



WINTER 2024



CEO'S PATIENT AND FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Newsletter

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Message from the CEO



Bonnie Camm, President and CEO,
Brant Community Healthcare System

“ Patient and Family Advisors (PFAs) are essential members of Team BCHS. They have consistently inspired us with innovative initiatives that improve patient experience, including Patient Experience Rounding, strengthening connections with local communities, and developing wayfinding solutions. This newsletter serves as a testament to their pivotal work. Their partnership, advocacy and input are invaluable and greatly appreciated by our team.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new members and our first-ever Youth Advisory Council. We are truly fortunate to have their insights and contributions, which we rely on as we strive to enhance patient care and ensure that it meets the diverse needs of our community. Their involvement is vital to our ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive and effective healthcare environment.

Thank you to our amazing PFAs for all that they do!



Message from Anna and Harold

Co-Chairs of
CEO's Patient
and Family
Advisory Council

The one constant in healthcare is change. Much has happened since the spring newsletter. New program councils have been formed, such as Oncology and the Youth Advisory Council, to name a few. The Equity Diversity Inclusiveness and Belonging Council is being developed. The Cardiac Council has now joined the Medical Inpatient Program Council. We are fortunate to have three Patient and Family Advisors (PFAs) on the Strategic Planning Committee Vision 2030.

One challenge in this ever-changing landscape is ensuring that the patient and family voices continue to be heard and remain at the center of all care. As PFAs, we must embrace change and adapt to this new reality.

I am honoured to be the voice of patients and families to achieve the best possible experience. As Patient and Family Advisors (PFAs), we hope that sharing our lived experiences with you at program councils and committees will shape and influence positive changes in healthcare delivery for all.

Sara Fretz has been instrumental in recruitment, and I am excited to announce that we now have 30 PFAs. Also, I am happy to announce that Harold Stahl shares the Co-chair responsibilities with me at the CEO's Patient and Family Advisory Council. Harold brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to this role. In closing, I would like to thank and acknowledge the commitment and dedication of all my fellow PFAs.

Anna, Co-Chair of the CEO's Patient and Family Advisory Council

I am a new Patient Family Advisor and would like to share my thoughts on this diverse and passionate group of volunteers. Each member brings a unique story and motivation for joining. We represent patients, seniors, those with special needs, Indigenous people and children, amplifying their voices within the Brant Community Healthcare System.

We're excited to welcome new members, including nine youth aged 17 to 24, forming a youth council focused on mental health. I appreciate the openness of BCHS staff, volunteers, and our CEO, Bonnie Camm. Their support strengthens our participation in initiatives to improve "People-Centered Care."

This newsletter is a celebration of our membership and the accomplishment of reaching new heights and bringing to focus those small incremental changes by looking through the lens of the patient and family to improve "People-Centred Care." Let me close with the following quotes.

"Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up, see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead."

Louisa May Alcott

"In order to succeed, we must first believe that we can."

Michael Korda

Harold Stahl, Co-Chair of the CEO's Patient and Family Advisory Council

CEO's Patient and Family Advisors

Anna Maynard (PFAC Co-Chair)

Committees and Councils:

- Perioperative Quality Council
- Medical Inpatient (MIP) Program Council
- Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- AODA-Accessibility Committee
- Emerging Leaders Core Committee

Outside BCHS: Anna enjoys Sci-Fi, especially Star Trek and the Guardians of the Galaxy. She is also an accomplished watercolour painter.



Harold Stahl (PFAC Co-Chair)

Committee and Councils:

- CEO Patient Family Advisor Council Co-Chair
- Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- Palliative Care Quality Council
- Critical Care Council
- Hospital Redevelopment

Outside BCHS: Harold has been a Corvette owner for over 30 years. He enjoys glamping with his wife in their new RV.



David Kirk

Committees and Councils:

- Emergency Program Council
- ED Redevelopment Committee

Outside BCHS: David worked as a school principal.



Janice Kucharew

Committees and Councils:

- Post-Acute Quality Council
- Medical Inpatient (MIP) Program Council
- Oncology Quality Council
- Falls Prevention Committee
- Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- Wellness Committee

Outside BCHS: Janice is an enthusiastic singer, and spends her winter months in Florida.



Karen Dinsmore

Committees and Councils:

- Cardiology Quality Council
- Critical Incident Review Committee

Outside BCHS: Karen enjoys decorating cakes.



Jodi Rock

Committees and Councils:

- Indigenous Cultural Safety Committee



Bryony Fox

Committees and Councils:

- Potentially joining our Essential Caregiver Partner Program

Outside BCHS: Bryony is a trained chef.



CEO's Patient and Family Advisors

Bruce Wilson

Committees and Councils:

- Ambulatory Council



Outside BCHS: Bruce has been a woodworker for over 60 years and has performed over 2,000 therapy dogs visits with four great dogs over the past 20 years. He has also been a guitarist since 1965.

Krystal Nagy

Committees and Councils

- Emergency Program Council
- Pediatric and NICU Council



Outside BCHS: Krystal is the mother of a two - year-old, a nail technician and advanced makeup artist.

Angela DeMontigny

Committees and Councils:

- Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council
- Spiritual Care Committee



Outside BCHS: Angela is an international fashion designer and artist, with a major art installation at Pier 8 in Hamilton.

Nancy Young

Committees and Councils:

- Stroke Quality Council
- Pressure Injury Prevention Steering Committee
- Patient Flow Steering Committee



Outside BCHS: Nancy is an antique car owner and outdoor enthusiast.

Shannon McKenzie

Committees and Councils:

- Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council

Outside BCHS: Shannon works at the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind.

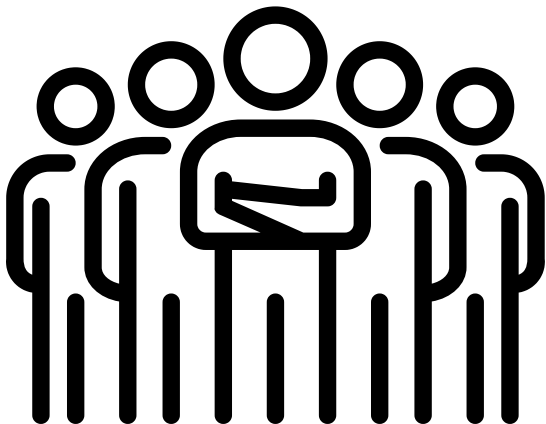


Folasade (Fola) Akinfe

Committees and Councils:

- Clinical Ethics Committee

Outside BCHS: Fola is from Nigeria and is a physician.



Heather Hadley

Committees and Councils:

- Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council

Meet our new Patient and Family Advisors: Arooj, Mohammad, Susanne, Will and Anthony. They will join our PFAs in improving patient experience by being a bridge between patients and the hospital. We are excited to include their unique, lived experience as part of our team, helping us improve care at BCHS.

Arooj Shaikh

Committees and Councils:

- EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Staff Council)



Outside BCHS: Arooj is a mom of three, a medical radiation therapist registered with CMRTIO and currently working in the pharmaceutical industry as a senior manager in patient support programs. She is also the president and founder of Muslim women of Brant.

Mohammad Hassan

Committees and Councils:

- Spiritual Care Committee



Outside BCHS: Mohammad is excited to see how his life and work experience can be helpful and utilized for the betterment of the Brantford community as a PFA/volunteer. He is a bright and receptive individual, capable of communicating effectively with people at all levels. He possesses a good sense of humor and maintains a pleasant approach in his interactions.

Susanne Sauvé

Committees and Councils:

- Mental Health and Addictions Quality Council
- Family Support Group
- EPI Mental Health Family Support Group



Outside BCHS: Susanne is a retired French teacher and enjoys curling.

Will Moore

Committees and Councils:

- Mental Health Acute Day Treatment Program (ADT) Alumni Group



Outside BCHS: Will's passion for helping those with mental health challenges stems from his personal experience living with ADHD. Outside of his role at BHCS, Will leads communications for a software company. He lives in central Brantford and serves as a board director for SOAR Community Services.

Anthony C

New member - Anthony is interested in supporting potential projects with the Mental Health Program.

Welcome, Youth Advisory Council!



BCHS's efforts to involve youth in decision-making have come to life as we announce our first-ever Youth Advisory Council! Having youth engage, take initiative and be the change is a big step towards a more inclusive and welcoming environment at the Brantford General Hospital.

Mission:

- To support BCHS in creating an inclusive youth welcoming environment within The Brantford General Hospital.
- Youth Advisors will represent the perspective of patients and youth in decision making through a variety of forums such as focus groups, improvement events, community promotions and youth initiative projects.

Objectives:

- Focus on specific issues including but not limited to; prevention of drug abuse, improving mental health, creating safe spaces for LGBTQ+.
- Mechanisms for improving the mental health system responsiveness.
- Bridging the gap between child and youth mental health services and adult mental health services.

"I am so excited to be guiding the voices of the youth on this council along with Alexa and Kate. We are all very passionate about creating and maintaining an inviting space that is safe for youth and other individuals." - **Aspen Searle**, Social Worker, Outpatient Mental Health

Youth Advisory Council



"I am thrilled to support the hospital's mental health program and build a safe environment. The cornerstone of fostering an inclusive space is coming together, sharing ideas, and solutions. I am proud to be part of the team, supporting an amazing cause." - **Jaimie**



"The hospital's mental health program has given me the opportunity to grow as a person. Being able to be a part of this council will help me continue my growth and help others grow as well." - **Frankie**



"I'm really thankful to be part of the Youth Advisory Council. It's an amazing experience that can open doors in the mental health field. My goal is to help make the hospital more inclusive for youth, and being on the council brings me closer to that!" - **Jasmine**



"My goal is to work with our hospital to help share the experiences of others and my own to bridge the gap between mental and physical health." - **Will**



“I am excited to help the youth in our community and allow their voices to be heard through our council. Having been in their shoes before, I hope my own experiences and what I've learned will help create a safe and friendly environment.”
- Harlie



“Joining the council means a lot because I've experienced the power of peer support. After years of turbulent hospitalizations, this is the first academic year that I have not needed inpatient care. I want to use my journey to help others feel understood and supported. I'm so excited to be part of a safe, inclusive space for youth to thrive, grow, and find community!” - Nikki



“I am a member of the Youth Advisory Council to help provide change in the community based off of both my own experiences and others.” - Sunny



“We're ready to take action and improve mental health in our community. As a proud Youth Advisory Council member, I'm dedicated to making a positive impact and building a community that truly cares. Let's work together and make it happen!”
- Hailey

Patient and Family Advisory At Work



10,092

Lifetime volunteer hours logged by
PFAs



30

Patient and Family Advisors, including 10 youth
advisors, PFAC members, and five new PFAs



16

Quality councils include PFAs



35

Committees and working groups
include PFAs

Good-bye Gail!



Gail Gloster

Committees and Councils:

- Infection Prevention and Control Committee
- Nursing Quality Council
- Collaborative Practice Advisory Committee (CPAC)
- Master Planning
- Quality Committee of the Board
- Medication Safety Committee
- Patient Flow Steering Committee
- Emergency Management Program Committee
- Alternate Level of Care (ALC) Committee
- Clinical Ethics Committee
- PT Flow and STEERING Committee
- Interview panels (VP and Digital Health)
- Accreditation Tracer training and interviews
- Accreditation 2019 and 2024
- Visitor policy working group
- San'Yans training
- First Impressions training
- Provided input on many documents over the year (Declaration of Values, MH discharge summary, perinatal loss)



“We are sad to say goodbye to a committed and passionate PFA, Gail Gloster. We want to acknowledge her years of volunteer work with the BCCHS, and wish her the very best.

Gail started at BCCHS in 2019 and has participated on many councils and committees over the years contributing over 400 hours of service.”

Sara Fretz, Patient Engagement Coordinator

“Gail, you were one of two people who convinced me to apply for the Patient and Family Advisory role at BCCHS and I am very glad that you did.

You have been an excellent role model for me with your enthusiasm, dedication and passion for the patients and families which we serve.

I will miss you in your role at the hospital but I hope that you bring your patient and family experience to another organization in the future! It will be their gain and our loss. I know that we won't lose touch friend. “

Janice Kucharew (PFA)

“Gail your voice has been so valuable. You have inspired me with your commitment, energy and passion. You have been the PFA energizer Bunny! You never slowed down. It has been a privilege to work with you. You will be missed SO MUCH. Your new community is so lucky to have you.”

Anna Maynard, PFA

We will miss you

PFA Strategic Alignment

The BCHS has client and family-centered care as a guiding principle and is a part of our strategic plan, mission, vision, value statements.

The PFAs are proud to support the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan through advising and co-designing programs and initiatives to improve the patient experience.



Key Goal #1: Advance Quality and Safety

Developing New Wayfinding Standards | ED Wayfinding group



Multiple Patient Family Advisors raised concerns about wayfinding at the hospital. This led to the formation of The Emergency Department (ED) Wayfinding User Group.

The group adopted a comprehensive approach to hospital navigation through multiple in-person meetings and three visual walk-throughs.

These efforts helped document the current signage standards for areas affected by the ED Renovation Improvement Project.

As a result, the group developed new wayfinding standards for updated signage, focusing on standardized colours, fonts, sizes, maps, accessibility, and inclusive symbols. The group also identified key priority locations for signage placement to enhance the overall user experience.



PFA Strategic Alignment



Key Goal #2: Partner to Transform Care

Acute Day Treatment Program (ADT) leads to Alumni Peer Support Group

In an inspiring effort to extend the benefits of the Acute Day Treatment (ADT) program, PFAs Will Moore and Anthony are initiating an Alumni Peer Support Group, set to launch in mid-January. Both recently completed the six-week ADT program through Outpatient Mental Health and found their experiences transformative.

Will described joining ADT as an "epochal moment" that provided him with essential tools for his future. He and Anthony felt a strong connection during the program and recognized the need for ongoing support after its conclusion. This realization led them to co-design a support group for graduates.

"The routine and community that ADT provides is something many of us fear losing, but a peer support group helps keep those connections alive" - Will Moore.

Starting this small group for Will has proven rewarding, offering him a renewed sense of purpose and reinforcing the lessons learned during treatment. While the dynamics of his initial support group have changed, he believes a structured alumni group, supported by ADT, could foster lasting connections and stability for those navigating their next steps.

With the upcoming launch, Will and Anthony aim to create a supportive community that enhances the ADT experience and ensures graduates continue to benefit from their shared connections.

About ADT

The Acute Day Treatment (ADT) program is a voluntary, transitional mental health recovery-based program for outpatients designed to assist individuals with goal-setting, learning coping strategies, enhancing daily life, connecting with community resources, and learning about symptom management. For more info, click [here](#).



PFAs collaborate with Outpatient Mental Health



Based on their experience as family members of loved ones, PFAs Angela DeMontigny, Susanne Sauve and Shannon MacKenzie identified a gap in communication for families of patients diagnosed with mental health issues, addiction, or psychosis. As a result, they came together to co-design the Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) Family Support and the Family Support Group.

These groups led by Rebecca McAuley (Social Worker), aim to provide support through shared experiences, helping loved ones cope with the distress caused by psychosis. Research indicates that family involvement in early intervention improves long-term outcomes for patients. The EPI Support Group has been active for several years, and the Family Support Group will soon launch, co-led by the above mentioned Patient Family Advisors (PFAs).

"When I heard about the Family Support group I immediately felt a sense of relief that I wasn't alone in my worries and struggles with a loved one. This group has provided me with an opportunity to share my story and receive invaluable support, advice, and knowledge, while at the same time feeling a sense of value knowing that my story is in turn helping others." - Shannon MacKenzie

"Generally speaking, these 'family support' groups are essential in so many ways for family members supporting a loved one dealing with mental health issues. They offer a safe place to share and discuss challenges, strategies, and resources. Not only do we feel better equipped to help our loved one, but it is reassuring to know we are not alone." - Susanne Sauve

PFAs in Action

Truth and Reconciliation



Angela DeMontigny (PFA) helped re-establish the relationship between BCHS mental health services and mental health representatives of the Six Nations. BCHS appreciates Angela, as greater relationships with the community can help better support patients from Six Nations.

Earplugs in ED



During Patient Experience Rounding, Nancy Young shared patient feedback about needing earplugs in the Emergency Department to help sleep. Thanks to the Brant Community Healthcare System Foundation, ED received ear plug wall dispensers as a donation.

Patient Experience Rounding



Co-designed by Elke Hilgendag (Clinical Director) and Nancy Young (PFA), the Patient Experience Rounding project is being piloted on the stroke unit, rehab, and at the Willet. Patient Family Advisors (PFAs) collect real-time feedback from patients to enhance care and identify both success stories and areas for improvement.

Nancy Young emphasizes the importance of allowing patients and families to share their personal experiences. "Each story can be so different and yet so important."

This initiative fosters meaningful interactions, making patients feel valued for their feedback while allowing PFAs to serve as helpful listeners and advocates. Nancy added, "As a PFA, I am motivated to represent hospital patients with the hope that we can help improve patient care."

Over the past two years on the Stroke Unit, patients and family members have expressed appreciation for the PFA role, demonstrating a willingness to share their hospital experiences.



JOIN THE CEO'S PFAC!

APPLY TODAY!

You have the power to influence change!

Brant Community Healthcare System is looking for Patient Family Advisors to help improve the local health care system.

Anyone can become an advisor. Your voice, lived experience and personal stories about healthcare will help shape healthcare and improve patient experience.

For more information please contact patientfamilyadvisory@bchsys.org, call **519-751-5544 ext. 2177**, or **scan the QR code**.

www.bchsys.org/PFA

