

# **Transforming Health Care for the Homeless in Niagara Emergency Departments Steering Committee**

## **Preamble**

In 2016, people experiencing homelessness generated policy ideas in partnership with the health system, including the following: “[A]llow for dedicated triaging space in the ER that will offer wrap around services for patients with mental health concerns....[including] offering peer support...” The goal of this Steering Committee is to guide the implementation and evaluation of a pilot project that incorporates Peer Support Workers with lived experience of homelessness in the emergency departments in Welland and Niagara Falls. The goal of this project is to leverage Peer Support Workers to provide wraparound services informed by their shared lived experience, including providing support, advocacy, referrals and accompaniment. This pilot project aims to improve health outcomes, health care use, and the experience of receiving care in Niagara emergency departments for people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the pilot project aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of this model and generate evidence-based, best practice guidelines for the implementation of Peer Support Workers in the ED.

## **Objective of the Steering Committee**

The role of the Steering Committee is as follows:

- To provide guidance to the lead agency for the implementation of the pilot project.
- To monitor the implementation of the pilot project and provide feedback to the lead agency in order to support effective service delivery and achievement of project objectives.
- To identify, discuss and explore solutions for client/system related issues or risks that emerge.
- To guide program integration across Niagara linking the pilot project with the strategic directions of healthcare organizations and leveraging the opportunities to enhance and expand the pilot project.

## **Membership**

The Steering Committee will consist of no more than 12 members. Efforts will be made to have representation from a wide range of service sectors and stakeholders across Niagara including people with lived experience.

## **Role of the Steering Committee Chair**

A representative from the lead agency of the pilot project will Chair the meetings. The Chair will be responsible for conducting meetings according to the agenda. At the conclusion of each meeting, members will be asked to identify agenda items for the upcoming meeting. Members may also present additions to an upcoming meeting agenda by contacting the chair at least 2 weeks in advance of a meeting.

## **Role of Steering Committee Members**

Individual Steering Committee members have the following roles:

- Understand the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes of the project.
- Understand and represent the interests of project stakeholders.
- Take a genuine interest in the project's outcomes and overall success.
- Actively participate in meetings through attendance, discussion, and review of minutes, papers and other Steering Committee documents.

**Timeframe**

It is expected that the Steering Committee members will commit a minimum of 2 years to oversee planning, implementation and evaluation phases of the pilot project.

**Meetings**

The Committee will meet monthly for 24 months, or as appropriate. Additional meetings may be required at various stages of the pilot project. Additional meetings for subcommittees may also be required. The location of meetings will be at the offices of the lead agency unless otherwise indicated.

**Minutes**

Minutes of meetings held will be kept and reviewed as the first order of business of the following meeting.

**Quorum**

Quorum shall be 50% plus one member.

**Decision Process**

Committee decisions will be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, decisions will be made by a majority vote.

**Conflict of Interest**

From time to time, items that present a conflict of interest will arise. A conflict of interest must be declared to the Chair when/ if they arise. The Chair will then direct the committee to determine the extent to which the member should participate in any discussion or decision making processes related to that item.

**Dispute Resolution**

In the event that a dispute arises, the Steering Committee members, with support from Quest CHC Staff, will attempt to negotiate/resolve the matter. A facilitator/mediator may be considered as appropriate.

**Confidentiality**

During each meeting, matters of confidentiality will be identified as appropriate and reflected in the minutes as such.

**Reporting Relationship**

The Steering Committee will provide guidance to the lead agency for the effective implementation of this pilot project. The lead agency is responsible for hiring staff; financial and statistical reporting; and implementation of the funded aspects of the initiative including communication with funder.