

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



Welcome

**Thank you for your interest in
becoming a member of our team**

Volunteering with The Oakville Stokers is a great opportunity to make a difference in someone's life, be part of a team, share your experience, learn new skills, have fun and develop lasting friendships. We greatly value and rely on our volunteers who together make The Oakville Stokers a success.

The Oakville Stokers' Advisory Board

July 2012

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Statement of Purpose

To provide a program of recreation, socialization and light aquatic exercise for survivors of strokes in and around the community of Oakville.

Objectives

- To help stroke survivors to revitalize their sense of independence, mobility and overall well being and at the same time, afford the primary care givers... usually spouses or adult children... time for themselves one day each week.
- To provide participants with an opportunity to socialize with each other and to share their experiences.
- To provide low-impact exercise.
- To provide an aquatic program in a large, warm indoor pool.
- To provide recreational activities... such as card games, arts and crafts and several outings each year whenever possible.

Background

The Oakville Stokers is a registered community charity for stroke survivors. It is operated by an advisory board of volunteers in close collaboration with the Town of Oakville, Recreation and Culture Department, and the Physiotherapy Department of the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. The program began in the spring of 1995 with 3 participants and 4 volunteers. It has grown steadily since then and now has approximately 30 participants (which is about maximum) and 35 volunteers.

Oakville Stokers Advisory Board

The Oakville Stokers is managed and operated by an Advisory Board of volunteers, with a representative from the Town of Oakville, Recreation and Culture Department, and a representative from the Physiotherapy Department of the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

Our Programme

Sessions run for 10 weeks in the fall, winter and spring each Friday at the Glen Abbey Community Centre, the home of the Oakville Stokers.

Each weekly program begins with a social and light refreshment time followed by low impact stretching and exercise and a one hour pool session with the help of volunteers. The Glen Abbey pool is reserved at this time and all other activities are in Community Room A, opposite the West Arena.

Although the program runs from 9.30 am to 2.00 pm each Friday, volunteers are most needed to help participants in the pool and change rooms from 10.50 am to 12 noon. Of course, you may stay for the whole program if you wish and help is always welcome at lunch and afterwards.

Participants enjoy a lunch which they bring themselves, with the group, followed by card games, arts and crafts and other leisure activities. Emphasis is placed on fostering a warm, caring and co-operative environment. Above all, it is fun and rewarding.

(continued)

Other fun activities we offer are:

- 10 Pin bowling and luncheon
- Annual Christmas luncheon
- Musical at Stage West
- Pub lunch in Oakville
- Interesting speakers
- End of spring session theme party
- and more

Our Participants

Our participants are usually referred to us by O.T.M.H as they complete the step-up program after their stroke. Many have been coming to Stokers for years, but we always manage to take a few new participants. We have about equal numbers of men and women who range in age, degree of mobility (wheel chairs, walkers, canes) and in their ability to communicate (from very able to converse, to some memory loss or inability to speak or write).

Helping in the change rooms and pool

- As a volunteer, you will assist a participant, whom you will help in the change room and work with in the pool.
- In the change room, individual independence is encouraged but volunteers are asked to help, with minimal assistance, if needed.
- Instruction will be given as to the correct way to help lift a person, e.g. from wheel chair to standing and vice versa, and also to move and guide a participant, should it be necessary.
- All volunteers and participants are required to wear pool shoes to avoid slipping.
- You will help your participant to put on a flotation device before entering the pool.
- With your assistance, participants use either the ramp or the steps to enter the pool.
- Initial instructions for the best way to help participants in the pool will be provided. Specific instructions will often be given by the participant, as they frequently have their own set of exercises they like to work on.
- If you cannot attend a session, please let us know by phone or record absence days, in advance, on the calendar. In this way, a substitute can be arranged.

Other important information

- Familiarize yourself with the Glen Abbey Community Centre fire safety plan. Know the best exits to use from the pool and room A.
- Volunteers are expected to be aware of any situation which may result in danger or harm to any member of our group at any time and report such circumstance to a board member.
- Volunteers are encouraged to limit their involvement with participants, beyond the program.
- Concerns about individual participants should be brought to a board member's attention.
- Participants and their families are informed that The Oakville Stokers' program is operated by lay people. As such, in the case of an emergency, a board member will phone the emergency numbers the participants have provided and follow the directions that are given. If necessary calls may be made to 911.
- Participants and volunteers should carry an up-to-date list of medications they are taking.

- Stokers' participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation. You are NOT responsible for transportation.
- Wallets and personal effects can be left with the kitchen staff before going to the pool.



Home of The Oakville Stokers
Glen Abbey Community Centre
1415 Third Line
Oakville, Ontario.
L6M 3G2