

From Scarcity to Abundance: Volunteers as link between Compassionate Communities and Health Human Resource

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Community based hospice organizations across the country, and around the world, rely on volunteers to deliver support services to terminally ill patients and their families. A 2019 survey conducted in British Columbia showed that hospice staff are supported by volunteers at a nearly 1:10 ratio. As well, 71% of hospice organizations reported that at least 50% of volunteer hours are allocated to providing direct care and support to patients and families.

This workshop will challenge participants to consider that this ratio is not a deficit, but rather an asset that leverages the workforce in the health sector. This unique feature positions hospice organizations to champion and harness the potential of compassionate communities; a globally recognized model that aims to complement the formal health services by focusing on the psychosocial, practical, and spiritual needs.

Using an asset-based approach that values and mobilizes the expertise, capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community through your volunteers you will see that you have the right people, doing the right work, at the right time. Shifting your thinking from one of scarcity to abundance!

In this workshop, participants will be introduced to projects undertaken by the BC Centre for Palliative Care that celebrate the contribution of volunteers and the expertise, skills and knowledge they bring to your organization. The aim of the workshop is to help participants see that they have in their volunteer-led organizations and programs an effective and efficient resource that can support patients and family closer to home.