



### **Volunteer Update from Tina McCafferty - CE**

Memo: All Totara Hospice Volunteers - All areas

From: Tina McCafferty, Chief Executive

Date: 20th March 2020

### **Information for Volunteers during the Covid-19 outbreak.**

Kia ora koutou,

We are living, working and volunteering in unprecedented times and I'm really conscious of the level of anxiety that we are experiencing across our communities. The impact of Covid-19 means that our Government are reviewing advice daily in order to keep us all as safe as possible. Totara Hospice is no different. We have been monitoring and responding to the dynamically changing landscape as we work to contain Covid-19 amongst our places of care, of service and of our wider communities.

The wellbeing, health and safety of all Totara Hospices patients, their families/whānau, our volunteers, staff, visitors and community are of paramount importance as **such today I met with the Volunteer Master Guild** to discuss the well-being of all Volunteers during this time, as I want to reassure everyone that as an organisation, we are doing everything possible to respond effectively. The following provides an update to volunteers on key messages and activities to date

**Totara Hospice Services:** Totara Hospice's clinical services are characterised as places of connection, compassionate care and understanding for the terminally ill and their loved ones. Totara Hospice's operational support services e.g. retail are characterised as places of community gathering, support, connection and advocacy for hospice.

However, Covid-19 means that at least in the short term, we have to be flexible and adaptive in the way that we express these characteristics and accept that right now business as usual, increasingly (temporarily) does not apply. That however does not mean we have to be anxious or panic. If we all calmly put connections, safety, security and compassion for each other at the front and centre we will help each other through in true Totara style.

**Working as a volunteer during Covid-19:** Currently NZ communities are not on government lock down.

Hence:

We support all volunteers to make an informed decision about continuing as a volunteer in the current situation. If you wish to continue volunteering we want you to do so being informed of all the risks and as part of the team to contain this virus.

- During this time of pandemic, all active volunteers will be making an agreement that they are:
  - Not awaiting test results for Covid-19 virus
  - They have not been confirmed as a person carrying Covid-19 virus.
  - They are not in a situation that requires them to self-isolate nor have they recently returned from overseas or had contact with a person known to carry the Covid-19 virus.
- If you would like to take a break from volunteering during this time of global pandemic we completely support your decision, and want you to know that this will not place undue pressure on us. Your safety is paramount and we will welcome you back with open arms in the future.
- We are monitoring government directives daily and should there be different requirements on social groupings and work places then we will inform you of the change - this may mean temporarily taking a break from your volunteer roster.

**Further information:** Today as a result of all of the information from the Totara Covid-19 Taskforce, the following decisions have been made:

#### **Effective from today**

- Visitation to Totara House will be limited for all types of visitor. We have a well-considered and compassionate protocol for patient visitors being managed by teams across SLT, IPU and Reception
- All of our commercial (public gathering) fundraising events are postponed
- All non-essential internal and external meetings are to be temporarily cancelled. Essential external

meetings can be done via Zoom or other digital applications

- All group training and education sessions are postponed
- The family/whānau flat will be temporarily closed until April 30th in the first instance.
- Any volunteer who is in a high-risk group i.e. those who are immune-compromised or have pre-existing conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes or hypertension or respiratory disease are asked to talk to Volunteer Services Trina Napier [trina.napier@hospice.co.nz](mailto:trina.napier@hospice.co.nz) about volunteering options that will keep you safe.
- To manage community contagion risk to patients, families, staff and volunteers Day Hospice is closed, in the first instance until April 30th.

*Please note the above actions are subject to change and will be regularly reviewed.*

**Communication Channels:** We will continue to provide updates via email and noticeboards. Please make sure that you read these.

**Education Signage:** There are Staff and Volunteer Covid-19 noticeboards being placed up in key areas for ease of access to Staff and Volunteers, please ensure you regularly read and share with your colleagues.

**Environment / Cleaning:** Screening protocols for patients and visitors are in place and at Totara House sign in is now mandatory for tracing purposes. Linda and the wider housekeeping team are doing a fantastic job and have intensified their cleaning regime paying extra attention to all key areas with ongoing and additional sanitising and cleaning of surfaces (handrails, door handles, worktops etc).

There are also several sanitiser dispensers throughout our work spaces in addition to those we already used. We will be placing sanitised products in fleet cars and throughout our stores and DC to ensure that teams can take extra care in their environment.

**Visitor and Stakeholder Communications:** We are actively communicating with all stakeholders and will continue to keep them updated on any changes.

**Government advise of no more shaking hands, hongi or kisses as greeting:**

**To prevent COVID-19 it is safest to avoid physical contact when greeting. Safe greetings include a wave, a nod, or a bow.**

**How should I greet another person to avoid catching the new coronavirus?**

World Health Organization #Coronavirus #COVID19 9 March 2020

There are many alternative ways to show a greeting.

**Emotional Wellbeing:** It's normal to feel anxious in the current climate especially with all of the media coverage we are exposed to. If anyone is feeling overwhelmed and needs support please reach out to your manager, colleagues the Volunteer Services team or our Employee Assistance Programme.

**Information Available:** We are continuing to monitor the developing situation very closely we really encourage everyone to visit the Ministry of Health website [www.health.govt.nz/COVID-19](http://www.health.govt.nz/COVID-19) this is constantly being updated and is the resource we will always refer to.

Also please find key guidelines and information from the Ministry of Health by [clicking here](#).

In times like these we all need to come together to support each other. Thanks you all for your assistance and calm as we continue to care and support our cause.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Trina Napier via phone or email 09 640 0220 / [trina.napier@hospice.co.nz](mailto:trina.napier@hospice.co.nz).

Ngā mihi nui,  
Tina McCafferty  
Chief Executive

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