



Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program

Parent Experience Advisor Handbook

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program (CMNRP) as a Parent Experience Advisor. Your parenting experience could contribute a great deal to how perinatal health care is delivered across Eastern and Southeastern Ontario. It is only from your perspective that we can understand if perinatal care and services in your community are being tailored to the needs of new and expectant parents and families. This guide will give you some background information to help you decide if being a Parent Experience Advisor is right for you.

Vision

CMNRP's vision is that "Family-Centred Care is adopted by all CMNRP partner organizations within the Champlain and South East Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) as the standard approach for planning, delivering and evaluating maternal-newborn healthcare programs and services". By partnering with us as a Parent Experience Advisor or Family Member Representative you will assist CMNRP in achieving this.

Understanding Family-Centred Care

Family-Centred Care (FCC) is about providing respectful, compassionate, culturally responsive care that meets the needs and beliefs of childbearing families from diverse backgrounds by working collaboratively with them.

Core Concepts of Family-Centred Care

Dignity and Respect

Listening to and honouring the parents' and families' perspectives and choices.

- Parental and family knowledge, values, beliefs and cultural backgrounds are incorporated into the planning and delivery of care.

Information Sharing

Communicating and sharing complete and unbiased information with parents and families in ways that are affirming and useful.

- Parents and families receive timely, complete and accurate information in order to effectively participate in care and decision-making.



Participation

Encouraging and supporting parents and their family to participate in care and decision making to the extent they wish.

Collaboration

Collaborating with parents and families in policy and program development, implementation and evaluation, facility design, professional education and delivery of care.

(Johnson et al., 2008)

What is a Parent Experience Advisor?

A Parent Experience Advisor is a parent or grandparent who has recently experienced (within the last 3 years) the birth or addition of a newborn or infant family member. Parent Experience Advisors partner with professional health care providers to provide direct input into regional projects and work to inform hospital, community and other services related to parenting across the Champlain and South East LHINs.

Is There a Difference between an Advisor and an Advocate?

Yes. An advocate is a person who pleads the cause of another. An advisor is a person who partners with health care providers by bringing their experience of what it is like to be a parent or a close family member of a parent, to a decision making table. An advisor looks at the big picture through the lens of their experience.

Role of the Parent Experience Advisor

- To partner with perinatal health care providers from CMNRP partner organizations to ensure parent and family-centred care is provided in a fully accessible environment that promotes health, wellness, dignity and trust in the organizations that are providing services to new parents and newborns throughout our region.
- To keep the parents, newborns and families as the focal point of our regional perinatal health system.
- To be viewed as a positive reinforcement of the family-centred care concept.
- To build partnerships with health care professionals based on mutual respect and open communication.
- To support and participate in regional quality improvement projects in an advisory capacity.



Characteristics of a Successful Advisor

- Respectful of others and their perspectives
- Comfortable speaking in a group and interacting with others
- Good listener
- Able to use their personal experience constructively
- Able to see beyond their own experience (able to see the big picture)
- Non-judgmental
- Positive attitude
- Able to work collaboratively with other families and health care providers
- Desire to expand their knowledge and skills
- Desire to participate in bringing about meaningful change
- Able to maintain confidentiality of patient and organizational information

Responsibilities of a Parent Experience Advisor

- Advisors are accountable to the CMNRP Lead of the CMNRP Family Advisory Committee.
- Advisors are responsible to prepare for meetings by familiarizing themselves with materials sent out prior to each meeting
- Advisors are responsible for attending meetings

What You can Expect as a Parent Experience Advisor

- The opportunity to assist with or attend CMNRP events and apply to participate on various CMNRP projects and workgroups
- Orientation to and full membership on CMNRP's Family Advisory Committee (FAC)
- Accessible meeting rooms where breastfeeding infants are welcome to attend meetings
- Opportunities for education around Family-Centred Care
- Over the years healthcare has developed its own language. You can expect to have abbreviations, acronyms and terms clearly defined/explained. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification when something is unclear.
- Organizational information and a list of committees with Parent Experience Advisor membership are available on request from the CMNRP Family Advisory Committee lead.
- Advance notice of meetings. FAC meetings, 2-3 per year, will be held on weekdays and will most often be scheduled between 8 am and 4 pm. Workgroups will meet more regularly over a shorter period of defined time (e.g. meet once a month for 12 consecutive months).
- A rewarding experience and the knowledge you are making a positive difference in how childbearing families are cared for in hospitals and communities throughout the Champlain and South East LHINs.



Parent Experience Advisor Application Process

- The application form and copies of this handbook can be accessed online at www.cmnrp.ca; after an application is submitted and reviewed, if you are a candidate to sit on a committee or workgroup you will be contacted by CMNRP. In some instances interviews will be conducted. These interviews can be held in person or by phone, will be informal in nature and will be hosted by the CMNRP FAC lead and a current CMNRP Parent Experience Advisor (PEA) and/or the current CMNRP PEA co-chair.
- Applicants will then receive a decision via email or preferred method of communication (as outlined in the application form).
- Orientation to the committee, or working group is given
- A CMNRP Confidentiality Agreement is signed

Parking

The cost of parking will be covered by CMNRP when meetings are held in locations where free parking is not available.

Depending on the institution hosting the meeting, parking chits or tickets may be available, or a CMNRP representative will accompany you to the parking garage to cover the cost of your parking.

Who to Contact if You have a Question or Concern

- The lead for CMNRP's Family Advisory Committee is there to support you and may be reached at the coordinates below.
- If you have any concerns which you feel uncomfortable raising with the lead you may contact the CMNRP regional director at 613-737-2660 ext. 2527 or by email mtrepanier@cmnrp.ca

Contact Information

CMNRP Family Advisory Committee Lead: Lauren Rivard

- Call 613-549-6666 ext. 4960
- larivard@cmnrp.ca