

## North West LHIN Patient and Family Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

### Background

Local Health Integration Networks aspire to learn what patients, families and caregivers value most in our health care system. In order to improve health outcomes and experiences, patients and families across Ontario must be engaged and empowered to have a strong voice to shape care delivery. Local Health Integration Networks are committed to partnering and listening to patients and families to ensure that changes in the health care system reflect the needs and opinions of those it serves.

The North West LHIN values the input of local residents, communities, health service providers, and other key stakeholders, which is why community engagement is a core value that guides planning and decision-making processes. The North West LHIN must ensure planning for health service delivery reflects the needs of the local community and the realities of the local service environment. The North West LHIN also recognizes that patients, caregivers and health service providers in local communities understand best what their unique health care needs are. Through continuous community engagement with health service providers, key stakeholders, communities, and the public, the input received helps inform the strategic planning priorities of the North West LHIN.

Patient engagement is a key commitment articulated in the “Patients First Act” and one of the approaches to achieve this is through the establishment of advisory Committees with information sharing between these Committees.

Engagement with patients, families and caregivers is key to ensuring ongoing collaboration, partnership and seeking opportunities to align work together to address the needs of the citizens of Northwestern Ontario with a focus on:

- Improving population health,
- Improving the care experience (access and quality) and,
- Creating a sustainable health care system where value for investment is achieved.

In 2017, the LHIN’s mandate was expanded beyond planning, integration, and funding to incorporate delivery of home and community care within the geographic area. Through the “Patient’s First: Action Plan for Health” transformation of our health care system is aimed at putting patients at the centre of care; making the system more accessible, equitable and

integrated specifically focused on access, connect; inform and protect. Additionally, the LHINs have an enhanced role with primary care providers and stronger relationships with Public Health agencies in the LHIN region.

LHINs are Crown agencies and are part of the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care's transformation agenda aimed at improving the delivery of health services within Ontario. To be effective LHINs need to establish effective collaborative relationships with key partners including health service providers, professionals, other Ministries and broader community members. Creative and innovative solutions for the local health system are needed to improve health outcomes of the population and achieve the desired and necessary results for our health care system.

The North West LHIN is advancing the Ministry priorities, the Board's Strategic Directions, the Integrated Health Services Plan and the Health Services Blueprint model. The goal is to create an integrated health system that supports a patient centered model of care where health system partners better link and coordinate care within and between sectors across communities at the local level, sub-region and regional level in Northwestern Ontario. System outcomes include reducing duplication of services; improving transitions in care between delivery partners and closing the gaps in services that exist across the region.

### **Overall Roles and Responsibilities**

The North West LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee will aim to assist in shaping the North West LHIN's programs, services and initiatives designed to improve care across the LHIN region.

The North West LHIN Patient and Family Advisory Committee will apply their learning, collective experience and insights to:

- Identify and advise on opportunities to incorporate the patient's perspective in initiatives to better integrate care across the region and across the health care system.
- Support effective patient engagement within the North West LHIN.
- Provide advice on recommendations about health care access or service delivery improvements from the patient and/or family caregiver perspective.
- Provide input on North West LHIN policies and standards guiding North West LHIN initiatives, particularly regarding patient care and patient engagement.
- Recommend strategies and practical ideas for improving patient care, and caregiver recognition and support.

- Work in partnership and engage in co-design with the North West LHIN CEO, LHIN staff, service providers and partners.
- Link and collaborate with other patient and family advisory groups within the North West LHIN and across the province as appropriate.

### **Guiding Principles**

When executing its mandate, the North West LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee will adhere to the following principles:

- The Committee will make every effort to provide informed advice on North West LHIN policy and program initiatives.
- The Committee will take into account population health and health equity in making its recommendations.
- The North West LHIN will respond to the Committee's advice and final decisions will remain with North West LHIN staff, North West LHIN CEO and shared with the North West LHIN Board of Directors.
- The Committee will work in alignment with best practices identified in the North West LHIN Community Engagement Guidelines and the provincial Patient Engagement Framework

### **Accountability and Reporting Relationships**

The North West LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee will provide regular updates and report annually at minimum on its work plans, activities and progress to the North West LHIN Board of Directors through the North West LHIN CEO report.

### **Roles of Members:**

The role of the Committee member is to provide advice to the North West LHIN based on the patient, caregiver and family experience that is meaningful to all people living in the North West LHIN region:

This will involve:

- Doing their utmost to attend each meeting of the North West LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee (either in person or by teleconference / videoconference).
- Being prepared to be active participants in each meeting (e.g., all meeting materials should be read prior to each meeting).

- Identifying opportunities for improvements in the planning and delivery of services.
- Participating in initiatives where the patient's voice can inform improvements outside of the North West LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee.
- Acting in accordance with the internal policies of the organization and relevant legislation, including the [Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.; and
- Approving and reviewing the Terms of Reference in collaboration with the North West LHIN staff as needed.

### **The role of the Co-Chairs is to:**

In addition to the Committee member's responsibilities outlined above, the Co-Chairs will also be responsible for:

- Liaising between the Committee and the North West LHIN CEO
- Encouraging participation and active involvement among members.
- Leading and facilitating Committee meetings (for people both attending in-person, online or via telephone).
- Attending external meetings on behalf of the Committee and at the request of the North West LHIN CEO.
- Setting the agenda for each meeting.
- Assisting in the evaluation of the Patient Family Advisory Committee on an annual basis.
- Guiding North West LHIN staff in-between meetings; and
- Recruiting and orientating new Committee members (in collaboration with the North West LHIN staff who support the Committee).

### **The role of LHIN staff is to:**

- The Vice President Home and Community Care will lead the Patient Family Advisory Committee and support the meetings as delegated by the CEO
- Provide secretariat support which may include, but is not limited to, logistics and coordination, organization of meetings, project management of Committee activities, orientation, research and analysis, report writing and translation, and performance measurement and evaluation.
- Respond to Committee feedback and advice.
- Facilitate discussions with the North West LHIN CEO, North West LHIN staff and others as appropriate.

- Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Committee Co-Chairs.
- Prepare briefing notes about agenda items and ensuring that they are clearly written and crafted with the perspective of what would be important to patients and family advisors.
- Answer questions about policies / issues answered in a respectful, helpful, and prompt manner.
- Support the Co-Chairs and existing Committee members with the recruitment and orientation of new members; and
- Collaborate with the Co-Chairs, identifying appropriate topics for engaging the Committee and developing appropriate meeting agendas and activities to elicit meaningful input.

### **Membership**

The North West LHIN Patient and Family Advisory Committee will consist of up to 10 – 15 members. The role of a Patient and Family Committee Advisor member is to share his or her unique stories, experiences, opinions and perspectives in order to strengthen engagement of patients, caregivers and the public in important local health planning decisions and policies.

Members will be selected and recruited in such a manner to ensure diversity that is reflective of the North West LHIN's population makeup, including in relation to age, geographic distribution across the North West LHIN sub-region, gender, cultural diversity, socio-economic status and health experience with the health system. Membership will also represent patient, family/caregiver experiences across different health care settings, including in hospitals, Long-Term Care Homes, and home and community care settings.

Members may participate on focused sub-Committees or working groups of the North West LHIN Patient and Family Advisory Committee as needed based on their interests and experiences with different aspects of the health care system.

Members shall be appointed for a term of up to 2-3 years. Length of term will be discussed with potential members and may be varied to allow for staggering. Members may be re-appointed for an additional term at the North West LHIN CEO's discretion.

Patient and Family Advisory Committee members shall be members of the public and be at least 18 years of age. Because elected representatives, practicing healthcare professionals, paid employees of health charities, employees of companies in health industries, elected officials, and employees of provincial and federal health ministries and agencies already have a strong voice in making their opinions known to decision makers, these persons are not eligible for membership.