

Volunteer Programs to Support Standard Care

The chart below provides a few examples of mealtime volunteer programs that could be used for standard nutrition care.

Recruitment	Training	Role	Time with each Patient	Eating Assistance Provided
New or existing volunteers	By the RD	To check with all patients on the unit to see if anyone requires assistance opening packages etc.	As needed by each patient on the unit.	No
New or existing volunteers	By the RD	Any hospital staff member can enrol a patient as per established criteria. Each volunteer visits at least one patient and provides social support, assistance with meal tray set-up, opening packages etc.	Varies with number of patients enrolled and volunteer availability but generally, longer time with each patient.	No
Existing volunteers, interns, trainees, students etc.	By the volunteer coordinator (education developed with nutrition & food services team)	To follow the food service worker as they deliver the trays and check to see that each patient has everything they need, open packages etc.	Short. Typically 20 minutes in total following all the trays then returns to their usual volunteer role.	No
Speech and Language Therapist (SLP) or Nutrition students	By an SLP	Volunteers check with the nursing staff to see which patients require eating assistance (low risk for choking/not dysphagia patients). Volunteers open packages encourage intake and provide eating assistance.	Long. Typically 1 hour per patient.	Yes