

Health Sciences North 2020 Annual General Meeting

Report from the Chair,
Patient and Family Advisory Council

Jessica Grenier



Health Sciences North
Horizon Santé-Nord

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Annual General Meeting – June 24, 2020

It's my pleasure to present to you the progress that the patient and family advisory (or PFA) program has made over the past year and to highlight Health Sciences North's continued commitment to engage with patients and their families to ensure that we remain the focus of all that HSN does.

Six years ago I was inspired to become a patient advisor following my heart attack at age 35 and stay with HSN.

My experiences within the emergency and cardiac departments as well as having experienced services with NEO Kids for several years left me feeling that sharing my personal experience with the staff and leadership at HSN could result in improvement work within the system.

In becoming a patient and family advisor, there was an opportunity to continue to partner with staff to provide direct input on policies, programs and practices that could affect the healthcare experience for future patients and families of HSN.

This year, I have participated in many engagement opportunities.

Helping to develop a streamlined, efficient and collaborative health care system for everyone; which focus' on solutions to close the gaps in several pathways in health care has been most rewarding.

Sharing my experiences and perspectives has impacted several outcomes and has allowed the opportunity to see firsthand the willingness to collaborate, the passion and dedication our community of health care workers and the HSN staff expresses when visioning what health care should look like in the future.

In health care, delivering quality patient care requires close collaboration of patients and families with their health care team.

I would like to highlight some of the key successes that HSN has had in partnering with patients and families over the past year.

The program itself has seen several improvement initiatives to help increase PFA program awareness at HSN including a revised internet site, the development of a patient advisor handbook, increased visibility through TV screen ads, posters, and the

development of recruitment post cards.

This year we wanted to send a clear message that all patients and family members are welcome to apply to participate.

Patient and Family Advisors have been members of councils, committees, interview panels and improvement projects throughout the organization, including the implementation of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan of HSN and HSNRI.

This work involved PFA's in key decisions in the organization, and included our voice at the table for each of the five key goals:

For the key goal to “**Be Patient and Family-Focused**”, Patient Advisors Sharon Henderson and Debbie Rainville have been participating in the Information Transfer at Care Transitions project.

The focus of the work has been on the handover of patient information between health care providers upon shift change.

They participated in improvement team meetings and discussions including feedback and recommendations on staff education, organization-wide communication materials, and obtaining patient consent.

They also provided input on the design of the documentation tool required as a permanent record in the patient chart. Their participation will continue as the project moves forward in the coming months.

The key goal to be **Digitally-Enabled** focused on expanding the use of technology data and analytics to improve care.

In September, Patient and Family Advisors Debbie Rainville, Brian Urso and I were included in a current state analysis to solicit our feedback on the development of the regional electronic medical record and patient portal.

We were able to provide feedback on what our priorities would be, what we've heard from community members and what would be beneficial to us in the electronic medical record.

As this work continues, HSN is looking at strategies to include patient advisors in the best way possible.

Under the key goal to be **Socially Accountable**, we worked towards providing cultural safety and diversity training programs for HSN's employees, medical staff and learners.

HSN actively participated in the City of Greater Sudbury's Pride Week last July.

Several Patient and Family Advisors shared their stories and the struggles that members of the LGBTQ community faced when receiving care at HSN.

Transgender patient advisors Rita O'Link and Darlyn Hansen along with HSN staff members had 103 thought provoking conversations with community members who shared their advice regarding how the LGBTQ education should be designed and delivered at HSN.

Improvement work under the key goal to **Support and Develop our People**, focused on Workplace Violence and how HSN could enhance our reporting and response culture.

A Rapid Improvement Event was held in July with the presence of a Patient and Family Advisor, Jenny Glanz, who helped to ground the work and offered a different perspective on organization-wide improvement approaches.

Jenny will continue to partner with HSN staff as a member of the Workplace Violence Task Force working towards prevention, intervention and postvention of workplace violence.

The work to **Strengthen our Academic and Research Impact** included onboarding two Patient and Family Advisors to the HSN Research Ethics Board (REB).

As members of the HSN REB, John Fraser and Lissa Gagnon completed the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans online training and attended meetings prior to becoming a member to gain a familiarity with how the board works.

Lissa and John are essential to the HSN REB meetings, sharing their experiences to help broaden the perspective and value base of the board.

HSN continues to strive to increase engagement and visibility of our patient advisors with one another and throughout the organization.

Our PFA Meet and Greet allowed us to share our stories, the work we have been involved in and to learn about additional engagement opportunities at HSN.

Further networking strategies provided us the opportunity to attend several conferences

including the Mental Health and Addictions Conference and the Northeast Oncology Conference.

The patient advisors that attended could feel the level of commitment and interest of the clinicians in the room to absorb and use the information in their daily practice. Further, Patient and Family involvement in Cancer Care allowed several advisors the opportunity to participate in a Cancer Planning Day in January to kick-start regional planning towards the development of the five year Regional Cancer Plan 2020-2025.

Knowing that there are endless opportunities to improve, having patient advisors as members of this important day helped bring focus to the important few priorities needed to advance in this region. It was a step towards developing achievable goals for the next five years.

This year, we set a goal, developed strategies and implemented a recruitment plan to add an additional 15 new members to the current resource pool of patient advisors. One of these strategies involved a news release led by Lianne Dupras. Lianne bravely shared her story with the public and spoke about her positive experience in partnering with HSN staff.

“I would absolutely recommend becoming a Patient Advisor because you can have a say in how care is delivered and how it can be improved. We always need different patient perspectives and experiences at the table to truly build a healthcare system for all of us”, said Lianne.

As a result of the media release, we have interviewed 10 additional PFA’s for the program and are well on our way to achieving our goal for this year.

Patient advisors have recently been partnering with HSN employees from outside of the organization as members of our Incident Command, Operations and Recovery Planning teams during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our voice at the table helped to determine patient-centered decisions around visitation, personal belongings and how the organization will deliver the recovery plan.

Our input has been sought by experts at every meeting I have attended.

I have listened to challenges and creative solutions and have witnessed the incredible collaborative work HSN employees, medical staff and leadership has been doing.

I cannot say enough about the strong leadership and team commitments that have been clearly identified during this time.

It is very re-assuring knowing our community is in extremely capable hands and HSN is very well positioned to continue caring for all of us in the best ways possible.

As a patient advisor, I have always been well included, welcomed and certainly heard when attending any of these meetings and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to be the voice representing our diverse patient populations in the planning and decision-making processes.

I have been referenced as the “priority” on more than one occasion, which always puts a smile on my face.

I would like to thank my fellow PFA’s for all of their hard work and dedication to the continuous pursuit to improve the health care experience for others.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge one of our most dedicated PFA’s who passed away this year: Charles Ketter.

Charles became a patient advisor because he wanted to improve communications between patients, families and the healthcare team.

He brought his personal experiences of caring for his wife and son to the volunteer role along with his dedication and commitment to making a difference in the healthcare system wherever he could.

His impact at every table was undeniable.

Particularly at new staff orientations or employee service awards.

The room always fell silent as Charles shared his story and explained what Patient and Family Centered Care meant to him and his family.

“As an Advisor, I have experienced acceptance and encouragement from staff at all levels of HSN as this cultural change evolves in the local health care system. As a participant in several improvement projects, I have been impressed with the dedication and compassion of staff”, said Charles.

He challenged all of us to do better.

Thank you for everything you did for HSN Charlie. We learned a lot from you.