.D. badge while on campus so that staff can identify them easily. You must wear your hospital photo I.D. badge in plain and obvious view (above the waist and not covered by clothing). Uniforms will be purchased during one of your onsite appointments or on your first day. You will pay for the uniform in the HMH Gift Shop (the cost is $27.06) and bring the receipt with you to the Volunteer Services office. Please be sure to wear comfortable, closed toed shoes!

Please do not wear scented cosmetics, perfumes, aftershave, hairspray or colognes. These items may cause discomfort and/or allergic reactions for our patients. Volunteers that have patient contact are not permitted to wear acrylic nails due to the requirement set forth by infection control in our hand hygiene policy.

Personal Appearance and Hygiene:

Examples of approved personal appearance:
- Business casual attire with approved uniform top/jacket
- Clean and neatly pressed shirts/blouses, skirts/slacks
- Clean shaven or neatly trimmed facial hair
- Neatly trimmed hair
- Clean and neatly trimmed finger nails; clear or subtle nail polish
- No artificial nails in patient contact areas
- Appropriate stockings/leg wear
- Appropriate mask and face shield

Examples of poor appearance (Not Allowed):
- Blue jeans or other denim, capri pants
- Flip flops or open toe shoes
- Unclean or wrinkled clothing
- Blouses/shirts with open collars that provide inappropriate exposure
- Bare midriff tops, halter tops, or mini-skirts
- Untrimmed beards, sideburns, or mustaches
- Shaggy and unsightly hair; non-traditional hair coloring (blue, purple, pink, etc.)
- Excessively long and/or brightly colored finger nails
- Excessive number of rings, bracelets, necklaces, and earrings
- Exposed body piercing, facial or tongue studs (except for religious purposes)
- Hats/head coverings unless required for safety, hygiene, or religious purposes