

End of Life Choices Oregon

Job Description: Client Volunteer (CV)

End of Life Choices Oregon (EOLCOR) is a non-profit organization that works with Oregonians who are considering end of life options. We are comprised of doctors and regional volunteers who are uniquely trained to provide skilled professional guidance through the Death with Dignity Act (DWDA) and other end of life choices. Our approach is non-judgmental as we work with clients and their families through these challenging transitions.

Summary of Client Volunteer position

Client Volunteers (CVs) are non-medical lay volunteers who provide education, advocacy, and support to Oregon residents regarding end of life choices. For those who meet the qualifications of the DWDA and want to pursue it, the CVs educate and assist them through the legal process for obtaining life-ending medication and support them in their decision whether or not to take it.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Regardless of whether a CV has any medical training or a medical license of any kind, in their role as a volunteer with EOLCOR, they are strictly lay volunteers and are only to represent themselves as lay volunteers.
- Educate clients and families about legal end-of-life options, including the DWDA voluntary stopping eating and drinking (VSED) and refusal or stopping of medical
- treatment.
- Provide nonjudgmental support for the client and their choices for end of life.
- Support client in making choices that are consistent with client's personal values.
- If the client wants to pursue the DWDA, educate them about legal requirements and the process of qualifying for the law and obtaining medications.
- Educate clients and families regarding the benefits of hospice care. Encourage client to enroll in hospice services, if they are not already enrolled. With client's permission, coordinate with client's hospice team regarding any wishes or plans expressed by the client.

- For qualified clients pursuing DWDA, CVs may need to advocate on behalf of client to find two physicians and a pharmacy that will work with them to fulfill the requirements of the DWDA.
- At the option of the client, CVs may be present at a planned death. If CVs do not attend the planned death, one CV should remain available by phone and encourage families to provide time of death to the prescribing physician.
- CVs may prepare medication for self-administration by the client only if the prescription was written by a licensed Oregon physician and filled by an Oregon pharmacy. If CVs do prepare lethal medication for the client, it must be done exactly as directed by the EOLCOR medical director's instructions. Preparing medication includes opening drug capsules and/or mixing medication with fluid.
- Client must self-administer lethal medication under the DWDA. Self-administration means that client places medication in their own mouth or g-tube by their own accord.
- CVs provide support to the client's family and/or friends throughout the journey to death.
- CVs may determine that death is presumed to have occurred, but if family wants to have a healthcare professional pronounce the death, they should call hospice or their attending physician.
- At the family's request, CVs may notify the funeral home for removal of body, if hospice is not involved. If hospice is involved, notify them and they will work with the family.
- In situations where time to death extends beyond 2 hours, CVs may discuss with family whether they stay or leave the home, but remain available by phone.
- Respect client and family confidentiality at all times.
- Record all visit notes in the database within 24 hours of seeing a client or talking with client by phone.
- Contact Team Leader if client needs assistance finding a physician or pharmacy to work with them.
- Contact Team Leader if there are any unusual circumstances or CV is unsure how to proceed with a client.
- CV should contact Team Leader and Medical Director if any situations arise that require the assistance of licensed medical professionals.

Skills Needed

- Be comfortable talking about death and dying.
- Can listen and hear client's wishes for end of life without judgment and support client in making decisions that are consistent with their own values.
- Computer Skills - be comfortable with learning and using the EOLCOR database.
- Have a thorough knowledge of the DWDA and other legal end-of-life options.
- The ability to advocate for needs of client.
- Have excellent communication skills to coordinate client wishes with family, hospice or caregivers.
- Exhibit empathy and compassion with clients and their families.
- Ability to work as a team member.
- Have flexibility with time - be available for visits or calls as needed.
- Attendance/Punctuality - arrive at meetings and appointments on time. Ensure client responsibilities are covered by another CV when absent.
- Appearance and Demeanor - maintain a professional presentation and appearance

Training and Supervision

- Participate in Volunteer Training.
- Mentor with a seasoned CV, until it is determined that the new volunteer is sufficiently prepared to work with clients on his/her own.
- Attend and participate in monthly CV team meetings.

Time Commitment. Varies depending on caseload.

Reimbursement

EOLCOR will reimburse volunteers for travel expenses relating to visiting clients, attending trainings, or monthly CV meetings, including mileage, parking, and ferry or bridge tolls. See Section 9 for Reimbursement Form.

Suspension or Termination

CVs may be placed on suspension for up to 90 days at the determination of the Team Leader and Program/Volunteer Coordinator for any violations of policies and procedures or for failing to abide by the parameters of this position description.

CVs may be terminated at the determination of the Team Leader and Program/Volunteer Coordinator for any reason, including violations of policies and procedures or for failing to abide by the parameters of this position description.