

Patient Experience Partners

Getting Started Handbook



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Dear Patient Experience Partner,

On behalf of Michael Garron Hospital, thank you for joining us as a Patient Partner. We look forward to hearing from you as we continue to improve the way we deliver care.

By sharing your ideas, experiences and perspectives you will help make meaningful improvements in the quality and safety of patient care. Thank you for joining us and supporting our commitment to Create Health and Build Community.

Sincerely,

Wolf Klassen,

*VP, Program Support
Michael Garron Hospital, Toronto East Health Network*

Lorrie Hamilton,

*Director, Patient Experience, Ethics & Spiritual Care
Michael Garron Hospital, Toronto East Health Network*

About Michael Garron Hospital

Vision: Create Health. Build Community.

Mission: Our community inspires us to deliver exemplary care, develop innovative partnerships and mentor the next generation of healthcare providers. Together we will make a difference and change the face of health in East Toronto and beyond.

Values: • Compassion • Integrity • Courage • Accountability

Nestled in the heart of East Toronto, Michael Garron Hospital (MGH), a division of Toronto East Health Network, is a vibrant community teaching hospital serving one of Canada's most diverse communities. For 90 years, MGH has delivered high-quality, patient-centred healthcare to more than 400,000 people in 22 neighbourhoods.

MGH is committed to **fostering an inclusive culture** that embraces diversity in the delivery of the entire medical and support services. The goal is to create a space where everyone feels safe, accepted and compassionately cared for.

MGH also has strong community, clinical, research, and academic partnerships, with University of Toronto, Sunnybrook Health Sciences, The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Centennial College, George Brown College, Michener Institute, Ryerson University and York University.

Who is Michael Garron?

In 1961, Michael Garron was born in Toronto East General Hospital to Myron and Berna Garron. Although the Garrons later moved away from East York, Toronto East General Hospital remained in their hearts.

At a very young age, Michael was diagnosed with a rare tissue cancer. Unfortunately, at the age of 13, Michael passed away. Prior to his passing, Michael confided in his mother, Berna, that his greatest fear of dying at a young age was that he would not be remembered. It is for this reason that the hospital's name was changed in Michael's memory, through the generous donation from Myron and Berna Garron.

Now, we can proudly say that Michael will never be forgotten.

Why is MGH Partnering with Patients and Families?

MGH believes that we can improve the way we deliver care by working with patients and families. This is why we strive to focus on patient and family centred care.

To us, patient and family centred care means:

1. Seeing patients as experts in their own experience and working with them to improve the quality, safety, and satisfaction of their care.
2. Partnering with patients and families to ensure their voice is heard at all levels of the organization, from the bedside to the boardroom. Examples include developing policy, building processes, and working together on projects.



Patient Experience Partners

Patient Experience Partners share their own thoughts and ideas to represent the voices of patients and families. This point of view helps us improve programs, education, and the way we deliver care.

Patient Experience Partners get involved based on their interests, experience, and availability. Time commitment varies depending on your interest and availability. Parking Passes or TTC fare is provided.

Here are some of the ways partners can get involved at MGH:

- Sitting on Patient Experience Panels.
- Joining hospital councils and committees.
- Taking part in hiring interviews for new staff.
- Being a part of focus groups.

Successful Patient Experience Partners:

- Are excited about improving the healthcare experience for patients and families.
- Want to share their ideas and experiences to improve programs, services, and hospital priorities.
- Are good listeners and can communicate well with others.
- Want to work with staff and physicians.
- Are respectful of other people's thoughts and ideas.
- Can openly share their thoughts and ideas in a group setting.
- Can use their personal experience to make positive change.
- Are open to hearing about other people's experiences, thoughts, and ideas.
- Can promote the mission and values of MGH when engaging with staff, physicians, volunteers, and the community.
- Can make the needed time commitments.
- Have received care at MGH in the last 3 years (or have a family member that has received care in the last 3 years).

Patient Experience Panel

The Patient Experience Panel (PEP) is a committee of Patient Experience Partners that work with the hospital staff on projects that impact patient care. Panel members learn about the hospital and represent MGH in the community. PEP members have received care at MGH in the last 3 years (or have family members that have received care in the last 3 years). PEP members have experience in different inpatient programs and outpatient clinics at MGH.

The PEP meets 4 times to give input to hospital initiatives and improvement projects. Here are some examples of projects PEP has been involved with:

Redesign of the Green Zone in the Emergency Department

PEP members provided feedback to improve design and flow. These updates were recognized as a best practice by the Knowledge Institute.

Patient-Oriented Discharge Summary

PEP members co-created the discharge summary that guides conversations for patients returning home. This information helps patients manage their health at home.

Hospital Redevelopment

PEP members provided feedback throughout the redevelopment process. Members also previewed mock-up patient rooms and public spaces to help with the design of these areas.

Advance Care Planning

PEP members provided feedback on the content of advance care planning materials. Materials included pamphlets, a workbook, video content, and a PowerPoint presentation.

For more information about the PEP, please visit:

<https://www.tehn.ca/patient-experience-panel-terms-reference>

Committee activities may include: sharing ideas, giving feedback, going to meetings, and answering surveys.

“I have been a Patient Experience Panel member for 2 years and during that time have been part of a few committees. These experiences have offered me insight and helped me develop an understanding of many aspects of Michael Garron Hospital.”

“My role is to help to bring the community member voice to the table by making observations, contributions of personal experiences, or simply asking questions. This involvement can either be on an individual basis or as part of a working group of PEP members. My experience has been very enjoyable and fulfilling as I have always felt welcomed and respected in every situation.”

-Louise Free (Patient Partner, PEP).



If you would like to join a Committee or learn more, please contact us:

- patientexperiencepartners@tehn.ca
- **416-469-6580 ext. 2324**

Being a Helpful Patient Partner

Being a Patient Partner can be very fulfilling. However, the role may also feel difficult at times.

Here are some tips to help you be a helpful Patient Partner:

- Believe that your ideas will make a difference for others.
- Listen with understanding, curiosity and respect, even if you don't agree.
- Ask questions to learn from each other.
- Make sure everyone has a chance to speak.
- Be open-minded and ready to hear new ideas.
- Rethink your assumptions and beliefs.
- Be comfortable with staff and other patients and families. Remember that you are an expert too!
- Think about points you want to make before attending a meeting. This helps the group stay on topic.
- Give input based on your own experience, but be able to see other points of view.
- When talking about something that didn't go well, give examples of how it could have gone better.
- When talking about something that went well, give examples of why it went well.
- Try be constructive, even if you are upset. Patient Experience team members are here to support you if a story causes strong emotions.
- Follow through when you say you are going to do something. If you have trouble balancing your personal life with PEP activities, please let us know.
- Give us feedback too! We want to know how we can improve your experience.

As a Patient Experience Partner, you will need to work towards a common goal with others. This means focusing on dialogue instead of debate.

Dialogue is the art of a good conversation. It is the process of putting two or more different opinions together in hope of creating a unified idea. Debate is stating your opinion without listening to other thoughts or ideas. Dialogue is much more than just talking back and forth.

Dialogue	Debate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes that many people have pieces of the answer and they can create a solution together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes that there is a right answer and someone has it. •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees a need to rethink assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees assumptions as truth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to work together for a common understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to prove the other side wrong.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects and rethinks one's own views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defends one's own views against those of someone else.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to understand, find meaning, and agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to find flaws and argue.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks for strengths and value in others' ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks for problems and weaknesses in other's ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows concern for the other person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticizes or looks down on the other person.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on new options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on winning.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I was a healthcare provider in the past. Can I use that experience and training in my Patient Experience Partner role?

A: Any professional background is helpful when you provide feedback or input. The focus of this work is to share your thoughts and ideas as a patient, caregiver, and community member.

Q: How much time will it take to be a Patient Experience Partner?

A: You can get involved at the level you choose. This means that the amount of time you wish to contribute is up to you. Please let the committee or leader of the project you are involved in know about how much time you have to give.

Q: What do I need to do to be a Patient Partner?

A: The application process includes an interview, criminal reference check, and an orientation session.

Q: Who can I get in touch with if I have more questions about the Patient Partner role?

A: You can contact the Patient Experience team at: patientexperiencepartners@tehn.ca or: 416-469-6580 ext. 2324.

Q: Who do I call to get involved with a specific project?

A: You will be put in touch with the person working on the project you have interest in once you have gone to an orientation session.

Q: What if I am asked “So, X, what do patients think?” In other words, what if staff members see me as ‘representing the public’, when I may not have the same opinions as others?

A: You could say: “I can’t speak to everyone’s experience, but here are my thoughts...”

Q: What if I want to stop being a Patient Experience Partner?

A: You can stop volunteering as a Patient Experience Partner at any time. Please tell the MGH staff person who is leading the project that you will no longer be volunteering. If you want, you can let them know why you don’t want to volunteer anymore.

