



Charlie's Gift

GEMs

(Volunteer Companions)

Education & Mentoring Program



Every volunteer is a GEM in our community

*Providing a program to benefit our young volunteers personally and professionally by giving support and guidance; together with education and training in interpersonal skills, is our way of saying **thank you.***

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MISSION STATEMENT

Charlie's Gift Fund Inc. (Charlie's Gift) is a not-for-profit/charity organisation founded to provide Newcastle and Lake Macquarie communities with a transparent, credible organisation enabling better ageing outcomes for our older community members. We implement sustainable and community focused programs for those aged 60+ by providing

- Empathy
- Support
- Opportunities to mentor the young
- Information and resources
- Enablement
- Meaningful connections within community

In essence, the program is a whole of community support to ageing well. OPALs are our older people affected by loneliness and GEMs are our genuinely empathic motivators.

Our vision is Charlie's Gift represents peace of mind for our older community and that ageing well is possible when supported by your community.

Our OPALs and GEMs Companionship and Support Program has been designed for older people who experience loneliness and the challenges of social isolation. The aim is to:

- provide the OPAL with a GEM
- initiate mutual rapport, based on trust and respect
- create a safe and supporting space for GEMs and OPALs to engage with, and learn from, each other
- support the OPAL to identify meaningful leisure and social activities and participate in them
- address issues or difficulties the OPAL has identified as an area where they need help
- enable the OPAL to access the information, resources, and services they need
- ensure the OPAL is able to continue their social engagement and community connection at the conclusion of the program.

Upon completion of our pilot program, we will launch our OPALs and GEMs programs in early 2023 pending community support, funding, and sponsorship.

INTRODUCTION

Nearly a third of older Australians live alone and suffer social isolation (opan.org.au). Loneliness can impact mental and physical wellbeing with sometimes dire consequences. We humans are social animals and older Australians need sociability as much as anyone does, oftentimes more so.

Our program provides companionship and support to assist older people who identify as lonely and who experience the challenges associated with social isolation. This program will enable the volunteer GEM and their allocated OPAL participant to form a mutual rapport based on trust and respect. Mutual rapport is integral to the program as it forms a safe space for the OPAL to share their wants, needs, values, strengths and the type of social engagement most meaningful to them. Through this program any difficulties experienced by an OPAL are addressed. From here, with the support of their GEM, an OPAL can participate in the social activities *they* choose and continue to do so after the program concludes.

Charlie's Gift's core values underpin our mission to ensure the health, wellbeing, access to information and the right to individual choice of the older person are not negatively impacted or dismissed, solely because of age.

Charlie's Gift was born from founder Shelly Spalding's experience in dealing with the care – and loss of her much-loved father, Charlie, who died in 2016 and the recent hospitalisation and need for homecare of her amazing mother, Pauline. Although Shelly is an accredited occupational therapist (OT), she encountered the same joys and pitfalls that carers of older people experience. It got her thinking, how do others who are not health professionals manage? She set about making a change to the way ageing is perceived and managed by creating this local program.

To find more about the OPAL and GEM Companionship and Support Program, please visit our website www.charliesgift.org.au or email admin@charliesgift.com.au to request a copy of the full program outline.

GLOSSARY

Ageism	Ageism refers to stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination based on age. In essence, it is how we think, how we feel and how we act towards others, and when directed at older people, it comes from negative attitudes and beliefs about what it means to grow old. (Older Person Advocacy Network),
Charlie's Gift	Charlie's Gift Fund Inc., an NFP/Charity founded to enable better ageing outcomes through Empathy, Companionship, Support and Enablement.
Volunteer Companion	A Charlie's Gift representative who has volunteered to take on the role of companion and support to an older person for the duration of the program. Also referred to as a GEM.
Co-ordinator	A Charlie's Gift representative whose role it is to coordinate, guide and support both volunteers and participants of the program.
Education/Informing	In the context of this program, education/informing refers to an experienced occupational therapist (OT), sharing knowledge, expertise, personal experience and the skills development to future health professionals followed by support and guidance to implement what they have learned in a practical setting,
GEM	<p>A Genuinely Empathic Motivator. In the context of this program, a GEM is the name given to a Charlie's Gift Companion Volunteer, a health or allied health student, and represents the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A younger person with GEM like qualities equally valued by society as an OPAL but who is still developing and forming their own unique characteristics and sense of self-worth.
Health Student	A person studying a health or allied health discipline.
Induction	The process where a volunteer is introduced to this Organisation, its operations, values and Code of Conduct, and provided with the information, resources and support to fulfil their appointed role and comply with the policy, procedures and processes that govern this Organisation.

Mentoring	Assisting through sharing of knowledge, skills and life experience to guide another toward reaching their full potential. (www.mentorsupportnetwork.com.au)
Older Person	In this context, a person aged over 60.
OPAL	An acronym for Older Person Affected by Loneliness. The attributes of an OPAL would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our older citizens, values, respected and appreciated. • Individuals who are as multifaceted and unique as an opal gem comprised of many qualities; shaped and formed by time and their unique environments and experiences. • Individuals who have cause to celebrate their milestones in life, not because they are old but because of all they have achieved and continue to want to achieve.
OPAL and GEM Companionship & Support Program	A program to provide companionship and support to older people experiencing loneliness and/or social isolation, enabling them to reconnect with their community and engage in social activities they choose and identify as meaningful
Organisation	Charlie's Gift Fund Incorporated
Participant	Older person participating in the OPAL and GEM program
Person-centred	The person's wellbeing, wants and needs remain the focus of the program.
Policy & Procedures	The rules and governance processes that govern this program
Pre Self Reading/Learning	Resources materials and information sheets provided by this Organisation for GEMs to read/complete and prepare for face-to-face education and mentoring sessions.
Program Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runs and coordinates programs • Manages and provide support for volunteers and Co-ordinators participating in the program. • Ensures all policy and procedures governing the program are adhered to.

Soft Skills

- A term to describe non-technical skills, examples of which include interpersonal (people) skills, communication skills (listening), time management and empathy

Stereotyping older people

- Believing that all older people are the same.
- Making assumptions about older people based on own beliefs

Volunteer

A person who applies for and accepts a role within the Organisation without expectations of remuneration. In the context of this program Volunteer, Companion, GEM and Health Student are Interchangeable.

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GEM MENTORING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES

Each GEM volunteer will

- Gain a stronger sense of empathy, compassion and an understanding of the issues and difficulties older people may experience
- Strengthen skills in rapport building and effective communication
- Learn to identify with older people and implement a person-centred approach to care
- Learn from the shared experience, skills, creativity and knowledge gained as GEM companion to the older person
- Learn valuable, practical and 'soft' skills to take into their future health professions.
- that will have an overarching positive effect towards better ageing outcomes for their community

The following data supports the framework and design the program.

- Allied health student feedback
- The extensive experience gained by the Founder when working with older people in the community in varied Occupational Therapy roles.
- Evidence based research

THE RESEARCH

Below is a summary of the evidence-based research that influenced the key components and design of the *GEM Companion Volunteer Education and Mentoring Program*.

1. Recognising the innate need for people of all ages to participate in social engagement.

- Human beings at any age are social creatures and it is the connection to others, which enables us to survive and thrive. Social connection, together with participation in meaningful activities and leisure pursuits, gives us purpose, self-value and strengthens our resilience to accept and adapt to change. (*National Institute on Ageing - Social Isolation, Loneliness in Older People Pose Health Risks*).

2. Identify best key skills areas to enable OPALs to achieve best health and wellbeing outcomes from the program.

A person-centred approach:

- Requires flexibility to support the person's wishes and priorities and acknowledges that people are the experts on knowing what they need to experience health and wellbeing. A person-centred approach supports and enables a person to build and keep control over their life. (<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/psychosocial/principles/Pages/person-centred.aspx#:~:text=A%20person-centred%20approach%20is,their%20needs%20and%20unique%20circumstances.>)

Rapport Building

- Skills in rapport building are essential when supporting people to adapt, accept and move forward with change. Rapport enables mutually fulfilling relationships with clear trust, respect and common understanding. *“Establishing rapport with older people enables them to accept things and process suggestions”*. (Gowtham-
[ev/publication/331275146_Building_Therapeutic_Relationship_in_Management_of_Elderly/links/5c6f8fec458515831f652617/Building-Therapeutic-Relationship-in-Management-of-Elderly.pdf](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/psychosocial/principles/Pages/person-centred.aspx#:~:text=A%20person-centred%20approach%20is,their%20needs%20and%20unique%20circumstances.))

Effective Interpersonal Communication

- Effective communication skills are important to establish good rapport and facilitate the healing process. Effective communication between the older person and those that heal or support them has many research proven benefits. For example:
 - the older person is more likely to adhere to treatment/help
 - achieve better outcomes
 - experience greater satisfaction with the process.

Good communication is not an innate skill but it is a teachable skill. Research suggests that medical students who receive communication training improve dramatically in talking with, assessing, and building relationships with older patients. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/tips-improving-communication-older-patients>

The harmful effects of ageism/stereotyping

- Ageism has serious and wide-ranging consequences for people's health and well-being. Among older people, ageism is associated with poorer physical and mental health, increased social isolation and loneliness, greater financial insecurity, decreased quality of life and premature death. (*Ageism is a global challenge: UN – News Release 2021 World Health Organisation.*)

3. Intergenerational approach to reduce ageism/stereotyping.

Ageism is real and a global concern. Ageism is often not intentional but based on stereotyping. Research suggest that ageism will only increase in the context of a growing aging population. Research also suggests the best way of combatting ageism is to develop interventions that have the potential to decrease age stereotyping and prejudice and include education and intergenerational contact/involvement. ([https://www.Interventions to Reduce Ageism Against Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis - PMC \(nih.gov\)](https://www.Interventions to Reduce Ageism Against Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis - PMC (nih.gov)))

4. The benefits of experience satisfaction from volunteering

There are many benefits and advantage for students who volunteer.

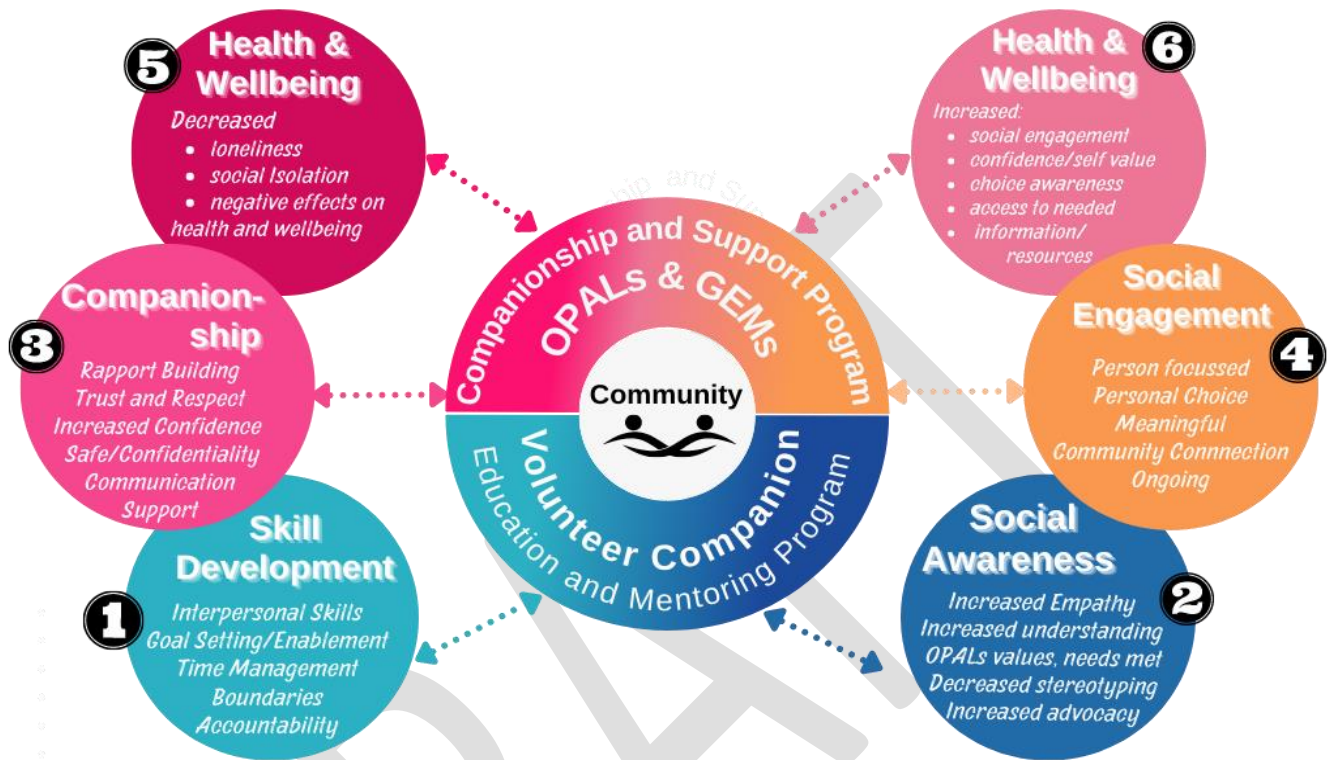
- Meet new people
- Gain a sense of purpose
- Discover a new perspective
- Increases empathy and compassion
- Proactive in the change they want to see
- Build resilience
- Increase employability
(*University of Sydney*)

- Employers often recruit people who demonstrate volunteering roles as they show to have the following attributes.
 - Empathy
 - Compassion
 - Strong work ethic
 - Teamwork
 - Time management
 - Positive attitude
 - Willingness to help
 - Community spirited

(Australian Volunteer Association)

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PROGRAM FRAMEWORK INFOGRAPHIC



- The blue section reflects the attributes of the GEM Education and Mentoring Program, which sits at the foundation of the OPAL's and GEM's Companionship and Support program
- The full diagram shows how both GEM and OPAL mutually benefit from their participation in the program and that at its core, the design of the program benefits all in the community.

OPERATIONS



PROGRAM DESIGN

Key Components

We have identified the following as key components for a successful program:

- Establish a win/win approach where both OPALS and GEMs achieve improved life outcomes through mutually beneficial engagement
- A person-centred approach to an evidence-based program
- Ensure OPALS and GEMs feel safe, supported, and valued
- Recruit GEMs with a genuine passion for health, disease prevention and better ageing outcomes
- Provide training, support, and guidance to GEMs to strengthen the skills required to perform their role in a practical setting
- Source volunteers for the role of GEMs without taking them away from other equally valued community services
- Provide opportunities within an adequate time frame to enable both GEM and older participants to establish a trusting and effectual rapport
- Reduce risks of GEMs unintentional assumptions and use of stereotype
- Facilitate positive ongoing outcomes towards health and wellbeing for older people.

Projected Outcomes

Through simultaneously running the *Charlie's Gift Companion Volunteer Education and Mentoring Program* with the *OPAL and GEMs Companionship and Support Program* we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Reduce the risk of burdening current aged care organisations and community centres who are heavily reliant on volunteers
2. Provide opportunities for allied health students to strengthen communication skills and rapport building, without the added pressures of graded academic performance
3. Provide students with the opportunity to interact and engage with older people to reduce risks of ageism or stereotyping in their future occupations
4. Increase the ability for students to empathise with older people by gaining a deeper understanding of their issues, values, needs, capabilities and attributes
5. Provide opportunities for students to understand and experience the benefits of applying a person-centred approach
6. Provide opportunities for students to identify older people as equals
7. Provide older people with an opportunity to mentor younger people, share their skills and experiences and contribute to their practical learning and development as future empathetic and compassionate health therapists
8. Provide the opportunities for student and older person achieve their goals and mutually benefit from participating in the program
9. Students and older participants can conclude their mutual companion-based relationship in a prepared and positive manner

MENTORING PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Essential Criteria

- Ability and willingness to commit to number of hours required to participate in and complete the 24-week duration of the program.
- Has a passion and genuine interest in working with older people
- Year 3 or 4 university or TAFE student studying a health discipline and a graduate of a health discipline able to commit to the duration of the program
- Has a National Police Check
- Holds full and valid NSW driver licence
- Has or is willing to obtain Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Insurance
- Excellent driving record
- Ability to safely drive and accompany older people to chosen social activities
- Character reference demonstrating maturity and reliability
- Ability to commit to the hours and duration of Mentoring Program and the requirements undertaking the role of Companion to an older person
- Ability to complete all requirements of the Volunteer Information and Mentoring Program
- Demonstrated ability to work in a team and independently
- Good digital and technology skills
- Fully vaccinated for Covid 19
- Willingness to learn, comply and implement the required policy and procedures, code of conduct and core values of the Organisation

Desirable Criteria

- Current First Aid certificate
- Previous volunteer roles, work experience or customer service roles
- Previous experience working with or supporting older people

GEMs - ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the GEM is to provide face-to-face companionship and support to older people in our community experiencing loneliness, social isolation and the hardship associated with these.

Tasks and responsibilities include:

- Continual liaison with their allocated Program Volunteer Co-ordinator and Program Manager or Mentor
- Providing companionship and support to their allocated OPAL
- Building rapport and a trusting professional relationship with their OPAL
- Listening to and learning from their OPAL to understand their values, strengths, and the social interests most meaningful to them
- Observe and note any possible issues or difficulties that influence their OPAL's safe engagement in their community
- Report any observed, perceived issues or difficulties to their Program Manager or Co-ordinator Mentor by
- Follow their OPAL's lead in relation to their readiness and motivation to progress through the program
- Once ready, support and facilitate their OPAL in their chosen social engagement activities
- Accompany their OPAL to their activity, provide reassurance and help foster new relationships within the activity
- Support their OPAL in accessing the local resources, services and businesses they identify as necessary for ongoing independence in preparation for the conclusion of the program

Supervision/Support

- All volunteers will have ongoing support, mentoring and guidance from their Co-ordinator and Program Manager for the duration of the program.
- All volunteers will have ongoing access to digital resources and documents required to govern and fulfil their role for the duration of the program.
- All duty of care and safety measures will be actioned to ensure volunteer safety and wellbeing.
- Volunteer coordinators and the Program Manager will be contactable at all times to support volunteers.

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GEM VOLUNTEER INFORMATION AND INDUCTION DAY

Example Running Sheet

8:30 REGISTRATION

- Sign off receipt of name badge, handbook and resource folder
- Light refreshment

9:00 WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

9:10 INTRODUCTION TO CHARLIE'S GIFT

- Purpose
- Mission
- Program
- Projections

9:30 FORMAL INDUCTION TO CHARLIE'S GIFT

- Core Values
- Code of Conduct
- Overview of Volunteer Handbook
 - Intellectual property information sheet
 - Dress code
 - Meals
 - Hours of engagement
 - Travel allowance and mileage log sheets
 - Safety
 - Duty of care
 - Safe driving contract
 - Hygiene and infection control
 - Covid19 guidelines
 - Volunteer and Organisation rights and responsibilities
 - How to make a complaint
 - Documenting an injury or mishap
 - Client privacy and confidentiality
 - OPAL identification code

11:00 15-minute break

11:15 Formal Induction Continued

- Volunteer personal information privacy procedures
- Access to Charlie's Gift digital documents
- Access to Volunteer digital resources
- Compulsory reading list of Charlie's Gift documents and completion sign off sheet.
- Role of Engagement Contract and commitment sign off

1:15 LUNCH

1:45 Companion Volunteer Induction

OPAL and GEM Companionship and Support Program

- Purpose of Program
- Commitment (hours and duration)
- Volunteer Companion (GEM) role
- Co-ordinator Manager or Mentor role
- Overview of GEM Volunteer Companion tools, resources and consent forms
- Overview of volunteer duties and responsibilities
 - OPAL Contact Consent form
 - OPAL Photograph and video consent forms
 - OPAL consent to images used for promotion and marketing
 - OPAL and GEM Value and Respect Contract
- Overview of Co-ordinator and Manager or Mentors responsibilities
- Scheduling and diarising OPAL home visits and community engagements

2:45 15-minute break

3:00 Mentoring Program Induction

- Duration
- Hours required
- Purpose
- Outline
- Learning topics and objectives
- Pre -reading List
- Face to face group mentoring venue and timetable
- Self-assessment Forms
- Awards and recognition
- End of program Presentation and Farewell

Volunteer Companion (GEM) Information and Resource Folder

GEM volunteers will receive an Information and Resource Folder during their induction. Each folder is broken into two sections:

1. Operational guides, tools, resources, forms, self-assessments and questionnaires required to fulfil their role of a GEM Companion
2. Education and Mentoring Program content documents, such as program outline, Key Learning Objectives, pre mentoring session learning materials and resources, Mentoring Session guides and worksheets/materials, surveys and questionnaires.

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GEM MENTORING PROGRAM

GROUP EDUCATION AND MENTORING SESSIONS OUTLINE

Overview of Education and Mentoring Session Content:

Charlie's Gift appreciates the university workload, volunteer GEM commitments and other forms of commitment for students. We have taken care to ensure that pre reading materials are relevant and manageable

The program is to provide each student with the skills and tools necessary to prepare them for their role as GEM Companions through each stage of the OPALs and GEMs companionship and Support Program.

It is our intention that GEM volunteers find this program to be engaging, interactive and enjoyable, and that the theory and practical skills developed prove beneficial personally and professionally.

HOURS REQUIRED:

Companionship with OPALs (Maximum):

Weeks 1-6	(1-2 hours)
Weeks 7-12	(2 hours)
Weeks 13-18	(3-4 Hours) pending social activity chosen.
Weeks 19-24	(4-1 hours) <i>hours reduce as OPAL becomes more engaged and social.</i>

Total 50 hours)

Mentoring and Education Program

<i>Self Reading/Learning</i>	Between 1-2 hours a fortnight
Group Mentoring Sessions	(2 hour fortnightly group meet up)

Total 48 Hours

TOTAL HOURS OF PARTICIPATION TO COMPLETE FULL PROGRAM:

OPAL Visits	50 hours
Self Learning/Preparation:	24 hours (own time)
Group Mentoring Sessions	24 hours
Maximum Total	98 hours (over 24 weeks)

To participate as a Volunteer GEM companion for the full 24-week duration of the program, each volunteer is asked to commit to approximately 74 hours of face-to-face participation across 168 days.

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GEM MENTORING PROGRAM

Content and Objectives

Gems are required to complete the pre learning material prior to each fortnightly mentoring session.

Weeks	Pre-Reading Topics	Key Learning Objectives	Group Session
Week 1 Prep for OPAL home visit.	Introduction to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness/isolation • Role of Companion • Boundaries • Rapport Building • Empathy vs Compassion • Ageism • Effective Communication 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a deeper understanding of the precursors and consequences of long-term loneliness and social isolation 2. Increase awareness of different types of boundaries, and how to apply them. 3. Increase awareness of the importance of rapport building to establish trust and a safe space to motivate change. 4. Gain a deeper understanding of the differences between Empathy and Compassion. 5. Ability to apply a person-centered model in a support role. 6. Increase awareness of effective communication practices. 	<p><i>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</i></p> <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. drawing 2. Using Observation Form 3. Using Know me Help me form <p>Discussion Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examples of Ageism/Stereotyping 2. Why do we need boundaries 3. How to recognize if you have crossed a boundary 4. Ways to make a good impression to start rapport – first visit. 5. What is breaching privacy

<p>Week 3</p> <p>Listening, learning about and supporting your OPAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of Communication • Effective Communication Skills • Communication for rapport building • Active listening • Using observation skills • Accidental Counselling • Grief and Loss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to respond to grief and difficult stories. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of all methods of communication. 2. Strengthen skills in effective rapport building. 3. Increase ability to use the most effective communication method to achieve the desired result. 4. Develop an understanding of accidental counselling. 5. Develop skills in accidental counselling to manage grief and difficult stories. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Video scenarios and open discussion. 2. Role Play – responding to grief and difficult stories. 3. Role Play – rapport building and initiating boundaries. <p>Group Discussion-General</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Preparing for Community Outings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of Duty of Care • Rapport, Trust and safety check list • Implementing privacy and confidentiality in a community setting • How to ask difficult questions without harming rapport • Preparing your OPAL for success in the community -- Identifying and preventing risks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of yours, your OPALs and Charlie’s Gift responsibilities in duty of care. 2. Use active listening and observation skills to identify potential risks to OPAL before accessing the community. 3. Increase confidence in supporting OPALs in the community. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Video and discussion - Has a rapport been established 2. Rapport Check list 3. Understanding body language 4. Open Discussion – identifying possible risks/difficulties – what have you heard or observed. 5. Creating a “success” to kit to avoid OPAL embarrassment in the community.

<p>Week 7</p> <p>Avoiding Risks and Managing Emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It starts with awareness. • Consequences of Falls • Managing a fall in the community • Recognising and managing the symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stroke ○ Heart attack ○ Diabetic hypo ○ Asthma attack ○ Examples of what not to do in an Emergency ○ Charlie's Gift procedures for emergencies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of potential safety risks when supporting older people in the community. 2. Develop strategies to minimize safety risks without disabling an older person. 3. Increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of onset of most common health emergencies. 4. Increase confidence to respond in an emergency. 	<p><i>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</i></p> <p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Falls Risk Check List 2. Role Play – Managing an Emergency 3. Role Play – Safety vs disabling <p>Group Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you can't prevent all risks
<p>Week 9</p> <p>Checking in to Wellbeing and reevaluating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Wellbeing Kit • Importance of looking after you. • Early Signs of burnout • 5 R's • Don't fear failure • Critical Thinking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of the early signs of burnout. 2. Develop a 'tool box' to manage times of stress. 3. Create a 'start your day right strategy' 4. Develop an understanding of the 5'R's. 5. Develop Critical Thinking skills to identify what is working and remedy what is not. 	<p><i>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</i></p> <p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wellbeing Check List 2. Your plan to start your day right 3. Tool Box to combat stress and anxiety 4. 10 minutes of Yoga Nidra 5. Reflection – challenges and triumphs of being a GEM.

			<p>Group Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small group – sharing challenges – problem solving solutions. 2. Large Group – Sharing small groups outcomes.
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Facilitating motivation for change and new experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Motivation for Change • Identifying the barriers for change through conversation • Overcoming resistance • 10 tips to motivate change • Skills for setting goals • Develop skills in solution focused communication. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop solution focused communication skills to combat barriers and motivate positive change. 2. Strengthen skills in achievable goal setting. 	<p><i>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</i></p> <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is your OPAL ready – Check List 2. What you have learned from your OPAL – What social activities might they like. 3. Role play – Solution focused communication strategies to overcome resistance to change. <p>General Discussion</p> <p>Why is it important to enable people to identify their own barriers to change and how they can overcome them</p>

<p>Week 13</p> <p>OPAL Community Engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of meaningful activities • Using what you know to facilitate leisure/social activity choices 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of the importance of engaging people in meaningful activities. 2. Increase an understanding of the therapeutic benefits of participating in Meaningful Activities. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OPAL Friendship Questionnaire. 2. Drawing/charades/Mini Golf/Beading 3. Enjoyment level scale <p>Group Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What leisure activities do older people enjoy? 2. What are the therapeutic benefits of social engagement – Why?
<p>Week 15</p> <p>Influencing new relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Listening to encourage group relationships. • Therapeutic relationship definition. • Strategies to 'break the ice' • Meta Model communication • Importance of debriefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen active listening skills in a group setting. • Ability to apply Meta Model communication in a practical setting. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role play – Applying Meta Model Communication when debriefing with your OPAL to manage distorted perspectives. 2. Role play -Applying deep listening and non-verbal skills to facilitate group discussion between OPAL and social group.

<p>Week 17</p> <p>Digital Mentoring for Increased Independence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Mentoring to older people. • Be Connected Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop basic digital mentoring skills to effectively increase OPALs confidence using technology to source information and resources. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activity: Overview of online resources</p> <p>Discussion: Do older people use technology – If not why not.</p> <p>Role Play Teaching a person who has never used the internet to perform a google search.</p>
<p>Week 19</p> <p>Checking In</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reevaluation for growth. • Reflection Activity – Has your perception of older people changed. • Complete Know Me Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of the importance of reevaluating self-practices when working with people. • Ability to use Self Reevaluation techniques to identify what is working, what isn't and how to move forward. 	<p>30-minute presentation -key points from pre session reading material.</p> <p>Activity: Self-Reflection Tool</p> <p>Group Discussion: After self-reflecting what would you do difficultly.</p>
<p>Week 21</p> <p>Preparing OPALs for Program Completion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Program Check List 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain experience with 'discharge' principles. • Increase awareness of existing supports and services for older people. 	<p>Activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteer Coordinators work with GEMs to finalize end of program needs for OPALs 2. Submit completed Know Me tool.

<p>Week 23</p> <p>End of program finalisations</p>	<p>List of items to bring to Week 23 Session.</p>	<p><i>10-minute program completion presentation.</i></p> <p>Open Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal experiences participating in program. 2. Farewell and Presentation Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final House keeping • Evaluation Forms
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Conclusion of the Companion Volunteer Mentoring Program

- General volunteer discharge processes.
- Completion of Volunteer Satisfaction and Improvement Survey.
- Invitation to attend a four-hour OPAL and GEM presentation, award ceremony and farewell afternoon tea.
- Presentation of Program Completion and Community Volunteering Certificates to volunteers