

STAR PALS – MEDI MINDERS FACTSHEET

1 Who we are

The Medi Minder service is one of the support elements in the Star PALS programme. It is provided to patients **free of charge**. It offers parents/other caregivers a few hours of respite a month, to care for other children in the family, run errands or simply to take a breather.

2 Who we help

Our patients comprise children and young adults who have life-threatening or life-limiting conditions.

Child patients are sick children who are at a higher risk of being critically ill as further aggressive treatment continues. The disease does not necessarily have to be fatal. We also support families with children that have curable or chronic conditions. An example would be a child who has a relapse after an initial treatment for cancer.

Young adult patients may be children with conditions that cannot be cured and were expected to die in their childhood but have lived into adulthood. An example would be a child with a congenital neurological condition which severely affects both mental and physical functions, resulting in severe disabilities.

3 Work of a Medi Minder

A Medi Minder visits a patient's home to take over the caregiver's role for a period of up to eight hours per month during the day, on weekdays or weekends. Eg. Two 4-hour assignments per month.

For Star PALS patients who are in good health and still independently mobile, here are some common but non-exhaustive examples of the work performed by Medi Minders:

- Provide adult supervision in the absence of the caregiver
- Provide companionship to the patient. This can be done by reading stories, watching a DVD together, playing a game, drawing, etc
- Supervise meal-times, bath-time, toilet-time and/or nap-time
- Supervise or assist the patient to take his/her medication i.e. ensure that the right medication is taken in the right dose, at the right time of day

For Star PALS patients who are wheelchair/bed-bound, here are some common but non-exhaustive examples of the work done by Medi Minders:

- Provide adult supervision in the absence of the caregiver
- Provide companionship to the patient. This can be done by reading stories, watching a DVD together, playing a game, drawing etc
- Help prepare milk feeds for the patient as instructed by caregiver
- Provide basic nursing care such as: (TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED)
 - Help feed the patient (tube feeding may be involved)
 - Help perform suctioning i.e. remove mucus and fluids from the nose, mouth, or back of the throat, tracheostomy of the patient using a suction catheter (a thin flexible tube)
- Help transfer the patient from the bed to the commode or wheelchair
- Help to change the patient's diapers
- Help to bath and dress the patient
- Help the patient with his/her medication, monitor and record medication taken

4 Profile of a Medi Minder

A candidate for Medi Minders should ideally have prior experience in

- working with children
- or patient care

We welcome those who are or formerly were in the following professions:

- Nurses
- Hospital Attendants
- Patient Care Assistants

- Therapy Assistants
- Child-Care teachers
- Mothers with grown children
- Babysitters
- Hospital volunteers
- Secondary or Tertiary students

We will call you to check your availability for each assignment. You will be briefed before each new assignment and we will also introduce you to the family and their needs.

5 Selection and training process

As Medi Minders work with children, a relatively stringent screening process is involved. All Medi Minders will need to register as a HCA volunteer first. You can sign up here:-

<https://friends.hca.org.sg/HCA/BCMain/basepg.htm?widgets=../iContact/Volunteer/Widgets/VolSignUpForm.bcw.htm>

After this, we will let you complete and submit a self-assessment form. You will then be notified to attend a one-hour HCA Volunteer Induction Program, including filling up a specific Medi Minder application form so we can arrange a face-to-face interview with you. Each Medi Minder candidate will also need to give two references.

If you have been successfully shortlisted, you will need to attend a half-day or full-day training session. An information handbook will be sent to you four to six weeks prior to the training session, for you to learn and complete theory based assessments. Once these assessments are completed, you will need to send them back to our coordinator one to two weeks before the training session for review.

Only upon successful completion of the relevant theory learning component and training session, will you be given six trial assignments to be trained on-the-job (with five practical skill assessments embedded).

After the six trial assignments, we will send all our Medi Minder trainees for a three-day Child First Aid for Infant / Child Care course if they do not have any prior first aid

training. We will formally confirm the candidate as a competent Medi Minder when all of the above are attained.

6 Training hours

Every Medi Minders will need to attend both trainings (except for practicing registered nurse volunteers, who will only be attending training 1). These are:-

1. Introduction to patient care (Theory & Practical) – four or eight hours (conducted by Coordinator and paediatric nursing team from Star PALS)
2. Child First Aid for Infant / Child Care Personnel – 25 hours (over two Saturdays and one Sunday)

Star PALS will book and cover the fee for the first aid course. Candidates who have been trained in CPR and First Aid in the past 12 months may be exempted from attending training 2, at the discretion of the Star PALS Programme Director.

Medi Minders will need to attend refresher courses (training 2) every 24 months and may also be required to attend a refresher course on practical skills (training 1) if these skills have not been practiced more than six months.

7 Volunteer hours

Assignments generally last four to eight hours during day time. Medi Minders will not be asked to help for a period of more than eight hours per day.

8 Contact

If you are interested to be a Medi Minder or would like to know more about the service, please contact the Star PALS Admin Executive at starpals@hcahospicecare.org.sg or call 6251 2561.