

Co-Chair: Ms. Margaret Melanson  
V.P. Quality & Patient Centred Care  
Co-Chair: Dr. Wayne MacDonald

Meeting Location:  
Zoom

Date: Monday, October 25, 2021

Meeting Time: 1:30 – 2:30

## REQUIRED ATTENDEES

Present (✓)    Regrets (R)    Absent (A)

PATIENT EXPERIENCE ADVISORS							
✓	Shirley Renouf	✓	Shirley Young	✓	Siobhan Laskey	✓	Debra Craig
✓	Wayne MacDonald	✓	Terry Clark	✓	Roger Stoddard	✓	Jean Castonguay
HORIZON STAFF							
✓	Margaret Melanson, VP Quality & Patient Centered Care	✓	Sonya Green-Hache, Regional Director, Volunteers Auxiliaries & Patient Engagement	R	Lauza Saulnier, Regional Director, Quality & Patient Safety Services	✓	Monica Landry, Executive Assistant to Margaret Melanson
R	Gail Lebel, Chief Human Resources Officer	R	Jeff Carter, Corporate Director, Capital Assets and Infrastructure	✓	Jacquelin Gordon, Director of Nursing Professional Practice	✓	Dr. Timothy Christie, Director of Ethics
EX-OFFICIO							
R	Dr. John Dornan, Interim President and CEO						
GUESTS							

### 1.0 Call to Order

- 1.1 Welcome W. MacDonald/  
1:30 – 1:40 It was noted by the Co-Chair, W. MacDonald a quorum was present, pointing out all PEA Council members were present. M. Melanson
- Agenda was approved by consensus.
  - The minutes from the September 23, 2021 meeting were approved as circulated.

#### BUSINESS ARISING

**Action:** Sonya will follow-up with Lynn Meahan regarding the committee evaluation email survey and provide an update to the PEAs.

### 2.0 Standing Items

- 2.1 COVID-19 Response Update M. Melanson  
1:40 -1:55
- M. Melanson provided an update on the fourth wave of the COVID pandemic in New Brunswick.
  - The fourth wave has brought on an increase of admissions across the province for both Horizon and Vitalité, notably in zones 1 (Moncton region), zone 2 (Saint John region), the northern part of zone 3 (Fredericton area) and zone 4 (Edmundston region). Due to the increase of admissions and staffing shortages, some services have been cancelled, deploying nursing staff to assist with the COVID units.
  - Both Horizon and Vitalité are working in collaboration with Ambulance NB and an Intensivist to organize and coordinate transfers of COVID patient across NB to assist with the many levels of acuity of COVID patients.
  - Recurring meetings are scheduled with the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) to assist with the placement of Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients to free up

inpatient beds for COVID admissions.

- Horizon returned to the red phase to lower the movement within the facility and assist with unit outbreaks occurring
- A circuit breaker has been in effect in certain higher-risk areas of the province since Friday, October 8, 2021 to restrict travel within the zones to curb the rise in positive cases
- Within the past week, it is noted that the number of admissions has started to decrease with the new measures in place.
- In response to a question related to the impact of nursing shortages and the pressures on staff to provide quality care, M. Melanson noted that although the current situation is challenging, with the dedication of staff and constant monitoring of the staffing needs, the quality of nursing and patient care has not been affected.
- W. MacDonald referred to the TORs of the Council, notably Functions, item 1, that PFAC provides patient family experience perspective, guidance and advice pertaining to situations, issues and developments that occur which impact patient family experience and care and raised concern about the impact of the current Covid situation on the already stressed health care system.
- Through discussion it was noted that a lot of very good work was carried out by GNB in earlier stages of the Pandemic response, however in their opinion, less so in the latter stages.
- Upon a motion made by J. Castonguay, seconded by R. Stoddard, PFAC recommended the Interim CEO of Horizon Health Network ask the government to initiate an independent public inquiry into the provincial pandemic response. Discussion on the motion took place and the motion was put to a vote. The motion was carried by a vote of 6 to 1.

**Action:** M Melanson will bring this motion forward to Dr. Dornan, Interim Horizon President & CEO for action

2.2 1:55 – 2:20	<p>Designated Support Person (DSP) Program Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effective November 19, 2021</b> Designated Support Persons (DSPs) will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This deferred implementation date provides unvaccinated DSPs an opportunity to become fully vaccinated.</li> <li>• This measure is in alignment with the Government of New Brunswick's policy for health care workers to be fully vaccinated to protect the safety of our vulnerable patients and health care workers, and due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, including Intensive Care Unit admissions.</li> <li>• As of Monday, October 18 DSPs are being asked to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination to the screeners upon entry to all Horizon hospitals and health care facilities.</li> <li>• Between October 18 and November 19, patients eligible for the DSP program are asked to appoint a fully vaccinated DSP. If an unvaccinated DSP is the only option, the DSP must participate in a COVID-19 testing regimen.</li> <li>• DSP Vaccination exceptions and the management of these exceptions after November 19 are currently being discussed in collaboration with Vitalité Health Network. From April 2021 to the present date there 1,507 DSPs have completed on-line education with 885 onboarded in the month of the October</li> <li>• Concerns were raised regarding the availability of DSPs to be with patients in the Emergency Departments. S Green Hache noted that patients who require emotional and physical support and/or assistance with decision making and communication were eligible to have a DSP with them. Wait room space restrictions can sometimes impact DSPs ability to stay with their loved one in the wait room.</li> <li>• Through discussion, it was recommended that more information be provided to patients and their support persons about who to contact if they have questions about becoming a DSP. It was noted that screeners who are the first point of contact for family members entering the hospital, do not have the authority to grant DSP designation. This is</li> </ul>	S. Green-Hache
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- completed by the nurse manager or designate of each patient care unit.
- It was recommended the DSP program be extended to any patient who would like to have a support person with them especially in the Emergency Department.

**Action:** S Green-Hache will investigate options for enhanced and expanded areas for designated support person allowance

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>	
3.1	Next Meeting	All
2:20-2:30		