

# Unit 14: Challenges Faced by the *Accompagnateur*

The work of an *accompagnateur* is done in solidarity with those who are suffering. You must be resourceful and solve problems every day. You must advocate for your patients and teach them to advocate for themselves. This can be rewarding. It is also hard work. In this unit, you will learn about your strengths. You will learn about the help that colleagues can give each other.



## Objectives

By the end of Unit 14, you will be able to:

- a. List 5 things you have in common with other *accompagnateurs*.
- b. Describe the meaning of solidarity between *accompagnateurs* and patients.
- c. Name and discuss challenges faced in patient care, in maintaining confidentiality, in relations between patients and *accompagnateurs*, and in dealing with stigma and discrimination.
- d. Describe when to ask for help, who to ask, how soon to get help, and what kind of help is needed.
- e. List the key people who can help you with your work.



## Key Points

- As an *accompagnateur* you will face many challenges, but you are not responsible for dealing with all these challenges yourself.
- There are people and resources to help you. They include nurses, doctors, social workers, psychologists, and other *accompagnateurs*.
- *Accompagnateurs* are part of a support system with other *accompagnateurs*, and they should act as resources for each other.



## Key Vocabulary

**Advocate:** to speak out for a desired goal and strive to achieve a desired goal

**Solidarity:** working and struggling together because of shared interests and responsibilities

## Support Network

Almost everyone uses informal support networks. When farmers ask each other which seed gives the best yield, they are supporting each other. When mothers talk to each other about how to get their children to study harder, they are working together in an informal support network. When an *accompagnateur* asks a nurse a question about how to best help a patient, she is using her support network.

You are one person in a network of caregivers who work together. All the other *accompagnateurs* who are participating in the same training as you are part of your network. So are the doctors, nurses, social workers, and pharmacists who work at the health clinic. You can turn to them when you have questions about medical issues. You can turn to them when you know your patient needs social or economic support. You can turn to them for advice on how to handle a difficult situation.



## Accompagnateur Checklist

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- Identify key people and resources that can help you solve problems.
  
- When you feel overwhelmed, seek out the support of other *accompagnateurs* and clinic staff.



