

Partners in Care

Supporting health care together



Providence Health Care
**Patient And Family
Partner Newsletter**
August 2024, Volume 3, Issue 1



The wait is over! Check out the fresh new look of the Partners in Care newsletter, featuring stories, a new meet & greet section, and new photo gallery. The updated newsletter also includes a link to The Daily Scan - the go-to place to read stories from every corner of Providence Health Care.

Email pfcc@providencehealth.bc.ca to submit story ideas, comments or questions.

What Matters to You?

June 6th marks the annual celebration of "What Matters to You?" (WMTY) day. This is an international initiative which started in Norway in 2014 with the goal to encourage meaningful conversations between patients, residents, caregivers, families and their health care providers. When health care providers have a conversation with patients, residents and families about what matters to them, it builds trusting relationships and ensures that the care provided is aligned with patient priorities. Leaders are also encouraged to ask the staff and co-workers about what matters to them to strengthen team and increase joy at work.

We encourage all PHC staff to ask "What matters to you" to patients, residents, caregivers, families, and each other each and every day.

We asked our Patient Partners to share an example of a time when they were asked "What matters to you?" and how this impacted their care and the importance of the WMTY initiative.

Here are some responses from our Patient Partners:



WMTY initiative is important "because it allows my care team to see me as a person, and not just my diagnosis, condition or illness. I am Claire Synman, wife, mother, sister, daughter and friend, first and foremost.

As someone who had endometriosis for most of my young adult and adult life, I was asked by my gynaecologist after my fourth laparoscopy for my endometriosis, "what was most important to me in my life at that stage?". That question changed the course of my treatment and care plan. Instead of ongoing medications and laparoscopies, I decided on a hysterectomy with her guidance and support. My quality of life has been dramatically improved ever since. I will never forget the power of such a simple question."

- Claire Synman, Patient Partner



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"I have been an advocate for People with Lived Experience of Dementia which includes a community. The GP often gives the diagnosis and then the person and their care partners must search for the knowledge required to get some sense of how to deal with their new life. Sometimes, one might get to a specialist, who may speak to the Care Partner instead of the Person to whom the needs the consult. After spending up to two years battling personal stigma and often times, medical stigma. The journey often sinks into disappointment and loneliness. There is no follow up, there is no therapy offered, much unlike heart disease, stroke and cancer. Without being valued or having a purpose, dwelling on one's disability becomes the main focus.

In a recent meeting with Rich Dillon, Ridge Meadows Fraser Health office, we conveyed some of our concerns and will meet with him again in June. WMTY means treating all persons with dignity and respect. WMTY means thinking outside the box in terms of health care. WMTY means working with Patient Partners not as pawns, but as active participants in our healthcare.

WMTY means a stable, service, not administrative heavy health care system. It means consistency. It means continuity and humanity. The initiative opens the door for a system that includes the trust, service and respect for all. If the Public Health Service, and I stress service is not seen as such, then the public cannot buy in and offer support thereby often being critical of the service."

– Myrna Norman, Patient Partner



What Matters Most? is an endeavor to promote conversations with people about their fears, hopes, needs, and idiosyncrasies. The strength of the WMTY initiative is the instillation of curiosity about how individuals want to be cared for. It matters to me that staff also contribute their priorities. I enjoy seeing these glimpses of individuality in both the receiving and giving of healthcare on websites and walls.

When I'm very ill it's wonderful if staff are friendly and cheerful with each other, my family and me. I worry I am making work for everyone. If staff are enjoying caring for me then I forget I am a bother.

Please introduce yourself more than once, bringing your picture and name on your badge closer, especially if you have a mask. Explaining your role and what to expect can help settle our worries. Don't hesitate to repeat yourself every time you come into the room. When there is no introduction or name badge it feels as if HCPs are evading responsibility for their care. Nevertheless, we've received exemplary care from a sometimes faceless team."

– Carol Anderson, Patient Partner



"I was not explicitly asked, 'What matters to you?' during my stay at GF Strong, but I was asked about my goals. This approach was less direct but equally effective in setting expectations and ensuring we were aligned. For example, one of my goals was to return to playing high-performance sports. My physiotherapist reminded me that we needed to take things one step at a time. Given that I had two screws in my pelvis and sacrum, the immediate focus was on regaining my ability to bear weight. This goal-oriented approach helped me stay motivated and focused on my recovery, as it acknowledged my long-term aspirations while emphasizing the importance of incremental progress.

Over the years, I've noticed a positive shift in how clinicians and therapists approach mental health. The language has become less transactional and more relational. Clinicians have recently begun asking, 'What matters to you?' This shift has significantly reduced my anxiety about having to constantly advocate for myself. When I need to focus on self-advocacy, it detracts from my ability to concentrate on my recovery, particularly because my injury involves the brain.

Rewiring neural pathways requires immense focus and discipline. By asking what matters to me, my care team has helped create a supportive environment that allows me to direct my energy towards healing rather than self-advocacy."

- Ovey Yeung, Patient Advocate



"In the 40 years I don't remember being asked WMTY and I wish I would've been asked so I can share WMTY me. It's about bringing everyone to the same level so we can talk to each other as human beings. Not doctor to patient. If I was asked this question - It would have helped me become more human and I would have had better interactions with the health care professionals."

- Vikram Bubber, Patient Partner

Vancouver Patients Can Now Receive Acute Care in Their Own Home Through the Hospital at Home Program

Patients are benefiting from convenient, safe, and timely acute-level care from the comfort of their own home as the Hospital at Home program launches in several Vancouver hospitals, including Providence Health Care's St. Paul's and Mount Saint Joseph hospitals.

Hospital at Home is an internationally recognized model that is both safe and effective, and is designed to improve patient comfort, privacy and independence. The teams include doctors, registered nurses, pharmacists, occupational and physiotherapists, and speech-language pathologists, among others. Other specialists may be provided as needed so care is tailored to a patient's individual needs.



The Hospital at Home team is joined by BC health minister Adrian Dix and Providence CEO Fiona Dalton.

Patients who are medically stable and who meet specific criteria are transferred home after consultation with the care team and the family. A nurse visits them at home once a day and there is 24/7 monitoring of their vital signs. Other members of the Hospital at Home team are also available to provide in-person and virtual visits, as required.

One patient noted that they felt the care was better than they would receive in the hospital. "I felt I got lots of attention with Hospital at Home. In the hospital, I just got my medication, vital signs and fed three meals. With Hospital at Home, staff talked to me and gave me all their attention."

"Hospital at Home is another step toward Providence Health Care's goal of access to the right care, in the right place, at the right time for every patient," says Barbara Drake, Hospital at Home Patient Care Manager. "Evidence from other jurisdictions shows that patients recover better at home. They have lower risk of hospital-acquired infection, less loss of functionality and fewer incidents of delirium."

In the words of one family member, "You helped my mom get better. It was so much better for her to be home, it helped her mentally. I would admit my mom into the program if she gets admitted again and the doctor thinks she would be ready for the program."

Visit the [Hospital at Home](#) page on the Providence Health Care website for more information, including a video about the program.

Meet & Greet

Swapnil Shah, Patient Partner



For this edition's Meet and Greet, let's get to know Swapnil Shah (he/him), Patient Partner!

How long have you been a patient/family partner?

I have been a patient partner with various research projects across the province for around six years and for one year with Providence Healthcare

What is your favourite thing about being a patient/family partner?

Playing a role in developing improved healthcare services and ensuring positive impact and overall satisfaction for patients

Tell us about a project or committee you were involved in as a Patient Family Partner at Providence Health Care and how you were involved.

The innovative Hospital at Home program allows patients to receive hospital-level care in their homes rather than in a hospital. I was involved in all aspects of this project including developing an educational one-pager and ensuring adequate support from staff to ensure a patient-centred approach throughout the process.

What has been your greatest learning in the patient/family partner role?

The healthcare system can be improved by involving those it aims to serve. The team at Providence Health care always received my suggestions with openness and enthusiasm and the wellbeing of the patient was always put at the center of the approach.

What is your go-to comfort food? Rice and Lentils. 😊

What book and/or podcast are you currently reading or listening to?

'Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind' by Yuval Noah Harari

What is the most interesting place you have ever traveled to?

Difficult to pick one – Canadian Rockies, Alberta and Arches National Park, Utah

Junko, Peer Support Worker

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Junko is a peer support worker with Road to Recovery at St. Paul's Hospital. Road to Recovery is an innovative model of care that will provide a full continuum of acute withdrawal management stabilization services for those seeking support for their substance use. This program will reduce weeks of waitlists and support patients to move seamlessly through a full spectrum of treatment services, from the Rapid Access Addiction Clinic through withdrawal management, in-patient recovery-focused beds, transitional housing, and many more - all in one location.

After Junko moved to Canada, she encountered significant challenges, including experiences of abuse and trauma. She was caught in the grip of depression and substance use. Fortunately, a small and fearless puppy, Koko, entered her life which gave her the strength to take the first step into seeking treatment. Junko's positive recovery journey inspired her to support others who were struggling as she once did. She recognized the incredible impact that animals, especially dogs like Koko, could have on people's lives.

Today, Junko is living her dream as a peer support worker, bringing her therapy dogs, Muffin and Cupcake, to visit patients. The impact of these furry companions is astounding. Patients who may be anxious or agitated find comfort and solace in their presence. The dogs break the isolation that patients sometimes feel, bridging the gap between fear and connection. Muffin and Cupcake's joyful and nonjudgmental companionship transforms the atmosphere in the hospital and brings smiles to patients' faces.

When I see a patient's face, no matter what bad day they're having or they feel agitated or angry, as soon as they see Muffin, they have a big smile. I experienced it myself with Koko. Now, Cupcake and Muffin bring joy, connection, love, compassion, and then such warmth to patients."

Junko's journey is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of compassion. She serves as a guiding light, a symbol of hope for those who may be struggling with adversity, addiction, to trauma. Her message is clear: no one is alone, and there is always hope. She encourages others to take that first step, no matter how daunting it may seem.

"Everybody's experience is different. But I know the pain that they have inside them. The biggest message I have for them is that they're not alone. We are here for them, and they don't have to go through it alone. I know it's scary to take that one step, but there is hope out there. I know that for a fact because I've done it. No matter where they are in their healing journey, we are here for them. And it's just one step at a time." says Junko.

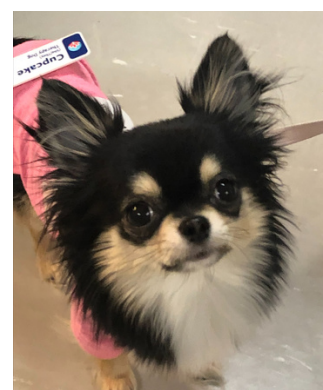


Photo Gallery

New St. Paul's Hospital

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We've reached three years of construction at the new St. Paul's Hospital!



Staff visiting a warehouse in the False Creek Flats to tour life-sized mock-ups of the new hospital.



Our New St. Paul's Hospital Project Team engaged with the public at the Strathcona Community Centre.

Sustainability Fair

Fiona Dalton, PHC CEO, and Elder Xwechtaal Dennis Joseph opening the event.



1st sustainability fair at St Paul's Hospital organized by the Environmental Stewardship Team. ~200 visitors dropped by the vendor and information booths for demonstrations, games and prizes.

Road to Recovery (R2R)

Max (centre), poses with Kamel, Registered Nurse (left), and Rhythm, Relational Security Officer (right), at the R2R unit.



Nurses Week Celebration



Acute Nursing Practice Council roamed around St. Paul's Hospital with treats for nurses.

Home for Us and Youville Pilot

Providence Health Care and Providence Living are on a mission to transform long-term care (LTC) by shifting from traditional task-based care to emphasizing the residents' needs and desires. Our innovative approach aims to ensure residents thrive through maintaining independence, social connections, and engaging in meaningful personal routines. By shifting towards a social-relational and resident/family-centred model of care, we aim to support residents in living their best lives within an environment that feels like home, fostering a sense of autonomy, dignity, and community.



To achieve this, Providence developed a new made-in-BC model of care called Home for Us (H4U). Our work is inspired by many pioneering care philosophies, including the Eden Alternative, the Greenhouse Project, The Gentle Persuasive Approach and — more recently — the work of the De Hogeweyk group in the Netherlands.

H4U is central to various LTC redevelopment projects, including Providence Living at The Views, a new LTC village coming to Prince George, and the St. Vincent's Heather LTC village. H4U will soon be implemented at all PHC's LTC homes, starting with Youville Residence in Vancouver.

In late November and early December of 2023, Youville Residence launched an H4U model of care pilot. This began with interviews and shadowing staff to understand Youville's current practices. These interviews along with resident, family, and staff feedback identified areas in which the H4U team could support staff in trailing new approaches from the H4U perspective (e.g. offering more breakfast choices at various times in the morning). Accompanying these trials, education is also being provided to support this new direction, including the H4U philosophy, supporting choices and care planning when risk is involved, and using person-centered language.

To conclude, the overarching goals of Home for Us is to create living environments that encourage emotional connections and build flourishing, connected communities; to support residents to direct each moment and have maximal control over their day; and to ensure homes feel like home and always bring about a sense of safety and true belonging. As we continue to implement H4U, we are committed to creating atmospheres that honor and enhance the lives of those we serve. Together, we are paving the way for a brighter future in long-term care.



Check Out What is Happening at Providence!



Person and Family
Centred Care



Daily Scan



St. Paul's Foundation



Providence Research

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