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**Things to Keep in Mind When Referring a Family to Hospitality Homes**

*Please introduce the idea that staying with our program means staying in the* ***private*** *home of a volunteer host. Hosts are trained and each home is visited to ensure the comfort and safety of our guest. Each host home is selected based on convenience to local hospitals, and each host home is different.*

**Can Hospitality Homes accommodate any length of stay?**

Our program generally provides short-term accommodations (1-14 days); however, we are often able to accommodate longer stays, up to three months, depending on the needs of the guest(s) and host availability.

**Who is eligible?**

* Guests must be traveling from ≥ 50 miles away (80 km).
* Guests must have a permanent home address to return to.
* Guest is an important support person for the patient.
* Patient must be in active treatment.
* Is not likely to put the host family at risk.

Hospitality Homes is an inclusive organization; we are open to all families, regardless of income, nationality, or the patient’s age and diagnosis.

**Does Hospitality Homes accept patients as guests?**

Our program is designed to serve the families and friends of patients. However, we do accept patients as guests as long as they are accompanied by a friend or family member and are medically independent.

**Is a host home appropriate for high risk or patients with immunosuppression?**

There are many factors that make it difficult for us to place a patient with immunosuppression in a host home. While we can take factors such as pets and allergens into account while making a placement, because our guests generally share common space with the host, we cannot guarantee that the setting will be appropriate for this need.

**Does Hospitality Homes accept guests who do not have a permanent home address, or are in the process of moving to Boston?**

No, we require that all applicants have a permanent home address to return to upon their departure from their host home.We also cannot provide temporary housing for a family that is transitioning to Boston and needs a place to stay until they find permanent housing.

**What is needed before a placement can be made?**

Guests can fill out an application on our website: [www.hosp.org](http://www.hosp.org). Applications take about 20 minutes to complete and are designed to ensure that an appropriate guest/host placement is made. Additionally, a reference is required for each guest 18 years and older. Guests provide contact information for the reference and Hospitality Homes contacts the references by phone.

**Who is an acceptable reference for a Hospitality Homes guest?**

A professional reference is required for every adult guest 18 years old and older. Acceptable references include employers, former employers, co-workers, a member of the clergy, a social worker that has been working with the guest for more than one month, and doctors. Friends, family members, and neighbors are not appropriate references.

**How long does it take to make a placement?**

It generally takes several days to make a placement. While turning an application around same-day is difficult, it may be possible depending on host availability and the time it takes to clear references. Applying about 2-3 weeks ahead of time is ideal.

**How accessible are the hospitals from the Hospitality Host Homes?**

The homes in our program can accommodate different transportation needs, including guests who need parking or access to public transportation. We have a minimal number of host homes within walking distance of the Longwood Medical area, yet most of our host homes are roughly 20-30 minutes from the hospital via public transportation or driving. The homes on public transportation are less likely to have parking as well.

**What does a host home provide?**

We guarantee that the host home is a clean and comfortable place to stay, and that the guests have access to a clean bathroom. Kitchen access and other amenities are up to each host’s discretion.

**What if the guests don’t speak English?**

Most of our host families only speak English, but some are comfortable with accepting guests who don’t speak English into their homes. If the hospital can provide the help of a translator, hosts are even more comfortable. We also have staff members in the office who speak Spanish to assist native Spanish speakers through the application process.

**What if a potential guest has an issue with stairs or pet allergies?**

We are able to accommodate the environmental needs of most guests. However, stair restrictions can be limiting because most of our host homes have the guest room on the second floor. Please encourage guests to inform us of their environmental needs when they apply.

**Are the host homes safe?**

Our hosts are not compensated for volunteering with Hospitality Homes and therefore their only incentive for taking people into their homes is their kind heart. However, Hospitality Homes performs the Massachusetts CORI check on all new hosts as of 2012. The Hospitality Homes staff meets all prospective hosts in person, sees their guest space, and goes through a training process in their home.

**Will a guest be a burden to a Host?**

Hosts are trained volunteers and they understand that their guests are going through a difficult time. They realize that guests might be coming home late from the hospital, leaving very early, and dealing with stressful issues. As long as guests communicate with their host and demonstrate mutual respect, they will not be a burden.

**How can I learn more about the program?**

If you have questions about our program, please call our office at (888) 595-4678 or visit our website at [www.hosp.org](http://www.hosp.org).