



## Statement of Purpose

### ABOUT VOLUNTEER CAREGIVING

*for members of Boards of Directors*

#### Preserving a National Treasure

As a member of your program's Board of Directors, you may be unaware of the role your organization has played in advancing Volunteer Caregiving. You are leading one of several hundred programs that is part of a national movement to serve America's aging and disabled populations. The original initiative was launched in 1984 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation which offered start-up funding to 25 pilots, the success of which resulted in a \$50 - \$75 million investment that ultimately funded programs to serve upwards of 2,000 communities.

Over the following 22 years and leading into today, we estimate an average of 18 programs in every state in the nation! Truly, you are now a steward of one of our national treasures! In 2024, Volunteer Caregiving will celebrate 40 years of demonstrated success, a model that has continued to be replicated around the country.

Local volunteer caregiving programs provide volunteer services to those most in need. While each program maintains its own independence, it shares things in common with other programs. Central among these are the "Five Building Blocks." Through the original RWJF start-up grants, the Building Blocks were the components required to receive the initial grant funding. They continue to serve as the backbone of Volunteer Caregiving, along with another community outreach model called "Faith in Action."

#### Five Building Blocks:

- 1. Interfaith: Serving diverse communities.** As part of the original Faith in Action outreach, interfaith communities were essential members of the coalition of community groups. Religious communities are often on the front line of service where a natural volunteer base exists. Faith-based communities continue to serve as important partners for programs, offering volunteer and monetary support. In turn, Volunteer Caregiving organizations provide an administrative arm for coordinating and supporting volunteers and the vulnerable populations we are designed to serve.
- 2. Volunteer: programs recruit, train and coordinate volunteers** to provide one-on-one service. Volunteers are vetted with background checks, trained for safety and compensated with a smile! While the level of background check may vary from program to program, depending on your size and resources, they are key to sustaining your organization's reputation and integrity. Take note that all volunteers are not compensated. Models that incorporate mileage reimbursement or stipends tend to complicate insurance and non-profit status.
- 3. Caregiving: programs provide non-professional, non-medical services** in a timely and efficient manner. Most programs provide a variety of services to assist with activities of daily living, including services such as transportation, friendly visits, grocery shopping, and much more. Volunteer Caregiving is a nimble model that can adapt to serve a wide range of community needs, but our volunteers do not provide personal care.
- 4. Long-term health needs: programs serve people with chronic health conditions** and those living with disabilities. Many programs are serving older people, and our ultimate mission is to help people age in place.
- 5. Resident-based: programs provide care where people reside** (private residence, hospice or congregate living).



## Maintaining Best Practices

The National Volunteer Caregiving Network (NVCN) is a non-profit organization that promotes volunteer caregiving. We inherited the work of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. As members of the Board of Trustees of the NVCN, we would like to make you aware of the tools and resources that NVCN offers to you as Board members and to your organization. Like you, we are responsible for oversight of and act as advisors to executive leadership.

## Celebrating 40 years!

As we roll out a celebration of the 40th anniversary of Volunteer Caregiving, we want to make you, as Board members, aware of our common history and the value of the services you are making possible. We also want to offer you tools and support!

With one-on-one volunteer support, individuals live independently and continue to be a part of the greater community through the work of programs in towns across the country. Our goal is to support existing community programs and to develop new, sustainable programs which use volunteers to assist people with informal care in their homes.

2024 marks 40 years since the model was first launched and many of those early programs have continued to thrive. Your program is rooted in that success and we hope you use this anniversary as an opportunity to educate your community. Here are some key messages that we hope resonate with you:

- Nearly 30% of seniors and those with disabilities live alone in the U.S. With a little help from volunteer caregivers, like those found at the National Volunteer Caregiving Network, we can all age in place! **#VolunteerCaregiving #FaithInAction**
- Volunteer Caregiving has been serving the nation since 1984, offering best practices in recruiting, training and coordinating volunteers to help vulnerable people age in place. Visit [NVCNetwork.org](https://NVCNetwork.org) to find your local program. **#VolunteerCaregiving #FaithInAction**
- Volunteer Caregivers are good neighbors who carry in the groceries, transfer the wet clothes to the dryer and help pull the fitted sheet over the corner of the mattress. It doesn't require a Ph.D. and you might save someone's quality of life! Visit [NVCNetwork.org](https://NVCNetwork.org) **#VolunteerCaregiving #FaithInAction**

## 2024: It's Time to Come Together!

Just as the original model called for a coalition of community organizations to come together, the national network is a coalition of programs that support and strengthen one another.

When the Covid 19 Pandemic suddenly shut down the country in 2020, programs in NVCN abruptly found themselves on the frontlines of their communities, providing essential services to older people living alone, who could not access groceries or medicine or who simply needed to connect with someone. NVCN program directors began meeting bi-weekly on Zoom to support one another and to come up with solutions.

NVCN quickly developed an affordable online shopping and scheduling program that has grown into a database for a variety of services. This is just one of the vital ways NVCN supports local programs.

- ✓ An email group for Directors and another for office staff to ask questions and access resources.
- ✓ A resource library that includes resources on a wide range of topics, including Volunteers, Governance, Fundraising ideas, and more
- ✓ Monthly roundtable meetings for Directors
- ✓ Support with funding to recruit volunteers: This year NVCN is working with programs in Michigan to increase the number of volunteer caregivers.

As members of the National Volunteer Caregiving Board of Trustees, we represent the diverse nature of the Network, with members from California to Maine and throughout the country, and we are proud to be a part of this important organization. Please proudly celebrate this upcoming celebration of 40 years. We hope these resources will help your organization continue to do its good work!