

TERMS OF REFERENCE

KW4 OHT Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Background

In their 2019 document entitled Ontario Health Teams: Guidance for Health Care Providers and Organizations, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care states “Ontario Health Teams will be driven based on the needs of patients and communities. They will meaningfully engage and partner with patients, families, caregivers, and communities, based on a robust patient partnership model and community engagement strategy.”¹

This mandate from the Ministry marked an evolution in patient, family and caregiver (PFAC) structures to a wider community engagement approach leading the way to the formation of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

Purpose

Members of the CAC act as ambassadors for the Kitchener, Waterloo, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich (KW4) Ontario Health Teams (OHT) to help KW4 OHT identify gaps and unmet needs in the community.

Collectively, CAC members will have meaningful ties to communities throughout our region. They will facilitate conversations and understanding as KW4 OHT members work towards co-designing a healthier community that provides residents with timely access to necessary care and services.

As representatives of the KW4 OHT, CAC members will thoughtfully engage communities to gain a better understanding of:

- health equity (focusing differently on those experiencing inequitable health outcomes)
- population health, including the social determinants of health
- anti-racism/anti-oppression
- diversity/equity/inclusion

The CAC aims to bring awareness to the varied perspectives and experiences of the OHT communities. This crucial step will aid KW4 OHT members better serve the community and improve the health system.

Mandate

To help identify gaps and unmet needs in communities throughout the KW4 OHT area.

To enhance and broaden the involvement of the community in planning, designing, implementing, and assessing the success of KW4 OHT initiatives.

To create and maintain bi-directional relationships between the KW4 OHT communities and the CAC, ensuring the exchange of information in both directions.

To keep community members informed about how KW4 OHT is integrating their feedback to create thriving communities; updates will be shared in a manner and frequency preferred by each community.

Membership

The CAC will consist of 12-15 members from communities across Kitchener-Waterloo, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich, who will serve for a 3-year term, with the option of a one-time extension for an additional year.

To achieve the objective of fostering authentic connections, CAC members will have meaningful ties to the communities they belong to and develop relationships with other communities as well to ensure an equitable approach to engagement and co-design.

CAC members will be respectful and conduct themselves in a professional manner when engaging with their communities and with each other.

Community members interested in joining the CAC will submit an Expression of Interest application form, which will be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair, CAC members, and the Executive Director of KW4 OHT.

Chair/Vice-Chair Selection Process

The Chair will serve a 2-year term after which the Vice-Chair will have the option of assuming the role of Chair and a new Vice-Chair will be selected.

If the Vice-Chair declines the Chair role, then a new Chair will be selected using the process outlined below.

Succession planning for the Chair/Vice-Chair will be initiated one year prior to the Chair's term completion. The Vice-Chair position will be open to anyone who's served on the CAC for at least one year. The roles will be decided using the following approach:

- self-nomination through a statement of interest
- written nomination by a CAC member or current Chair/Vice-Chair
- written nomination by KW4 OHT

Informal interviews with interested candidates will be conducted by a panel, which may include the current CAC Chair/Vice-Chair, the KW4 Executive Director, a current CAC member, and a representative from the KW4 OHT Steering Committee.

**Note: On February 23, 2024, the Ministry of Health posted the draft regulation of proposed designation requirements on the Ontario Regulatory Registry for public comment. Within this, there is a proposed regulatory requirement related to Patient, Family and Caregiver Involvement. The OHT would be required to:*

- "Establish an advisory council composed of patients, families and caregivers to advise both the Board of Directors, as well as the operational management of the co-ordinating corporation, and

- Include an ex-officio position on the board of directors for the chair of the advisory council, while ensuring that this ex-officio board position is a voting member of the board of directors (i.e. with the same voting rights as other elected board members)."

As such, the Chair of the CAC would be required to fulfill this ex-officio position on the OHT Board of Directors in the future.

Chair/Vice-Chair Responsibilities

Together, the Chair and Vice-Chair will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the agenda and any supporting documents are prepared and distributed in advance of meetings.
- Reviewing and approving the previous minutes.
- Tracking meeting attendance and reaching out to anyone who misses more than 3 meetings within the September to June meeting schedule.

In the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair will act as Chair. Once the Chair's term has concluded or if the Chair resigns, the Vice-Chair will assume the role of Chair.

Staff Support

The KW4 OHT Communications Coordinator will schedule meetings; notify members of the meeting date, time, and mode (virtual or in person); and document and circulate meeting minutes.

Time Commitment and Expectations

The CAC meets monthly for 90 minutes from September to June. This meeting frequency and length may change depending on the workload and timelines. It is important that members attend each meeting and offer feedback and updates on behalf of their respective communities. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must inform the CAC Chair beforehand.

Members may be asked to form sub-committees tasked with providing CAC with advice and recommendations, in which case more time will be required beyond the regular monthly meetings.

CAC members who require a leave of absence or are unable to fulfill their commitment for any reason should notify the CAC Chair at the earliest convenience. A new CAC member will be recruited if necessary.

Any member who misses more than three meetings over 10 months without notifying the CAC Chair may be asked to resign from the CAC.

Requests for Accommodation

KW4 OHT recognizes that given the diversity of the population, some patients, care partners, knowledge keepers, and community members may require special services or accommodations to participate. These supports may be in the form of translators for those with English as a second language, sign language interpreters, medical assistive devices, etc. KW4 OHT will endeavor to obtain these resources or will reimburse participants for out-of-pocket expenses accrued for such expenses required to participate.

Reimbursement of Expenses and Compensation for Time

KW4 OHT recognizes the importance of obtaining diverse perspectives as we seek to design equitable health systems in our region.

For this reason, we believe it is essential to consider the input and engagement of patients, care partners, knowledge keepers, and community members who have lived experience within our health systems. We strive to ensure an equitable approach by supporting the participation of these individuals in the CAC. To do so, KW4 OHT will provide compensation, honorariums, and/or reimbursement of expenses as required and using a health equity framework.

Refer to the Community Member Stipend Policy and Procedure for more information.

Decision Making

Recommendations will be made based on consensus. The Chair will create and implement the mechanisms by which recommendations are collected and shared. Where a consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be referred to the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair in consultation with the KW4 OHT Executive Director.

Quorum

A quorum will be required for any significant decisions. The majority (i.e. greater than 50%) of the committee must be in attendance to meet the quorum requirement.

Conflict of Interest

Committee members have a duty to ensure that the integrity of the decision-making processes is maintained by ensuring that the members of this committee are free from conflict or potential conflict in their decision-making.

Declaration: All members of this committee should declare a conflict of interest – real or perceived as they arise and have an ongoing duty to recognize and make full disclosure of any potential, perceived or real conflicts of interest to the Committee Chair and the KW4 OHT Executive Director.

Refer to the KW4 OHT Conflict of Interest Policy for more information.

Confidentiality

Members shall respect the confidentiality of information received by, and discussions of the CAC, subcommittees, working groups or KW4 OHT.

Declaration: CAC members and all members of subcommittees or working groups shall each sign an acknowledgement confirming their agreement to respect the confidentiality of information received in their capacity as a member of a subcommittee or working group. The acknowledgment confirms adherence to these Terms of Reference and any protocols, policies or procedures adopted by the KW4 OHT from time to time.

Members acknowledge that their names and email addresses will be shared with other CAC members as well as the KW4 OHT.

Additionally, images of the members may be shared by KW4 OHT in social media or on the KW4 OHT website.

Terms of Reference Review

The terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

Version Control

Last reviewed/revised – March 28, 2024