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Policy on Volunteering for the Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario (SCAGO)¹

Accountability: Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario

Responsibility: Management

Approver: Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario Board Members

Approval date:

Last Revision date:

Review:
as necessary

Overview:

The Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario (herein referred to as “SCAGO”) is a provincial association, formed to advocate for and support individuals with sickle cell disease.

Given the goals of the organization; it is imperative that SCAGO maintains strong, skilled and willing volunteers in order to ensure a smooth running of our organization. The volunteers must also adhere to SCAGO’s principles and rules.

Volunteer’s Vision: To serve and support the vision and mission of the SCAGO

Policies:

1. Volunteer to complete an application form located at www.sicklecellanemia.ca
2. Once completed, a telephone or face to face interview should be conducted to further determine the best placement of the volunteer within the organization.
3. Volunteer to undergo a formal training process and receive a volunteer handbook which will include among others lists, Vision, Mission, Values, Performance Expectations, Meetings and Discipline Procedure.
4. Volunteer to sign a “Commitment form” during the Orientation/ Training period.
5. Volunteers of the corporation shall be oriented to the organizations' work rules, policies, performance standards and other organization's requirements before volunteering with the association.
6. It is imperative for the committee chairs, volunteer chair, and the management lead to conduct volunteer meetings addressing volunteer expectations, committee expectations, reminder of policies, performance management discussions on an ongoing basis.
7. Expenses incurred from volunteering must be reasonable and pre-approved and submitted with receipts using the organization’s expense claim form
8. Volunteers are not permitted to release the names and contact information of the patients, and families of the Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario to an individual, organization or association. Failure to abide by this rule may result in legal ramifications

Volunteer Meeting Procedures

Follow-Ups by committee chairs

The Committee chairs must meet regularly with volunteers in committee

Feedbacks: During meetings, know enough to provide positive and constructive informal and formal feedbacks

If there is non/ineffective performance, find out the reason and if there is a better role for the volunteer somewhere else within the organization

If a situation is not improving, what do you do?

1. Would a volunteer benefit from training?
2. Is it an option to redefine your definition of good performance?
4. Is the organization willing to allow the situation to continue with modification?

The Organization also needs to consider its level of responsibility for any role it has played in things not working out--- if applicable

Executive Lead and Committee Chair

Committee coordinator and the management lead must hold a bi-yearly meeting with all volunteers. It is essential to keep the meetings consistent so as not to risk disconnection with volunteers

1. Setting meetings to check in & keep those meetings consistently (inconsistency will bring disconnection with volunteers)
2. Where there is low volunteer performance, check if volunteer would benefit from training, and if the organization is willing to allow the situation to continue with modification or redefine your definition of good performance?
3. The Organization also needs to consider its level of responsibility for any role it has played in things not working out--- if applicable
4. Management lead in collaboration must determine how to make the volunteers perform better.

Volunteers must be given:

Policies, Volunteer handbook and Moral Obligations

When meeting with Volunteers;

- Start with small steps & conversations
- Focus the meeting on setting expectations
- Get agreement on accountabilities

- Document your meeting
- Stay focused on follow-Up (Many managers drop the ball here)

At Meetings of Volunteers, management to review the rules as listed in the volunteer handbook and:

- Clarify expectations of good performance
- Explain the consequences of poor performance
- Provide specific feedback (e.g, if things are going well, talk about it and if not going well, help find ways to make things good)
- Provide advice
- Explain consequences of no improvement
- Monitor behaviour and provide time to improve
- Take increasingly severe steps if things are not improving
- Revisit expectations very often (post it, one on one discussions and meetings)
- Speak the unspoken rules
- Identify the consequences of non-performance (typically in policy)

Guidelines- Internal Disciplinary Steps

The Discipline Steps

1. **Warn verbally**- Committee chair to hold informal conversation to be followed by an email to clarify what was discussed. Volunteer coordinator and the secretary may be copied to serve as a means of organizational documentation of verbal warning.

2. **Meeting**- If no improvement, follow with a face to face meeting with the volunteer to learn why they are struggling and what you need from them. This is where you can also pick up about your organization and some of the barriers that are not allowing them to perform and how management can help them. This is where you may find out if there is a better role for the volunteer somewhere else within the organization

The meeting should be in private and not in public and you should watch for overly emotional times.

- Always put your meetings in writing and copy the volunteer coordinator and the secretary.
 - Even verbal warning gets an email
3. Involving management: If no improvement, the volunteer coordinator and the management lead will meet with volunteer.
4. **Written Warning**: Management will provide volunteer with written warning and subsequent dismissal from organization