

## **INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL SUPPORT CENTRE FOR PALLIATIVE TERMINAL CARE VOLUNTEERS (VPTZ) , BASED ON REGISTRATION 2009**

### **THE VPTZ AND ITS LOCAL MEMBERS**

- In 2009 VPTZ included 199 affiliated local organizations, including 79 hospices. 169 of these took part in the registration. Since January 2011 the number of members is 208;
- Provided services cover 95% of the Netherlands;
- About 9,800 volunteers who give over 1 million hours of voluntary palliative terminal care. Volunteers are predominantly female, on average 55 years of age;
- 430 coordinators, on average 30 h/week;
- All hospices have paid coordination. 70% of the VPTZ organizations specialized in home care employ a paid coordinator, the rest have coordinators who work on a voluntary basis.
- The local VPTZ-members receives subsidies from the Ministry of Health totaling 12,1 million Euros (in 2010) to cover coordinators' and volunteers' expenses (insurance, training, activities, out-of-pocket expenses, etc.), and a further 2 million Euros in respect of the hospices' accommodation costs.

### **AVERAGE DEPLOYMENT OF VOLUNTEERS PER YEAR (2008)**

- In total 9,250 patients are supported in their final stage of life;
  - Of which 55% receive support from the volunteers in their own homes;
  - Of which 45% moved to the hospices;
- Over 10,000 personal meetings took place to provide advice and information;
- 3,000 relatives are offered support during the process of loss and grief.

### **WHERE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE SUPPORT**

- 76% of the organizations provides support in the patient's own home;
- 22% in residential nursing homes;
- 59% in hospices;
- 9% in residential care homes;
- 5% in residential facilities for the disabled;
- 5% in other locations such as hospitals.

### **THE NATURE OF THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY VOLUNTEERS**

- Practical help and 'a listening ear' for patients and families;
- Sitting with the patient through the night;
- Remaining with the patient so that relatives can spend a little time elsewhere ('respite care');
- Being on hand to give advice and provide information;
- Helping with personal care;
- Doing light housework;
- Visiting the family after the patient has died, if desired.

## THE NATIONAL VPTZ ORGANIZATION SUPPORTS LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VARIOUS WAYS:

- Improving professional ability
  - Over 83% of the new volunteers took part in an introductory in-house training course (of eight three-hour sessions);
  - Each year 1.250 volunteers follow training organized by the National Centre VPTZ;
  - Each year 150 coordinators (35% of total) are trained on a national level;
  - A management course for the members of local governing committees;
  - Peer supervision sessions and on demand thematic meetings for local boards.
- Centre of knowledge and meeting and network place
  - A website (including a section which can be accessed by VPTZ members only), in addition to an interactive mailing list, a forum on diversity
  - Publication of the newsletter *Antenne*, which has a circulation of almost 9,000 and is sent to all volunteers six times a year.
  - Publication of a newsletter which is sent to all VPTZ members and coordinators six times a year.
  - A national conference for all volunteers, held every four years.
  - Two seminars and a day of inspiration per year for coordinators, each examining specific aspects of voluntary work, in total 180 attendants per year;
  - An annual policy discussion meeting for the board members of all VPTZ member organizations
  - A yearly report with statistic information on clients, volunteers, financial issues and from that benchmark reports for each member per organization type.
- Public affairs and public relations
  - Consultations with Ministry of Health (VWS) and Platform Palliative Care, for example about the subsidy for the local organizations;
  - Representation in the field of volunteer work, palliative care and informal care;
  - Public relations with politics, financial funds, insurance companies, knowledge centers, research institutes and private companies.
- Improving good quality and continuity of the provision of services
  - A manual on 'how to start a hospice';
  - Stimulating regional tuning and cooperation;
  - Consulting and coaching services for individual members;
  - Reference book on VPTZ organizations, which contains many sample documents and templates;
  - Development of own Quality Framework (Circle 'Being there'; Framework 'Good Governance').

## FAMILIES' APPRECIATION OF THE VPTZ VOLUNTEERS

In most situations requiring palliative terminal care, several volunteers will be involved at one time or another. Families and informal carers are 'satisfied' (30%) to 'extremely satisfied' (68%) with the support provided. When asked to score the volunteers on a scale of 1 to 10, they awarded an average rating of 8,7. (Source: K. Luykx & P. van den Akker, *Een extra steun in de rug, onderzoek over de ervaringen met vrijwilligers in de palliatieve terminale zorg*, IVA Tilburg, November 2003).