Meals On Wheels Essay, Research Paper

INTRODUCTION

Motivated neighbourhood people have provided ‘Meals on Wheels’ in their communities for many years now. The efforts of such caring individuals has made it possible for many long-term care consumers to remain independent within their own homes. This non-profit organization has provided the consumer with a most vital service; to help in providing them with good health and emotional well-being.

HISTORY

The ‘Meals on Wheels’ non-profit organization was established in Canada in the 1960’s. A group of dedicated individuals elected by a Board of Directors provide the direction for this charitable association. A study was undertaken by various organizations and churches into the needs of the elderly living alone and those being discharged from hospitals with no help available during their convalescence. Interested volunteers and service clubs answered the call for help and proved to be the backbone of this organization. The United Way also plays a vital role in the success of this social service.

The aim of this association is to recruit volunteers from the community to deliver meals to long-term care consumers in their own homes. This allows the consumers the chance to maintain their independent lifestyle. Because of the fast growing senior community, ‘Meals on Wheels’ will continue to provide this essential care.

Providers and Users of ‘Meals on Wheels’

The organization is run by an elected Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers. There are full-time and part-time paid staff members administered by an executive director. Volunteers donate many hours of time to deliver meals for every day of the year within their community.

These services are available to eligible long-term care consumers, senior citizens, persons with physical disabilities, persons with mental health problems, the developmentally challenged and convalescents.

WORKLOAD OF ‘MEALS ON WHEELS’ VOLUNTEERS

AND ADMINISTRATION

Drivers use their own cars to deliver meals to the consumers in need. The volunteer will pick-up the meals at a designated location and specified time. The driver checks his route list for new consumers or changes. He loads his car with the meals to be delivered. The volunteer will go into the consumers house and assist with the delivery of the meal where necessary (i.e. helping to take food out of containers, etc.). When the route is complete the driver also returns empty containers to the food source location. The volunteer also reports back to the Team Leader is advise on the well being of the consumers and if there are any messages from the consumers to relay back to the organization.

The administrative part of the organization handles the financial aspect of ‘Meals on Wheels’. This would include preparing financial statements showing the contributions to the organization, the invoices paid by consumers, and the expenditures incurred.

Administration is also responsible providing public knowledge of the organizations through brochures, service clubs, etc.

The recruitment of volunteers is carried out by the administrative part of this organization.

Another part of Administration is the preparation of routes, the initial contact of a consumer and information about the consumer. They would also handle the eligibility requirements with the consumer.

PROBLEMS AND EMERGENCIES

It may be necessary to handle emergency and problem situations during the delivery of meals to the consumer. The volunteer is trained to look out for certain situations which may mean that a problem or emergency may be happening.

If a consumer does not answer the door, the volunteer must not leave the meal at the door. Instead, the volunteer checks with his superintendent to ensure that it is alright to leave the meal. If the door is not locked, the volunteers must call out the consumer’s name before entering. He may

then proceed into the house to locate the consumer. If he finds the consumers to be ill or injured the volunteer will call 911. The volunteer should be trained in CPR to be able to aid the consumer, if necessary, until help arrives.

CONCLUSION

The ‘Meals on Wheels’ organization has a long tradition of volunteer commitment. It has provided a valuable service to the community. Without the efforts of its many volunteers and workers, the community would miss a very appreciative service to the consumers who are in need of good, healthy meals. This organization is helping to make sure that the people in need in their community will have food available to them in a quick and easy fashion, so that their lives are made easier. Even a friendly face at the door once a day could make a world of difference to a person who perhaps is not able to be out in the community. The people making ‘Meals on Wheels’ work for their community are a very valuable asset.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Meals on Wheels – Community Support Services Brochure

Welland, Ontario

www.mealsonwheels.com