



RESPIRE VOLUNTEERS
OF SHIAWASSEE



*Giving
the
Gift
of Time*





Our Mission:

A gift of time and caring support to adults with persistent health needs and their families.

Imagine for a moment that your spouse is in assisted living and you would like to visit them but your license to drive wasn't renewed... or that the light in the hallway has gone out and you are not steady enough to climb a ladder to change it... or that you have a grocery list but no way to get to the grocery store.

Imagine that your spouse has had a stroke and you are never able to leave him/her alone... or that your children live out of state, your spouse has passed away and you are so lonely.

Imagine that you are your parent's only source of socializing... or that your mom has developed dementia and you're juggling your responsibilities of raising your family, going to work, maintaining your home and trying to help take care of mom....

There are all kinds of life situations that can create a feeling of desperation and weigh heavily on your heart and spirit. Many frail and physically challenged adults in our community struggle daily to maintain their independence. A trained Respite Volunteer can make a tremendous difference in their lives and help them to remain independent at home.

Quick Facts:

Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee makes a huge impact on the caregiver's ability to continue caring for their loved one at home.

- Family caregivers provide an average of 20 hours of care per week.
- Family caregiving lasts an average of 4.6 years.
- Caregiving often has a negative impact on the caregiver's health.
- If the caregiver is 75 or older they are likely to have health problems themselves.
- 63% of Baby Boomers are actively involved in assisting their elderly parents.
- Frequently caregiving causes severe financial crisis and bankruptcy for a family; both increasing medical bills and the caregiver's decreased income are factors.
- Respite improves the coping ability of primary caregivers who are employed, allowing these caregivers to be productive employees.
- 14.6% of Shiawassee County's population is over the age of 65.
- People are living longer and the 90+ age group is dramatically increasing.
- It costs Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee \$450 a year to help a person stay in their own home, compared to \$3,000 a month for typical out-of-home placement.
- We have over 225 active trained Respite Volunteers.
- Respite Volunteers donate an average of 12,065 total hours per year.
- Respite Volunteers combined will log approximately 46,500 miles this year.
- Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee assists over 100 new families each year.

"I moved my Grandma in with us after her surgery. Her dementia was getting worse. I would never give up on her or put her anywhere. It helps that the Respite Volunteer makes me feel less alone in this tough time."

— Family Caregiver



Our History

In 1991, a coalition was formed to assess the need for a Volunteer Respite program to fill in the gaps of health and senior care without duplicating established programs. Two years later Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee opened their doors as an interfaith volunteer program.

Initially RVS could serve only caregiving families in which the caregiver and patient resided in the same residence; however the need for respite services for caregivers who lived separately from the patient was soon evident. Later the need to serve elderly persons living alone and adults with persistent health needs was also evident.

In 1998 our program gradually grew to serve about 14 patients a month. By 2009 that number had increased to 83 patients a month. Presently RVS has over 225 active trained volunteers serving up to 135 patients a month.

Touching Lives

“Last year, Dad lost his wife of 59 years. My brother and I have families and live in the Chicago area. Dad doesn’t want to leave his home and move to the city with us, so we keep in touch and do long-distance caregiving as best as we can. Dad’s life is so different since mom passed. His vision is impaired and mom used to do the driving, so he doesn’t get out much like he and mom used to. We mentioned our concern about Dad’s loneliness to his pastor and he told us about Respite Volunteers. They have matched Dad with a volunteer who has changed his life. Now when I call Dad, he sounds much happier and tells me about playing chess and enjoying his outings with his new Respite Volunteer friend. It is such a relief to know that Dad is socializing and someone is checking in on him for us.”



Michael D-L Jordan/David-Lorne Photographic

Our Successes

We consider our program a success in many ways:

- Every time an elderly person living alone enjoys our volunteer's friendly visit and their loneliness is lessened.
- Every time our volunteers give family caregivers a break and the caregiver feels refreshed and ready to continue to cope with their caregiving responsibilities.
- Every time we help a family access local services that they are eligible for and their lives are improved.
- Every time we help someone with simple house repairs or safety improvements enabling them to remain living safely in their own home.
- Every time our volunteers deliver groceries or take an elderly person out to do errands, or have a friendly outing.
- Every time our volunteers make a new friendship with their caregiving families and patient.
- Every time our volunteers feel valuable and enriched by helping others.
- Every time we save families \$1,000's by avoiding premature out-of-home placement.

We hear these success stories every day, personally, during staff visits with families we serve, on volunteers' timesheet reports and through friendly thank you notes. We monitor our success by surveying family caregivers, patients and volunteers. Every year those surveys reinforce our confidence that we are making a difference in people's lives, saving money, improving our community and helping the elderly and adults with persistent health needs to age with dignity.



Michael D-L Jordan/David-Lorne Photographic

Story of Helen

Helen will be 98 years old this December and has been living alone since her husband passed away almost eight years ago. Helen first became acquainted with Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee when she requested help while she was caring for her husband. After her husband passed away Helen remained independent and fortunate to enjoy good health, but she was lonely. So being able to continue with her same volunteer was helpful. Eventually Helen's hearing and mobility became more challenged and she needed more help.

Helen has a son and granddaughters who are busy raising their children and working. They help her with her mail, her errands and her basic needs. But what keeps Helen's spirits high and eyes sparkling are her outings and sharing stories and laughter with her long-time Respite Volunteer friends.



Michael D-L Jordan/David-Lorne Photographic

Support Respite Volunteers

Your generous contribution will support our volunteer training and placement program. Trained Respite Volunteers are matched with a patient who lives in their community and asked to provide one to four hours of help to that person a week.

For elderly persons living alone, the volunteers provide friendly companionship, assistance with grocery shopping, transportation to and from local appointments, installation of safety equipment, and basic home repairs.

Volunteers provide respite (a period of temporary rest or relief) to family and informal caregivers who may be experiencing exhaustion, isolation and caregiver burnout. This temporary break from their caregiving responsibilities enables caregivers to return refreshed and better able to cope.

RVS also assists patients and caregiving families by providing education regarding home health, senior services and home help services they may be eligible for.



Michael D-L Jordan/David-Lorne Photographic

Our major programs include the following:

- Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Placement
- Patient and Family Caregiver Education
- New Patient Assessment, Evaluation and Continuing Education
- Volunteer Supervision, Retention and Continuing Education
- Organization of Non-patient Volunteers
- Church Liaison Program
- Respite to Youth Caregivers Program
- Promotion of Respite Volunteers services

How You Can Help

Time is more valuable than money. Once you give your time away you can't get it back. It is irreplaceable. Respite Volunteers willingly give their precious gift of time to help those in need. They find great value in helping others to cope with their challenges. Not everyone has spare time to invest in others. In fact, very few people do.

If you can't afford to spend your time volunteering, perhaps you are able to help financially. Your generous donation will enable Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee to recruit, train and organize volunteers to help your neighbors. Your valuable gift will make a huge difference in someone's life. Family caregivers will be able to care for their loved one at home and elderly folks will be able to remain living safely in their own home because you chose to care and share.



George Nama, Chrysalis Photography

Making A Difference

"I'm not so depressed because I have company."

— Patient

"I would not have been able to live here alone if it were not for Respite Volunteers."

— Patient

"It is nice to have an organization to turn to for information on services available in the community."

— Caregiver

"It is a great comfort to have someone visiting my husband while I'm at work. It helps his state of mind to know he won't be alone on those days."

— Caregiver

"Helping others always brings rewards!"

— Volunteer

"Caregiver education has helped us prepare for the future and offered suggestions to deal with our greatest challenges."

— Caregiver

"I learned how to be more patient and considerate of others. I enjoy being helpful."

— Volunteer

It's time to get involved!

Please contact us at:




710 W. King Street
Owosso, Michigan 48867

989.725.1127

respitvolunteer@frontier.com

www.shiarespite.org

 Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday

8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



George Nama, Chrysalis Photography

This is where the office is located, but the real spirit of Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee is located in the homes of the patients and caregiving families we serve and in the hearts of our volunteers.

The Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee Board of Directors wishes to thank The Cook Family Foundation for grant funding for Fund Development and for the Nonprofit Capacity Building Program.