

## WHAT YOU CAN GAIN FROM VOLUNTEERING WITH THE COMMUNITY VISITOR SCHEME

Studies have shown that being a volunteer brings many health and wellbeing gains including lowering mortality rate, reducing symptoms of chronic pain or heart diseases and reducing depression.

Being a Community Visitor can provide:

- » gratifying work and a welcoming and inclusive work environment;
- » a healthy boost to self-confidence, self-esteem, and life satisfaction;
- » personal growth by undertaking a variety of activities and tasks;
- » recognition of the unique skills and diversity you bring to the role;
- » the development of new skills and knowledge;
- » potential employment pathways - make your Resume more rounded and reflect that you are willing to work, have compassion, and are a team player;
- » provision of a practical link to your studies; and
- » connection with your community and a means to form new networks and friends.

## RECRUITMENT PROCESS

To be a Community Visitor you must be at least 18 years of age and demonstrate

- » good communication skills;
- » a desire to help individuals through advocacy;
- » dedication to improving services.

There are no training or formal qualifications required for the role. People with lived experience and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal heritage are encouraged to apply.

Suitable applicants will undertake a comprehensive induction program including orientation visits to facilities to gain the relevant knowledge and understanding to effectively undertake the role.

Applicants are required to undertake appropriate security clearances and this is arranged through the recruitment process at no personal cost.

## LENGTH OF APPOINTMENT

Community Visitors are appointed by the Governor for a 3-year term, after which time they will be eligible for reappointment.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY VISITOR SCHEME

For more information contact:

1800 606 302  
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www.sa.gov.au/CVS



## DO YOU WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN A CHALLENGING AND REWARDING VOLUNTEER ROLE?

The Community Visitor Scheme is seeking volunteers who are passionate about protecting the rights of people with a mental illness or disability and improving the treatment and care provided to them.

Gail (Community Visitor)

*“ It is heart-warming to be recognised by long-term residents as we visit each month and to be greeted warmly as a confidante. ”*

## WHO ARE COMMUNITY VISITORS?

Community Visitors are volunteers appointed by the Governor to be independent statutory officers who have legislative responsibility for further protecting the rights of people who are in mental health treatment centres, Emergency departments, disability accommodation or Supported Residential Facilities (SRFs). *Hereafter referred to as 'facilities'.*

## WHAT DO COMMUNITY VISITORS DO?

Community Visitors work in pairs to conduct visits of facilities.

Community Visitors inspect and report on:

- » the standard of care and accommodation of patients/residents;
- » the adequacy of information provided to patients/residents, family members and guardians regarding their treatment, care, and rights;
- » the adequacy and effectiveness of complaints processes;
- » the attitude of staff towards patients/residents, family members and guardians; and
- » the quality of communication between staff members, patients/residents, family members and guardians.

Community Visitors support and advocate for patients/residents to promote the proper resolution of issues.

## WHO CAN A COMMUNITY VISITOR TALK TO?

A Community Visitor may talk to any patient/resident at the facility, or to staff/management involved in the provision of treatment, care and support.

Any patient/resident, family member, guardian or staff member can contact the Community Visitor Scheme to request a visit or advocacy support for patients/residents.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A VISIT?

Following a visit, verbal feedback will be provided immediately to staff about any matters of concern raised during the visit. Community Visitors are also required to provide a written report on each visit.

Facilities are expected to make every effort to promptly address any issues raised. If an issue cannot be resolved at the facility level, the Principal Community Visitor may refer the matter to senior management of the service or an appropriate body for resolution.

## WHO IS THE PRINCIPAL COMMUNITY VISITOR?

The Principal Community Visitor (PCV) is appointed by the Governor and reports directly to the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse and the Minister for Disability.

The Principal Community Visitor will:

- » play a lead role in your recruitment, training and orientation to be a Community Visitor (CV);
- » provide oversight, advice, assistance and ongoing support in your performance of the role of a CV;
- » report on matters of concern regarding the care and treatment of patients/residents which you or other CV's raise;
- » progress and assist in the resolution of issues relating to the care, safety and wellbeing of patients/residents raised by CV's or others; and
- » conduct visits and inspections with CV's.

Joan (Community Visitor)

*“ I find it an incredible privilege through CVS, to be able to interact and hopefully assist people, who are at a very vulnerable point in their lives. ”*