**Patients as Partners Program: Ministry of Health**

**Who we are**

Patients as Partners is a philosophy, a program and a collaboration between patients and families, health authorities, health-care providers, universities, non-profit organizations, the Ministry of Health and other organizations in the province. Together, we are working to advance and integrate patient- and family-centred care at every level of the health-care system.

B.C. will pursue patient-centered care with a vision for achieving a health-care system in which:

***The patient`s voice*** is anchored in all behaviours and drives all activities of the health system.

***A culture of patient-centeredness*** is self-evident across the health system and is integrated into existing health-care programs.

***Health care programming*** is built upon the patient-centered care principles throughout planning, implementation and evaluation.

The Patients as Partners Program recognizes that fully achieving such a shift in focus will take time, but most importantly it will take collaboration and partnership. It is for this reason, Patients as Partners funds and collaborates with a variety of different organizations, including UVIC, UBC, Delaney and Associates, Pain BC, Family Caregivers Network and CCMI working at different levels of the health-care system – from the individual to the community and system-wide.

**Did you know?**

Through Patients as Partners, the Ministry of Health has been honoured with the 2016 Canadian Organization of the Year Award from the International Association of Public Participation. This is thanks to engagement activities at the individual, community and system level, as well as the support from our senior leaders.

In less than 10 years, Patients as Partners has invested in patient and public engagement training for more than 800 health-care workers, and achieved more than 40,000 patient engagements.

Patients as Partners currently supports six organizations through direct funding so they can engage patients and families, develop broader organizational capacity for patient- and family-centred care, and deliver programs which support self-management.

The Patients as Partners motto is *nothing about me…without me.*

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**What do we do?**

Our team of four provides leadership, strategy, policy, collaborative efforts and funding to support patient and public engagement as well as self-management supports. We execute through coordination, training, engagement activities, collaboration, partnerships, education, and the development of tools and resources for patient-centered care to set the foundation to achieve healthcare cultural transformation.

**What Guides our Work?**

**Framework for Patient-Centered Care**

Since the Ministry of Health created the Patient Centered Framework in 2015, many of the health authorities have adopted a patient-centered strategy and plan. The framework builds on the Province’s objective of building health-care delivery around the individual, not the provider and administration. It provides the vision, core principles and practices of patient-centered care.

**Patient-Centred Care**

Patient -centered care puts patients at the forefront of their health and care, ensures they retain control over their own choices, helps them make informed decisions, and supports a partnership between individuals, families, and health-care service providers. In February 2014, the Ministry released *Setting Priorities for the B.C. Health System,* which presents strategic and operational priorities for the delivery of healthservices across the province, including the first priority of providing patient-centered care.

**Triple Aim**

This is about working towards achieving three things: 1) better patient and provider experience; 2) improved population health; and 3) having a system at a cost we can afford.

**The Big Five Key Priorities**

**** In 2015, the ministry re-positioned its priorities into five areas of focus:

1. Improve access to primary care through a primary care home model.
2. Reduce demand on hospitals by improving care for seniors.
3. Reduce demand on hospitals by improving care for those with mental illness and substance abuse issues.
4. Improve access to surgical services and procedures.
5. Improve delivery of rural health services.

The Ministry of Health’s Service Plan states, “Successfully achieving the ministry’s strategic vision will require close collaboration with partners,including health authorities, physicians and health-care providers, unions, patients and otherstakeholders, in shaping and implementing key areas of focus.”

**For more information, contact Shannon Holms, Director, Patient Engagement and Community Programs** [**Shannon.holms@gov.bc.ca**](mailto:Shannon.holms@gov.bc.ca)