



Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington

Ontario Health Team

Community Council Orientation Handbook



Adapted from the Algoma Ontario Health Team Partner Handbook



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Welcome Community Council member,

Welcome to the Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington Ontario Health Team (FLA OHT).

We are a collaborative team of health professionals, organizations, and community members, working to redesign the health-care system to keep people as well as possible and connected with high-quality, easy-to-access services.

The FLA OHT seeks community voices at every level of our initiatives. We involve patients, clients, family members, caregivers, equity-seeking individuals, and Indigenous and Francophone community members. This ensures that our health system is actively co-designed with the input of those who directly experience it.

We are excited to welcome you to our team and encourage you to share your experiences and be a voice for your community. In your role, you will collaborate with health-care partners, project managers, clinicians, and other members of the team to help develop projects and systems that better meet the needs of our community. We look forward to your input.

We've created this handbook as background information for you on our initiatives, and to help answer questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact any member of the team if you have questions at any time. We look forward to collaborating with you!

Sincerely,

Kim Morrison, Executive Lead



A strong culture of person-centred, caregiver and public engagement will support a high-quality health and wellness system for our community members

Let's get started.

What is Person-Centred Care?

Person-centred care occurs when people actively participate in their care, which is focused on their individual needs. It is a partnership between health system professionals and the community members they serve. This is the foundation of our community partnership and the focus of our engagement program.

How do We Engage the Community?

We believe that understanding the experiences of community members is vital in creating a responsive health care system. We offer a variety of contact opportunities for the community. These include everything from participating in surveys or group discussions to longer-term participation in projects, working groups, committees, and leadership roles.



Community partners can be patients, clients, families, caregivers, care partners, people with lived experience, and other individuals who interact with health and social services. There is no requirement to be part of any organization or existing Patient Family Advisory Group or other patient/family/caregiver council. It is also not a requirement that every community council member sits on a working group. However you identify, you are welcome on our Community Council.

The Importance of Language: “Patient” versus “Person”

One of our key goals is inclusivity. We aim to use language that allows all people who will be served by the FLA OHT to feel included.

Much of the vocabulary of traditional systems is hierarchical in nature. Health care terms like patient, client, consumer, caregiver, or user, imply a power structure with the person at the center of care being a passive recipient of the expertise of others. This can exclude equal participation. We will limit the use of these terms as our goal is to have truly active partnerships among all members of this OHT.

We also require that the terms we use are easily translatable and present the same notions of membership and inclusion in French and in other languages.

We do use acronyms. We've included a list of the more commonly used ones in this package.

The Role of a Community Council Member

Characteristics of a successful Community Council member:

- Respectful of others and their perspectives
- Comfortable speaking in a group and interacting with others
- Good listener
- Ability to use personal experience constructively
- Ability to see the big picture
- Demonstrate a non-judgmental and positive attitude
- Work collaboratively with other community partners and staff
- Desire to expand knowledge and skills
- Desire to participate in creating meaningful change



As a member, it is important that you:

- Participate as an active member of the group you've joined and attend meetings regularly.
- Tell your story and share your point of view.
- Advocate for patient, family, and caregiver needs from a broad perspective.
- Participate in the development of new processes, programs, and services.
- Objectively listen to and appreciate the views of others.
- health system planning and decision-making.
- Promote improved collaboration and relationships between community members and staff.
- Read meeting materials before the meeting and come to the meeting prepared to contribute and discuss agenda items. Materials will be sent out the week before the meeting.
- Respect the collaborative process and understand that final decision-making related to care and process improvements is the responsibility of FLA OHT organizations.
- Maintain confidentiality of patient and organizational sensitive material.



Preparing for Meetings

Meeting frequency and structure will depend on the groups you are involved in. Prior to each meeting, you may receive documents to review. These can include a meeting agenda, minutes from previous meetings, and/or documents or presentations that will be discussed in upcoming meetings. We expect that Community Council members will review these materials before meetings and come prepared to discuss and contribute.

To be an effective member of a meeting, you can:

- Come prepared – go through the agenda in advance and review items as required
- For each agenda item, ask yourself: How can I contribute to the discussion? What could be some possible concerns? What is relevant to bring to this discussion?
- Be involved
- Be a good listener
- Support your fellow community partners
- Initiate dialogue instead of debate. Debate is argumentative and challenges the viewpoints of others. Dialogue is about reserving judgment, listening, asking questions, and building a shared understanding

Our role as co-chairs and FLA OHT staff:

- Explain internal processes and terminology as needed for clarification and understanding.
- Help orient you to virtual meeting software as needed.
- Provide a safe space for you to contribute and be respected for your insight and suggestions.
- Work with you to address questions or concerns related to involvement
- Provide initial orientation and training, as well as ongoing training (where required), to ensure you are well-equipped and comfortable to actively participate

Welcome to the community council! We look forward to hearing from you.

Resources for Understanding Ontario's health-care system

- 'Ontario's health system: Key insights for engaged citizens, professionals, and policymakers,' in Rise, edited by the McMaster Health Forum's director. There are free PDF documents available for download on this site.
<https://www.mcmasterforum.org/rise/access-resources/ontarios-health-system>
- Healthcare in Ontario: How does it Work and How is it Funded?
<https://www.closingthegap.ca/healthcare-in-ontario-how-does-it-work-and-how-is-it-funded/>
- Understanding Health care in Ontario
https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ministry/hc_system/#:~:text=Most%20people%20in%20Ontario%20call,services%20they%20provide%20to%20you

Additional Resources on Person-Centred Co-design:

- Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care: <https://www.ipfcc.org/>
- Health Quality Ontario Patient Partnering Framework:
<https://www.hqontario.ca/Patient-Partnering/Patient-Partnering-Framework>
- Ontario Hospital Association Patient and Family Engagement:
<https://www.oha.com/quality-safety-and-patient-and-family-centred-care/patientand-family-engagement>
- Ontario Caregiver Organization: <https://ontariocaregiver.ca/authentic-engagementand-co-design-are-the-key-ingredients-to-meaningful-change/>

Time to get started!

If you have additional questions or comments, please connect with Marie Bartlett at marieba@kchc.ca.

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