



Putting Patients First  
*better health • better care • better value • better teams*

# Patient and Family Advisor

*Handbook*



The goal of Saskatchewan's health care system is to ensure people have the best possible health and care experience.

We are putting patients first, by welcoming patients and families to participate in their care and into the design and planning of the care and services we provide.



## Contents

<b>What is Patient- and Family-Centred Care (PFCC)?</b> .....	<b>1</b>
4 principles of Patient- and Family-Centered Care .....	1
Patient- and Family-Centered Care Terminology .....	2
<b>What is a patient and family advisor?</b> .....	<b>2</b>
What does a patient and family advisor do? .....	2
Expectations .....	3
<b>Want to find out more about becoming a patient and family advisor?</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Helpful Links</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Contact Information</b> .....	<b>6</b>

# What is Patient- and Family-Centred Care (PFCC)?

## The Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care defines Patient- and Family-Centered Care as

“an approach to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of health care that is grounded in mutually beneficial partnerships among health care providers, patients, and families. It redefines the relationships in health care.

For me, it means health care providers are including patients and family in the overall care plan as well as involving us in the planning and implementation of current and future services.

Amber Chepil  
Client and Family Advisor

Patient- and family-centered practitioners recognize the vital role that families play in ensuring the health and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, seniors, and family members of all ages. They acknowledge that emotional, social, and developmental support are integral components of health care. They promote the health and well-being of individuals and families and restore dignity and control to them.

Patient- and family-centered care is an approach to health care that shapes policies, programs, facility design, and staff day-to-day interactions. It leads to better health outcomes and wiser allocation of resources, and greater patient and family satisfaction.”<sup>1</sup>

## 4 principles of Patient- and Family-Centered Care

- **Respect and dignity:** Staff, physicians, and volunteers actively listen to patients and families, and honour their ideas and choices. Patients and family are recognized as integral members of the care team. Care should be provided in an equitable, culturally appropriate manner.
- **Information Sharing:** The phrase “nothing about me without me” means patients have the right to receive timely, unbiased, and accurate information about their care. Patients should be supported to make informed decisions about all aspects of their care.
- **Participation:** Patients and families are empowered to participate in their care and decision-making at whatever level they choose. This can be summarized in the “Platinum Rule—Treat others the way they want to be treated.” Staff, physicians, and volunteers work with patients and families to provide care collaboratively, and in the way that best meets the needs and goals of the patient.
- **Collaboration:** Patients and families help co-design health care. They actively participate in developing, implementing, and evaluating health policies and programs; designing health care facilities; professional education; and, in the delivery of care.

<sup>1</sup> Institute for Patient & Family Centered Care [www.ipfcc.org](http://www.ipfcc.org)

## Patient- and Family-Centered Care Terminology

The most appropriate term for patient usually depends on the health care setting. For example, in long-term-care homes, we use the term *resident*, while in home care, we use *client*.

Patients define who belongs to their family. Therefore, the term *family* refers to two or more people who are related in any way—biologically, legally, or emotionally. The role of the family should be determined by the patient (or where appropriate, a substitute decision-maker).

## What is a patient and family advisor?

A patient and family advisor is a person who has had a recent experience being a patient or the family member of a patient. Advisors partner with staff and doctors to provide direct input into policies, programs, and practices that affect patient care and services. Patient and family advisors help shape the future of health care in their community.

It is the goal of the Saskatchewan health care system to put the patient first. We want to continuously improve care and services by working closely with patients and families. To that end, patients and families serve as advisors on many committees, councils, research projects, and improvement events.

## What does a patient and family advisor do?

As a patient and family advisor, you may be invited to attend meetings, improvement events, webinars, or focus groups. At these events, you will participate as an equal member of the group, which may also include administrators, managers, and providers. You are encouraged to share stories from your experience that illustrate how care went well or how things could have been better.

Patient and family advisors are to learn alongside other members of the team. This may include learning new terms or about best practices used in other care settings or organizations. While organizers will do their best to keep you informed, you should speak up when you don't understand words or topics.

### Examples

- Tell your experience story;
- Work on a Quality Improvement project team;
- Sit on an advisory council; or,
- Survey other patients and families about their experience.



JESSICA BONISH  
PATIENT ADVISOR

## Patients and families are asked to

- partner with staff to help develop a system where every patient received care that is patient and family centred;
- encourage and support staff and the health system to put the patient and family first;
- build partnerships with staff, physicians, and volunteers that are based on mutual respect and open communication;
- encourage and challenge the health system to use evidence-based best practices for care and service delivery;
- participate in facility and program design, quality improvement, research, and staff, student, and physician education; and,
  - present alongside staff to educate other advisors, staff, students, or doctors.

**I always wanted to help make things better for people. Being part of the CFCC Steering Committee allows my voice to be heard and satisfaction to know my voice is helping shape the health region in a positive sense for others.**

### **Aaron Nagy**

Client/Family Advisor and CFCC Steering Committee Member

## Expectations

### As a patient and family advisor, you can expect to

- have processes and terms explained to you as needed for clarification and understanding;
- be listened to and respected for your insights and suggestions;
- be assigned a staff person to address any questions or concerns; and,
- attend an orientation meeting, receive training relevant to the role, or both.

### As a patient and family advisor, you are expected to

- attend meetings as scheduled and advise organizers when you're not able to participate;
- read meeting or session materials in advance and come to the session prepared to contribute;
- respect the collaborative process and understand that final decisions about care delivery and process improvements are the responsibility of health care administrators; and,
- respect the confidentiality of materials about patients and organizations.

### Successful advisors are

- respectful of others and their perspectives;
- comfortable speaking in a group and working with others;
- good listeners;
- able to use their personal experiences constructively;
- able to see beyond their own experience;
- non-judgmental;
- able to work collaboratively with other families and health care providers;
- interested in expanding their knowledge and skills; and,
- committed to helping bring about meaningful change.

## Want to find out more about becoming a patient and family advisor?

Saskatchewan health regions and organizations offer a variety of different opportunities; some are for a single event, while others are ongoing roles.

For more information about opportunities in your area, contact your local health region or one of these provincial organizations: 3sHealth, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, Health Quality Council, eHealth Saskatchewan, or the Ministry of Health.

Examples of advisor roles include

- participation in a Rapid Process Improvement Workshop;
- membership on a patient and family advisory council;
- membership on a community advisory council;
- membership on a steering committee or quality committee;
- student mentorship programs;
- sharing your story at a conference or board meeting; and,
- participation in a patient-oriented research project.

Depending on the organization you get involved with, and the role you pursue, you may be required to complete one or more of the following

- expression of interest or registration form;
- confidentiality form;
- photo consent form;
- volunteer criminal record check;
- honorarium form; or,
- orientation session.

As a patient and family advisor in Saskatchewan, you are eligible to receive an honorarium, in recognition of your contributions.



**KEN WIEST**  
**PATIENT ADVISOR**

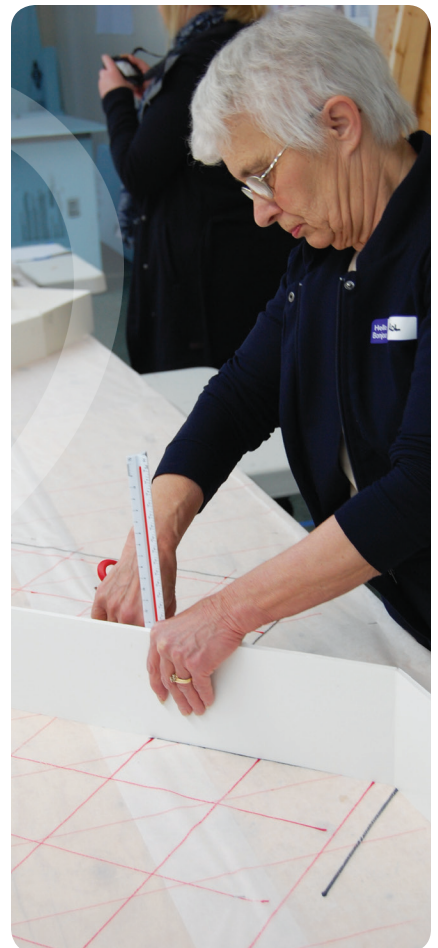


## Helpful Links

To learn more about Patient- and Family-Centered Care, visit [www.ipfcc.org](http://www.ipfcc.org)

To learn more about health care improvement in Saskatchewan visit, [www.BetterHealthCare.ca](http://www.BetterHealthCare.ca)

To connect with other patient and family advisors in Saskatchewan, join the Patient & Family Advisor Network on Facebook.





## Contact Information

### Interested in becoming an advisor?

3sHealth .....	306-347-5500 / pfcc@3sHealth.ca
Athabasca Health Region .....	306-439-2604
Cypress Health Region .....	pfcc@cypressrha.ca
eHealth Saskatchewan .....	306-337-0976
Five Hills Health Region .....	306-691-6508
Health Quality Council .....	306-668-8810
Heartland Health Region .....	306-882-4111 Ext 0
Keewain Yatthé Health Region .....	306-235-2220
Kelsey Trail Health Region .....	306-873-6600
Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region .....	306-425-2422
Ministry of Health .....	306-798-1420
Prairie North Health Region .....	306-820-2623
Prince Albert Parkland Health Region ..	306-765-6499 / pfcc@paphr.sk.ca
Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region .....	306-766-0792
Saskatoon Health Region ..	306-655-0120 / cfcc@saskatoonhealthregion.ca
SK Cancer Agency .....	306-655-0437 / pfac@saskcancer.ca
Sun Country Health Region .....	306-842-8226
Sunrise Health Region .....	306-786-0735



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**l'amélioration des  
services de santé**