



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS
HOSPITAL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MANUAL

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Preamble:

Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) and its predecessor organizations share a long history of support from the communities served. The Board of Directors has adopted a Community Engagement Framework to facilitate a common understanding of community engagement practices at NHH going forward. The Framework is updated regularly and serves as an overview of how sincere and timely engagement will assist NHH in meeting both patient care expectations and accountabilities within the broader health care system.

The Board of Directors strengthen its community engagement approach, building upon past/current strengths and implemented a Patient and Family Advisory Council to provide input to structures and processes within the Hospital.

Policy:

The Board of Directors receive regular reports from the Patient and Family Advisory Council on its activities and contributions.

Purpose:

Community engagement provides many opportunities including the ability to determine local needs, promote information about the health system locally and beyond, improve service design and strengthen local accountability.

Guiding Principles for Community Engagement:

In step with the recommended best practices for public participation of the International Association of Public Participation and the Ontario Ministry of Health, the following outlines seven guiding principles that shape community engagement at NHH:

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will (where opportunity permits) influence the decision.

3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

The Board of Directors recognizes that the opportunity for meaningful public participation varies from issue to issue, project to project and, by extension, so should the engagement tools applied. The Board will engage its community along a spectrum of participation, ranging from 'inform' to 'empower'. The spectrum acknowledges various degrees of engagement ranging from communicating to listening and to consulting and partnering. The greatest level of public impact falls on the "collaborate" or "empower" end of the spectrum which, in the present context of Ontario hospitals, rests with the Board of Directors in collaboration with Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health.

References:

NHH Community Engagement Framework 2016

Approved:

JUNE 2014

March 2016 revised

February 2017 reviewed

February 2018 revised

February 2019 revised

February 2020 reviewed

March 2021 revised

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