

Sitting down with Marilyn and Josephine, you would think the two were long lost pals. It's hard to get a word in edge-wise as they comment on world events and things that happened in their daily lives since they last got together. What's interesting is they have only known each other for five months, through Carefor's Visiting Program.

Josephine was rarely home as her busy social calendar kept her committed, but when she fell and broke her right arm, she was suddenly spending every moment of her day at home. Alone. She couldn't drive or play cards or do the simplest of tasks.

"People don't know how hard it is to sit and watch people do what they do when you can't," she says.

While waiting on additional health supports, Josephine was referred to Carefor's Volunteer Visiting Program and she immediately signed up. That's how she was matched with Marilyn, a former teacher who has been a regular volunteer for many years.



Volunteers As Visitors

By: Alice Grenon, Manager, Community Support Services

"We just seem to hit it off," says Josephine. "I'm a talker. She's a talker."

And that's not a fluke. Carefor takes the time to match people with volunteers. They get to know both parties and figure out who might make good matches. That way there are always a few volunteers available for each person in case of holidays or other volunteer commitments. The Volunteer Visiting Program also works well if there is a caregiver involved. The volunteer can provide a break for the caregiver, freeing them up to

do other things.

"When my kids visit, they want to do everything for me," says Josephine. "A regular visitor is just different."

And Marilyn understands that. She says people just often feel better talking to someone about things instead of keeping their thoughts and feelings inside. It could be commenting about something in the news, or a more personal matter, but just talking it over relieves a lot of stress. So what does Marilyn get out of it?

"It's difficult to explain what I get out of it, but it's extremely

rewarding," she says. "It's kind of like explaining what you get out of faith. It just feels good."

Volunteers can also help with some tasks that the person they are visiting can find difficult to do. One woman who makes jewellery has a volunteer who helps sort and organize the beads during her visit. Another has the visitor accompany them to a doctor's appointment to ensure they don't miss any instructions.

As Carefor's Volunteer Visiting Program continues to grow (with 20 new referrals in July alone), volunteers are always welcome and can contribute as much time as they wish. And for those wanting to benefit from the program, you can call Carefor directly to register.

ASK THE EXPERT:

Alice Grenon, Manager
Community Support Services
Carefor Health &
Community Services
Phone: 613-732-3949 ext. 1115
volunteerprogram@carefor.ca
www.carefor.ca

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Could you or someone you know be part of our Volunteer Visiting Program

Carefor is looking to recruit volunteers to assist seniors and isolated adults who wish to remain living in their own home for as long as possible. Could we recruit you?

Volunteer can assist with:

Going for a walk | Preparing a lunch | Writing letters
Light housekeeping | Conversation | Reading a book
A shopping trip | Social visiting | Caregiver respite

Do you have 2-4 hours a week available?
Do you enjoy helping others who could really benefit from a volunteer visitor? If so, we would really like to chat with you.

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volunteerprogram@carefor.ca | Phone: 613-732-3949 ext.1115