With this newsletter, we hope to maintain and build connections with our community of patient and family partners while working together to advance our goals around Person and Family Centred Care at Providence Health Care.

It was important to the team that this newsletter was designed with patient partners for patient partners. If you have an idea for a story, please share it with us for future editions! Email pfcc@providencehealth.bc.ca

**Meet the Partners in Care Newsletter Team**

**Betty Murray**
Patient partner who enjoys learning new ideas, new skills, new theories and history.

She loves travelling and enjoy meeting and listening to others’ stories. Betty’s words of wisdom - have humor, a giggle or a laugh every day – keeps the grey clouds at bay!

**Irene T.**
Patient Partner since 2015 who supports loved ones, understands how critical PFCC is and wants to raise and promote awareness about PFCC. Irene enjoys Happy Hours and dinners with friends and family, yoga, going to the gym, knitting and a good DIY challenge.

**Mario Gregorio**
An advocate to create awareness, reduce stigma and educate the public concerning people living with a disability. He enjoys eating out with friends and likes to swim, walk and take pictures as part of his regimen to stay healthy.

**Angela Lee**
General nurse educator supporting PFCC initiatives at PHC. She enjoys being in the kitchen when she has free time.

**Hannah Tighe**
Respiratory Therapist turned patient and family centred care leader. She loves a long run and a good DIY project!
Patient Engagement in Action

Using a survey, we ask patients for feedback on their experience in the hospital and use that feedback to improve the care we provide. When asked ‘what is one thing we can do to improve?’ one of the most common themes is food. Last year we invited the leaders of the food services team to attend the Care Experience Strategic Direction Advisory committee meeting to learn from the perspectives of PHC patient partners on what we can do to improve.

One clear lesson from this conversation was that patients often do not know that they can ask for changes to their meals, or that there are dietitians and dietary aides they can speak with about their meal selections in the hospital. This finding led to a review of the “My Blue Menu Selection” instructions that we give to patients to make their meal choices.

With patient partner input and the skills of our in-house graphic designer, the Food Services team was able to revamp the wording and layout of the instructions provided to patients for how to select their meal preferences each day.

Menu instructions before patient engagement

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Menu instructions after patient engagement

Following implementation of the updated ‘My Blue Menu Selection’ instructions, the food services team went back to patients to find out if the changes made a difference. The feedback from patients using the new instructions showed an increase in effectiveness of the blue menus and some additional suggestions for other ways to improve patient experiences with food services.

Stevens Santos, the general manager for Patient Food Services recognized early on in the process that the patient and family partner involvement in this project was instrumental to making meaningful changes to the “My Blue Menu Selection” sheet. The input of several patient and family partners helped the team to simplify the wording, add an abbreviation legend and make it more visually appealing and approachable for patients.
Celebrating Patient and Family Partners

Bruce Raber and Anja Lanz are recent recipients of the 2021 Kerston Community Educator Award. This award honours outstanding community educators who have expanded student learning beyond traditional professional boundaries and made a difference to student learning in health and human service programs at UBC.

As active patient partners at Providence Health Care we asked them both why this work is so important to them and what they hope students take away from their interactions in the UBC Interprofessional Health Mentors Program.

Bruce

Over the course of 8-9 sessions with these student, Bruce noted that the connection the students developed gave them the opportunity to understand that there is so much more to patients than their diagnosis and medical history. Connecting with these students as a patient helps them to realize the value of understanding patients and their circumstances and in turn will allow them to provide better care.

One thing Bruce wants students to remember as they move into their careers is, you cannot effectively take care of others if you are not taking care of yourself. He says ‘put a priority on your own health in order to be able to bring [your] best self to work for your patients’.

Anja

Why is working with students in health profession training important to you?

Working with students is crucial, as those individuals are the next generation of healthcare professionals. I already see it in my own line of work: the next generation is bringing new ideas, innovation, and diversity to my profession, and in healthcare it is the same.

We need more diverse views for the diverse population of patients and clients in healthcare. It is important to pass on our knowledge to the next generation to build upon in their training. I really notice the lack of depth of understanding of patient needs that the traditional education is not teaching. I strongly believe that patient voices bring a much-needed pillar to education which only enriches the knowledge sharing.

What do you hope students take away from their interactions with Health mentors in the program? What is one lesson you hope students take with them into their career in healthcare?

My hope is that students take away from their mentors a deeper and enriching understanding of what it is really like to live with a chronic health challenge. I also hope they see that real live examples often chatter the statistics and common assumption about a particular diagnosis. In addition, I hope the students take their learnings to the next level and help build a better and more robust healthcare system that serves all patients and not only those that can afford it.
Patient and Resident Experience Week
April 25th - 29th, 2022

We celebrate Patient and Resident Experience Week each spring to express our gratitude to those who influence patient and resident experiences everyday! From nurses, allied health professionals and physicians, to support staff and executive professionals, to patients, families and communities served, everyone contributes to the patient experience.

Patient and Family Partners play a big role in contributing to improving patient and resident experiences at Providence Health Care. We thank you for helping PHC continue to strive to for excellence in person and family centred care.

Through the Eyes of a Patient

Betty is an experienced patient partner who has been involved in improving health care with various organizations, including Providence Health Care, Vancouver Coastal Health, Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House and more for many years.

During her recent hospitalization, she was pleased to see more person and family centred care (PFCC) practices in action despite how tired and overworked health care professionals appeared during this challenging time. Many health care professionals introduced themselves, asked what was important to her, and were mentally present with her even if it was just a few minutes.

Overall, Betty had a positive experience. However, she occasionally observed missteps to the principles of PFCC – communication and education in staff practice.

From Betty’s perspective, consistent communication, listening and providing patient education are key aspects to improving a patient’s care experience. In Betty’s recent experience, she was frequently updated about her care plan and felt that she was heard. She also felt reassured when health care professionals provided education and explanation for the treatment they were providing. For instance, when the ER doctor suggested a CT scan, they explained the reason for doing this investigation, which made Betty feel safe and informed.

Reflecting on her recent experience in the hospital, Betty hopes that health care professionals are mindful of how scared and without control patients may feel when they are in the hospital. Be aware of your tone of voice and body language, patients are sensitive and feeling vulnerable.

Betty’s advice to health care professionals: Remember to look past the technology and tools used to diagnose a patient and see the human-being needing care.
Celebrating National Volunteer Week
April 24th -30th, 2022

In 2012, Toby Schmitt was a second-year pharmacy student at the University of British Columbia when he decided to volunteer performing weekly concerts for residents at Mount Saint Joseph Hospital. He'd play everything from World War II songs to Christmas carols!

Ten years later, and now Dr. Schmitt, he is again at Mount Saint Joseph but this time he's there to complete a portion of his residency in pathology.

Last year hospital gift-shop volunteers contributed $20,000 of funds raised to the purchase of a digital cassette printer for the hospital—a device that houses tissue specimens for pathologists to analyze for disease. Serendipitously, part of Dr. Schmitt's training involves learning on this volunteer purchased machine.

While, as a pathology resident, Dr. Schmitt notes he doesn't interact directly with patients, he credits his time spent as a volunteer with helping to shape his empathy.

Volunteers generously give their time and energy to serve patients, families and residents as they receive health care, and sometimes this empathetic nature is what makes them best suited to become health-care providers themselves.

#EmpathyInAction

Volunteering is Empathy in Action
National Volunteer Week
April 24-30, 2022

#VolunteersBringHeart
Partners in Care Spotlight
Each edition we will highlight an individual who exemplifies the values of person and family centred care. This could be a patient partner, a health care professional, support worker or corporate staff member.

This month’s Partners in Care Spotlight is Maria Roberts!
Maria is an admitting clerk in Surgical Day Care at Mount Saint Joseph’s Hospital who provides exceptional compassionate service and shines with PFCC values.

Maria’s compassion came through in a recent encounter with a patient and their family member. After admitting an elderly patient that spoke limited English, Maria noticed that the family member was told they could leave and the nurse would call when the patient was ready for discharge. Maria observed the family member reluctantly step outside, but continued to peer through the window. When Maria approached the family member outside she learned that she wanted to stay with her partner but wasn’t sure she was allowed. Maria was able to bring the wife back to the waiting room to remain with her partner until he was taken in for the procedure.

Reflecting on this situation, Maria felt emotional as this couple reminded her of her own parents who are elderly and do not speak English. Small gestures make a big impact on the experiences of patients and families.

Patient and Family Partner Engagement Opportunities and Events

Skunkworks - Hacking Wounds: Prevention, treatment and management
Save the Date - September 22-23, 2022
Providence Research in partnership with St. Paul’s Foundation is hosting its second Skunkworks event. This unique two-day mixing of minds will bring together multi-disciplinary teams from Providence Health Care and our partner organizations to work collaboratively on innovative solutions related to wounds (prevention and care).

Patients and family caregivers with lived experience in wounds are a critical component of the teams and are invited to participate in the event. The event will be in person at a downtown Vancouver hotel.

Registration will open soon. For more details visit www.providenceresearch.ca/skunkworks or email skunkworks@providencehealth.bc.ca

Stay tuned for our next edition in September!! Until then....