

Connecting with Care & Compassion

Volunteers can help improve the experience for patients, families and caregivers by actively engaging with them and helping navigate the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre.

Introduce yourself

- ❖ Hello! My name is XX and I am a volunteer in the cancer centre.
- ❖ This applies to any individuals you encounter during your shift, whether you are providing a direct service or passing by while they are waiting for an appointment.

Assess if they would like support or to have a conversation

- ❖ How can I help you today?
- ❖ May I help you find something?
- ❖ Would you like any help getting to where you need to go?
- ❖ Is there anything I can do to help support you today?

Listen actively

- ❖ Look engaged- face the individual, make eye contact, nod, be aware of body language or facial expressions as giving or receiving information
- ❖ Allow the individual to finish what they are saying before responding.
- ❖ Refrain from making assumptions about the individual, their needs, and their sense of humour
- ❖ Avoid judgement or giving advice
- ❖ Stay away from topics or statements such as:
 - Religion or politics
 - “I’m sure you will be fine”, “You will feel better” or “It will go great” (we don’t know the outcome)
 - “Hopefully this is your last visit” (we don’t know if this will be their last visit to the cancer centre or not)
- For more information about active listening skills: https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/active_listening

Provide friendly support and guidance

- ❖ Offer to escort the individual to where they need to go. If they decline, offer verbal directions and advise that anyone in a blue vest can answer questions.
- ❖ Promote Verspeeten and community resources (refer to *Guide for Verspeeten Volunteers*)
- ❖ Show where the Keith Samitt Patient and Family Resource Centre (first floor) is located
- ❖ If escalation to a healthcare provider is needed:
 - “Can I connect you with someone that you can speak with about that?” or “Make sure you connect with your healthcare provider about that.”
- ❖ Ask for help if you do not know the answer
 - Look for another Verspeeten volunteer
 - Approach a Verspeeten staff member
 - Call Volunteer Services – extension 58112