

**VOLUNTEER
CANCER DRIVERS
SOCIETY**



DRIVERS HANDBOOK

MAY 2024

VOLUNTEER CANCER DRIVERS SOCIETY

VCDS is a registered society under the Societies Act of BC and a Registered Charity. It began operations in February 2016 to meet the needs of cancer patients requiring assistance to access care.

OUR MISSION IS:

To serve cancer patients in need with compassionate and personalized transportation to care with community funding. VCDS is singularly focused on providing free, safe, reliable, transportation and peace of mind for Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley cancer patients who have no viable **means of** getting to their essential treatment.

THE NEED

- A cancer diagnosis is very challenging, both physically and mentally
- Many cancer patients have neither a support network nor the financial means to provide assured transportation to their treatment.
- Public transit is stressful, impractical, frequently unavailable, and seldom a viable option.
- Access to and from treatment should not be an additional burden for cancer patients during what may be a life-threatening journey.
- The need for this service is high and continues to grow as our population ages.

FUNDING

- We are a Registered Canadian charity.
- Our volunteers donate about 30% of our revenue.
- All funds for operations are raised by our volunteers.
- We rely on community funding from Foundations, Corporations, Cities, Service Clubs, Firefighters, the public and client patients.
- We have no paid employees, vehicles, or facilities – our administrative costs are 5% of budget.
- Our budget for 2024 is \$675,000 primarily to assist volunteers with vehicle expenses.

VCDS HISTORY

Follow this link to find out more about VCDS and how it has evolved and grown since its inception. www.volunteercancerdrivers.ca/about/founding-members/

KEY POINTS FOR EVERY DRIVER

Patients

- The transportation of cancer patients to care is our primary purpose.
- We strive to make them comfortable and secure.
- We always maintain a professional demeanour and an arm's length relationship with patients.
- Cancer patients are often sick, immune compromised and focused on treatment.
- We need to be a good, empathetic listener and not discuss patient's health unless invited.
- We ensure that all information about a patient is strictly confidential.
- We do not offer health advice- some patients want to talk, others want quiet, we respect both.
- We understand a patient may be tired or disoriented and act accordingly.
- We do not discuss religion or politics and make no comment on these topics if a patient discusses them.
- We do not discriminate on any basis.

Patient Ride Process

1. Drivers maintain communications with their dispatcher and provide their availability for the following week.
2. Patient rides are either assigned electronically by the dispatcher or selected by drivers using the Driver Select process.
3. When assigned a ride, as soon as practical a driver must confirm acceptance or rejection of the ride with the dispatcher?
4. Call the patient directly as soon as possible by telephone. DO NOT rely on text or e-mail for this initial contact.
 - a. Confirm treatment facility, pick up time and location.
 - b. Determine patient's or interpreter's ability to communicate in English.
 - c. Allow for traffic and weather conditions. Plan to have the patient at the treatment facility 10-15 minutes before their appointment time.
 - d. Confirm any special needs, mobility issues and other people accompanying.
 - e. Exchange cell phone numbers to facilitate last-minute changes and pick-up arrangements following treatment.
 - f. Confirm patient health and safety issues per the IPAC policy.
5. Contact patient 24 hours before the appointment to complete the Health Questionnaire
6. Adhere at all times to IPAC protocols regarding the use of masks, car windows partially open, etc.
7. Do not wear scents of any kind.
8. Keep your vehicle clean and a supply of sickness bags in your vehicle.
9. Wear your name tag and display mirror tag.
10. Know the route and arrive at patient's residence a few minutes early.
11. Do not enter a patient's residence. If necessary, you may enter the lobby or public space.
12. During drive make patient comfortable- consider temperature/ music/ conversation or not.
13. Drive safely and conservatively, the patient may be apprehensive or nervous.
14. For new patients- provide a brochure and donation envelope.—
15. Before treatment drop off, confirm after-treatment pick up details, location, phone contact.
16. Know alternative parking locations / arrangements if regular parking at the facility is full.
17. Our service is a door-to-door service- we do not normally accompany the patient to check-in or appointment area within the facility.
18. Avoid having the patient waiting at the end of their appointment, confirm the meeting time **BUT BE AT THE FACILITY 10-15 MINUTES EARLY**, unless the patient contacts you to advise of a later time.
19. We do not allow side trips for patient errands. We will drop off at an alternate location if requested.
20. Be aware the patient may be sick and tired after treatment- ensure they get safely into their residence, but do not enter the patient's home.
21. Do not accept payment or gratuities of any kind from patients or family members.

Patients Donating Cash to VCDS

We sincerely appreciate the donations we receive from patients, but we do not approve of cash donations being given to drivers. Cash donations present VCDS with audit / processing challenges and it complicates our ability to provide the patient with a charitable donation tax receipt. All donations must have an authorized receipt issued.

If a patient wishes to give you a cash donation, please,

- Decline acceptance and encourage them to send in their donation and provide them with a VCDS envelope with our preprinted address.

- Advise the patient that there is information on our website that permits them to make a donation using a credit card.
- Inform them that if they mail a cash donation and it goes astray VCDS cannot accept responsibility or issue a donation receipt. Remind them that VCDS must issue tax receipts for all donations.

If the patient insists on giving you the cash, it needs to be handled as follows:

- Use one of your VCDS drivers' cards and note the name of the donor, the date, the amount, and then sign or initial it and give it to the donor.
- Advise the patient that this is not a receipt– the VCDS tax receipt will be issued when you turn the donation in.
- We suggest you use your cell phone and take a photo of the temporary receipt to minimize any concerns that may arise.
- Do not mail the cash to VCDS instead deposit the funds and send an e-transfer to Tom Akam, Treasurer for the donation amount referencing the patient's name.
- Drivers unfamiliar with e-transfers may contact Tom at the forgoing address for assistance tom.a@volunteercancerdrivers.ca

Safety

- Safety is paramount- you are responsible to make the decision to proceed with the drive or not.
- If you are unwell, inform the dispatcher and do not drive until feeling well.
- DO NOT drive post-anaesthesia patients (unless accompanied by a friend or family member) or patients who require medical assistance or nursing care during their ride.
- Inform patient and dispatcher if you cancel the ride due to illness, weather, road, or other unsafe conditions.
- If you cancel a ride due to weather conditions, advise the patient that the dispatcher will not provide a replacement driver.
- Comply with the current Infection Protection and Control (IPAC) policy.
- Respect any COVID regulations at treatment facilities.
- Report any unusual or uncomfortable circumstances to your dispatcher.
- You may assist a patient by putting their foldable, light-weight wheelchair or walker in the trunk of your car, but drivers MUST NOT lift a patient at any time nor push a patient in a wheelchair into a facility or their home.
- If you are involved in an incident or accident: Ensure the safety and well-being of the patient and yourself.
 - Contact the police if necessary.
 - Inform your dispatcher.
 - Remain with the patient and if necessary, arrange transportation for the patient and request reimbursement, per approved policies, from VCDS for expenses incurred.
 - Complete our Incident/Accident Report and send to the dispatcher and Director Driver Operations

Administration

- For treatment appointments of 4 hours or longer (not total drive time), you can choose to:
 - Drive one way and have another driver complete the other leg.
 - Drive both ways, wait for the patient, and claim mileage for two trips.
 - Drop client, return home, pick up patient and claim mileage for two trips.
 - Vehicle expenses are paid for direct routes to/from your home to the patient's home, treatment facility and return.

- Please ensure that the Registrar and your Dispatcher have your current e-mail address.
- Immediately report to the Registrar any change in vehicle liability insurance, traffic violations, health and wellness issues that change your status as a volunteer driver.
- Drivers are reimbursed for kilometres driven based on rates established by the VCDS Board of Directors. Kilometres are calculated electronically using Google Maps but may be adjusted by the driver with an explanation to compensate for extenuating circumstances, such as construction, road closures or when patient rides are combined. Vehicle expense claims are reconciled and paid monthly. Drivers who have questions or concerns about reimbursement of expenses should contact the Treasurer.

CODE OF ETHICS, PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY & CONDUCT

All drivers are required to comply with the Society's policies. Our policy that covers the confidentiality of patient information is particularly important. We are committed to complying with BC's legislation on the protection of privacy.

We do not need or identify information concerning a patient's diagnosis. However, if confided by the patient it must not be shared with others including fellow VCDS drivers/dispatchers or immediate family.

VCDS will possess information pertaining to patient residence and phone numbers. Once the service has been provided the volunteer must discard the record. VCDS will maintain an ongoing record electronically in secure files for data and fundraising purposes.

EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

- Commit to volunteer drive on an ongoing basis.
- Own and maintain a safe, trustworthy vehicle for use in transporting patient.
- Be in good physical and mental health and be physically able to assist patients should it be required.
- Be able to consistently drive defensively, avoid distractions and obey traffic laws.
- Be familiar with accurate maps or electronic navigation devices.
- Be familiar with the use of email, have a basic familiarity with computers and be willing to receive vehicle expenses by electronic bank deposit.
- Become a member of the Society and respect and observe the policies, procedures, codes of conduct and ethics of VCDS.
- Understand that you may be asked to stop volunteering as a driver.
- To be a successful volunteer cancer driver you must:
 - have empathy, compassion, patience, and a non-judgmental approach when interacting with patients, fellow volunteers, and medical staff.
 - Have supportive listening skills.
 - Be reliable, punctual, flexible and feel competent to deal with emergency situations.
 - appreciate that you will transport to and from the patient's appointment—depending on the purpose of the patient's visit the wait time may be up to 3 or 4 hours but often may be as short as ½ hour.

NON-DISCRIMINATION & HARRASSMENT POLICY

VCDS is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and respect across all areas of our organization and in the services we provide. All volunteers will respect this Policy and treat fellow volunteers and patients accordingly. In return they can expect to be treated in the same manner by our volunteers and patients. We have zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment (which includes retaliation and bad faith complaints).

INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL (IPAC) POLICY QUICK REFERENCE

To determine if the wearing of masks is optional, recommended or mandatory and if other safety measures are required, consult with the latest version of the IPAC Policy on the drivers web page.

VCDS Dispatchers will:

1. Screen the patient at initial registration. If the patient is vaccinated record this information in R/S for the benefit of the driver.
2. Inform the patient that the driver will ask a health screening questionnaire prior to their ride and ensure the patient understands the need for ongoing safety.
3. Advise the patient that driver, patient, and any other passenger must comply with masking requirements during transport to and from treatment and the driver will provide a mask if needed.
4. Ensure the patient understands that should they experience respiratory symptoms they are to advise the driver immediately.
5. If the patient is in Assisted Living or a Care Facility and the site is on a communicable outbreak, such as COVID-19, all activity in and out of the facility is governed by the Medical Health Officer (MHO). VCDS will not provide transportation until the outbreak is declared over even if the patient is symptom free.
6. Inform the patient that if they require assistance, one person may accompany them during transportation. That individual must confirm that they will answer the Health Questionnaire to the satisfaction of the driver
7. Advise the patient that it may be necessary to transport other patients in the same car at the same time (i.e., carpool).

VCDS Drivers will:

1. Contact the patient by telephone ASAP to confirm the ride and advise that they will contact the patient again 24-hours in advance to complete the VCDS Health Screening Questionnaire and reconfirm pick up timing.
2. Confirm the masking requirement for everyone in the vehicle.
3. Remind the patient that all drivers are fully vaccinated for COVID-19.
4. Self-assess their own health consistent with the VCDS Health Screening Questionnaire and advise the Dispatcher if they have any respiratory symptoms and will not drive.
5. Use and maintain the VCDS provided 'PPE kit' that includes a supply of non-medical disposable masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, and disinfectant wipes. Drivers will ensure the 'PPE kit' is maintained and advise the Dispatcher if replacement components are needed or purchase the components directly with reimbursement provided through the monthly driver expense report.
6. Inform the patient additional patients may be travelling with them (i.e., carpooling) if they have been assigned.
7. Seating will be at the discretion of the driver. Where possible, drivers will seat all passengers in the rear seat to maximize social distancing. Should the patient have difficulty accessing the rear seat, the driver may permit the patient to take the front seat.
8. Maintain rigorous hygiene and appropriate precautions by:
 - a. Washing hands as well as providing hand sanitizer to the patient(s) before and after each contact.
 - b. Ensure vehicle sanitation is maintained by wiping down vehicle hard surface and seats with disinfectant solutions/wipes provided in the PPE kit (spray aerosols are not acceptable). Wipe down the surfaces prior to and following each patient's transport.
 - c. Ensure fresh air ventilation by partially opening front passenger and rear driver side windows at least 2"; if unable to do so, ensure "outside" air is selected.

DRIVER'S VCDS HEALTH SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

In the past 3 DAYS have you experienced any new respiratory symptoms**?

If YES do not transport.

If NO proceed to transport.

** Symptoms may include fever, sweats or chills, diarrhea, cough/worsening chronic cough, shortness of breath, taste or smell, runny nose, headache or sore throat-unrelated to their cancer treatment.

IF A PATIENT INDICATES THEY HAVE SYMPTOMS:

VCDS Dispatchers will:

Advise the Dispatcher that the patient has indicated they are experiencing respiratory symptoms, and the ride is therefore not able to proceed.

1. Cancel the ride/rides on RideScheduler and contact the patient to let them know that all booked rides will be canceled for 5 days.
2. Suggest the patient complete a COVID-19 test at home should they have access to one. The patient may resume service once the patient is asymptomatic from any respiratory illness.

IF A DRIVER INDICATES THEY HAVE RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS:

VCDS Driver will:

1. Advise the Dispatcher that they are experiencing symptoms and are unable to complete booked rides.
2. Consider completing a COVID-19 test at home should they have access to one.
3. If a driver tests positive for COVID-19 they should:
 1. Begin to self-isolate at home. Contact their Dispatcher to let them know the date of their test and advise that they will not be able to drive.
 - As they are fully vaccinated, they should self-isolate for at least 5 days from symptom onset or 5 days from when they received their test results (if they were asymptomatic at testing).
 2. If they are scheduled to pick up a patient from a long-term care home specifically, they need to ensure they wait the full 10 days following their positive test and be symptom free before driving patients from these care homes.
 3. If they continue to experience symptoms (even if mild) beyond 5 days, they are to continue to avoid driving until they are feeling well and symptom free as other viruses may be spreading in the community (i.e. RSV, Influenza).
 - VCDS does NOT require a negative COVID-19 test to resume driving service.

VCDS Dispatchers will:

1. Cancel the ride/rides on RideScheduler and time permitting attempt to re-assign the ride/rides

**Fully Vaccinated is defined as two full doses of the COVID-19 vaccine*

PARKING INSTRUCTIONS

Fraser Health Parking Authorities support the Volunteer Cancer Drivers Society by providing complimentary parking through a license plate recognition system at certain facilities for volunteers transporting patients on behalf of VCDS. In order to maintain this relationship, it is critical that volunteer drivers not abuse these privileges and obey all on-site rules.

VCDS drivers may park in handicap stalls with a valid SPARC hanger and VCDS mirror Hanger or dashboard sign. **VCDS MIRROR HANGER SHOULD BE DISPLAYED AT ALL TIMES!**

Complete list of parking facilities that permit VCDS drivers free parking.

Location	Impark Lot #
97 Braid Street - New Westminster	2237
Abbotsford Regional Hospital & Cancer Centre (ARHCC)	1525
BC Cancer Vancouver Centre (BCCA/VCC)	185
Burnaby Hospital (BH) - Emergency Lot	1503
Burnaby Hospital (BH) - Parkade	1502
BC Children's & Women's Hospital (BCCW/C&W)	209
Chilliwack General Hospital (CGH)	1249
Diamond Health Care Centre (DHCC)	184
Eagle Ridge Hospital (ERH)	1504
Jim Pattison Outpatient Care & Surgery Centre (JPOCSC)	1530
Langley Memorial Hospital (LMH) - Foundation Lot	1517
Langley Memorial Hospital (LMH) - Main Lot	1516
Lions Gate Hospital (LGH) - Parkade	144
Mental Health and Substance Use Wellness Centre (MHSU)	69
Mount St. Joseph Hospital (MSJ)	1825
Peace Arch Hospital (PAH) - Main - Lot "B"	1519
Peace Arch Hospital (PAH) - Staff - Lot "C"	1520
Richmond Hospital (RH)	202
Ridge Meadows Hospital (RMH)	1505
Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH) - HCC Parkade	1500
St Paul's Hospital (SPH) - Parkade	199
Surrey Memorial Hospital (SMH)	1510
Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) - 12th Ave Main Parkade	186

Facilities not mentioned here are not eligible for free parking. A claim on your expenses may be made for parking fees.

BC Ferries and Impark have agreed that VCDS drivers will not be ticketed while waiting in the drop off lane when displaying their official VCDS Mirror Hanger

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

Our Number One Priority – the Safety and Wellbeing of our Patients

In a vehicle accident involving yourself and your patient, common sense decisions will have to be made on the spot regarding the people involved. The VCDS will support any reasonable actions you take that are appropriate to the situation using the following as a guide.

1. Injuries to someone in the vehicle

- o Make person(s) comfortable with assurance that help will be called immediately.
- o Make the accident site safe, assess extent of patient injury:
 - Administer first aid to the extent of your knowledge.
 - Call 911, if necessary, request Ambulance/Police
 - Continue to comfort patients until an ambulance arrives.
 - Self- assess and if necessary, seek medical attention with first responders.
 - Ask patient if it is ok to call family/friend – do so if patient agrees.
 - Contact patient’s medical treatment facility – advise of situation.
- o If an ambulance is not necessary transport patient to medical treatment or arrange transportation, (taxi, Uber) and assure the patient VCDS will provide reimbursement later.

2. No injuries to anyone in the vehicle

- o Determine patient’s wishes and if your vehicle is safe to drive, self-assess to ensure ok to drive, if ok proceed to appointment or return to the patient’s residence
- o If not ok to drive, arrange public transportation for self, patient, and others in the vehicle.

3. Vehicle is not safe to drive.

- o Follow procedure in 1. above if the patient is injured.
- o If appropriate, arrange transportation for the patient to appointment or residence, (taxi, Uber) and assure the patient the VCDS will provide reimbursement later.
- o Advise patient proceeding to appointment, VCDS transportation to residence will not be available after appointment. VCDS will provide reimbursement later if public transportation (e.g. taxi, Uber, Lyft, TransLink) is used.
- o Arrange for vehicle towing and personal transportation.

4. Driver is injured and can’t drive.

- o Call 911 for an ambulance.
- o Follow appropriate procedure 1. or 3. above to the extent possible
- o If possible, follow the General Procedures below.

Note 1 In all incidents, the driver must contact the Dispatcher as soon as practical to report the incident and within 24 hours submit an Accident Report to the Director of Driver Operations with a copy to the dispatcher.

Note 2 As a direct result of the incident, drivers will be reimbursed for insurance deductible up to \$1,000 for vehicle repairs and costs for transportation to their home or treatment facility. Patients will be reimbursed for costs for transportation to their home or treatment facility.

Note 3 In all cases follow Accident General Procedures below.

ACCIDENT GENERAL PROCEDURES

Once you have ensured that all the patient's needs and concerns have been met you can deal with the ICBC and 3rd Party Insurers accident reporting procedures. It may be a stressful time but getting all available information is important. Your insurance company(ies) may have specific requirements. The following suggestions cover essential requirements:

- o Exchange information with the other driver. If possible, record on phone or another device:
 - Other driver's name, contact information.
 - Vehicle license plate number, vehicle year, make and model.
 - Insurance details, ICBC information, or other if the vehicle isn't from BC.
- o Take pictures of damage to your car and to the other car, if you feel this is necessary.
- o Obtain witness contact information if possible.
- o Provide the patient with a copy of the other driver's information and your own information. This is necessary in case the patient needs to get a Claim Number to make a subsequent ICBC injury claim.
- o Complete the VCDS Accident Report which can be downloaded using the "Volunteer Central" link available in our monthly "Operational News" emails or bookmark the following web page
<https://volunteercancerdrivers.ca/vcds-members/>

You may also use the sample accident report on the following page to take notes.

SAMPLE ACCIDENT REPORT

FILL THIS IN AS SOON AFTER THE ACCIDENT AS YOU CAN	
Date of Accident:	
Time:	
Weather Conditions:	
Name of Driver:	
Name(s) of Passengers:	
Dispatcher:	
Hospital/Clinic Visited:	
Police Notified?	
Insurance Claim Filed	
The Accident:	
Location of Accident:	
Description of the Accident:	
Describe Damage to Vehicles or Property	
Witnesses:	
Name	Driver's License, Address & Phone Number
Action Taken to Secure Patient	
Individual (s) who have Received this Report:	
Dispatcher	
Driver/Dispatch Coordinator	

