



PEER MENTORING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. The Peer Mentoring Program was created to allow clients and caregivers coping with a new cancer diagnosis an opportunity to speak with a patient or caregiver who has “been through it,” and thus obtained valuable information regarding a specific illness and treatment experiences. In addition, this program allows new clients an opportunity to receive emotional support, learn new coping strategies and become knowledgeable about available community resources.
2. Clients and peer volunteers will be matched by age, diagnosis, and gender, or any other client preference deemed appropriate by the staff. All matches will be made by the staff member assigned to oversee the Peer Mentoring Program and subject to the approval of Cancer Services.
3. Typically, peer mentoring relationships are for a short time, although long- lasting friendships are often formed and may provide appropriate support. Maintaining proper boundaries, however, is essential. Assigned staff will periodically review assignments to assure proper boundaries are maintained.
4. Volunteers must have an interest and commitment to helping others and be willing to speak openly with new clients regarding their experiences. Most contact is by phone, although meetings between the participants are acceptable. Conversations typically cover treatment, new research, self-care issues and coping skills.
5. Volunteers must sign a Peer Mentoring Program agreement, assuring Cancer Services of their commitment to the program. This includes an agreement to provide appropriate support to clients, and compliance with the confidentiality policy of Cancer Services.
6. Volunteers must complete a request form for participation in the Peer Mentoring Program and agree to maintain appropriate boundaries as set by Cancer Services.
7. Periodic Peer Mentoring volunteer trainings will be held to help volunteers feel more comfortable working with new clients. Participation in training is a pre-requisite to participation as a volunteer. All volunteers must complete volunteer training prior to participation in the program. All volunteers are screened and interviewed by Cancer Services.