



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NHH Patient and Family Advisory Council

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in NHH's Patient and Family Advisory Council.

1. Why does NHH have a Patient and Family Advisory Council?

NHH is committed to actively engaging the community it serves through a variety of methods for the purpose of sharing information and exchanging ideas to develop and/or improve policies, programs, practices and, ultimately, experience. Engagement at NHH includes many strategies, to reasonable reflect all segments of the community we serve.

As patients/caregivers, we are interested in your experience with the hospital. Patient and Family Advisors help us achieve our goal of continuously making improvements to the planning, delivery and evaluation of care.

2. What do Patient and Family Advisors do?

Patient and Family Advisors are consulted and involved on a range of activities, from corporate-level discussions, such as strategic planning, to program- and issue-specific work, for the purpose of:

- Representing the patient/family voice to ensure the patient/family are at the centre of what we do
- Sharing experiences (positive and negative) for the purpose of promoting and enhancing patient-centred care
- Respectfully identifying processes that do not work well for patients/families
- Supporting the organization in quality improvement

3. How many members are on the Patient and Family Advisory Council?

We started small, and we are growing as we go. Today we have 10 Advisors, working with programs, departments and projects across the hospital. Two staff members also participate, in the role of co-facilitators.

4. How do I know if this is the right volunteer opportunity for me?

Here are some qualities or personality traits to consider. The ideal advisor is:

- Respectful of others' opinions and ideas
- Comfortable speaking in a group, and asking for clarification if needed

- Able to work collaboratively with others
- Able to communicate negative experiences in a positive manner
- A good listener
- Willing to partner with NHH staff, physicians, other patients and family members
- Flexible and patient
- Able to see beyond personal experiences and represent views of other patients and families

5. What is NHH's commitment to the Advisors who offer their time?

The NHH Board of Director's policy on Community Engagement outlines seven guiding principles that shape community engagement at NHH, including engagement with patients and their families.

- 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.*

6. If I become an Advisor, what is the time commitment required?

- Commitment to serve for a minimum of one year and a maximum of three
- Commitment to attend a minimum of four quarterly meetings of the full Patient and Family Advisory Council each year, at the hospital, for approximately 2 hours/each.
- Commitment to participate in an assigned Quality and Practice Committee and/or special project, related to your experience and area of interest.
 - For example, Department A is considering a change to the registration forms that patients complete prior to treatment. You may be invited to sit in on that group to provide the patient perspective on the forms that should be developed.
 - Another example may involve a renovation project being planned inside the hospital. You may be asked to participate on the committee as a patient advisor.

7. Is there a minimum age limit for an Advisor?

NHH invites applications from all patients/advisors who are over the age of 18 and meet the other requirements.

8. What we expect from you:

- Complete an Expression of Interest Form and, if requested, attend a selection interview
- Successful applicants will then be expected to:
 - Commit to a minimum one-year term
 - Attend an orientation session (subsequent orientation will be provided, as required)
 - Sign an NHH Confidentiality Agreement, pledge to respect the NHH values, and provide a complete criminal record check including a vulnerable sector screening (any fees associated with the necessary screenings will be covered by NHH)
 - Ensure all necessary immunizations are up-to-date, as per NHH policy
 - Attend meetings and provide your patient/family member perspective in order to collaboratively improve NHH's overall patient and family experience
 - Understand the scope of your role and act within it

9. What kind of training and support will Advisors get?

Your perspective, and the willingness to share it respectfully, is the most important skill you bring to the Patient and Family Advisory Council table.

Advisors receive general orientation on the hospital and specific information/training on particular areas and operations as needed to support full and effective engagement. At NHH, each advisor is also matched with a "buddy." Your buddy is a staff member from the program or project you are assigned to work with, and they will be your go-to resource, together with the PFAC co-facilitators, on questions and ideas that may come up in the course of your work.

Thank you for your interest. If you have additional questions regarding NHH's Patient and Family Advisory Council, please contact NHH care of the Public Affairs office:

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