

VETERANS CENTRE FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE

POLICY STATEMENT:

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre supports the Veterans Centre Family Advisory Council (FAC) in its role to give veterans' families and members of a veteran resident's support network* a forum to participate as a viable group and partners in shaping and improving the veteran resident's home environment and community. Like the Veteran Residents' Council (VRC), the FAC shares the goal of improved quality of care and quality of life for all veteran residents of the Veterans Centre. All FAC members share the responsibility for ensuring that the process is solution-focused.

** A "veteran resident's support network" means anyone that the resident deems to be a person of importance in their life, eg. a substitute decision maker who is not related by blood, marriage or adoption, or a close friend. It does not include paid companions.*

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

Background:

The FAC is a forum to improve the resident experience within Sunnybrook Veterans Centre, to advocate for the preservation of the home environment of the Veterans, and promote a veteran-focused community within.

The FAC provides an opportunity to discuss shared concerns and issues across the Veterans Centre. Examples include: programming or scheduling issues, meals, physical improvements to the facility, noise, parking etc. Issues that are not appropriate are those that affect the care of one resident or one room only, or individual staff performance. Such issues may be directed to the resident's primary nurse, the unit's Patient Care Manager or to the Manager, Office of the Resident & Family Experience.

Leaders and content experts internal and external to the Veterans Centre are invited to FAC meetings as appropriate, to hear and respond to shared concerns and issues.

The FAC has the ability to make recommendations to the Veterans Centre Administration. FAC recommendations are taken forward to the next available Veterans Centre Program Council and are minuted, and the month's previous FAC minutes are appended to monthly Program Council agenda packages.

Items that are not able to be addressed or resolved at the next Program Council meeting are brought forward until resolved. A written or verbal response to recommendations is provided to FAC at the first available opportunity post resolution. FAC recommendations to Program Council will be taken under advisement, but are not binding upon Veterans Centre leadership.

Process:

Improving the resident experience will be accomplished by working with the Veterans Centre Program leadership:

1. To create a culture of family engagement, and to ensure its systemic adoption by offering opportunities to family members to participate in committees and working groups as appropriate, and to act as advisors and partners in shaping and changing the resident care experience.
2. To provide a vehicle for families to offer input on how care is organized, delivered and experienced, by engaging families in processes that will result in wider consultation, collaboration and communication with families as partners within the Veterans Centre.
3. To enhance communication between veterans' families and staff and provide a vehicle for communication with the Veterans Centre Program leadership.
4. To identify issues and recommend solutions on behalf of veteran residents and families who may no longer be able to do so themselves.
5. To provide a forum for families to voice their concerns, and give positive or negative feedback about the Veterans Centre.
6. To liaise with external partners as appropriate to improve the life of Veterans in the Veterans Centre.
7. To identify and provide educational opportunities for veterans' families, as well as staff as appropriate.
6. To liaise with the Veteran Residents Council (VRC) regarding shared needs/concerns.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP:

The FAC will report through the Manager, Office of the Resident & Family Experience to the Veterans Centre Program Council.

MEMBERSHIP:

1. FAC members must be either a veteran resident family member or a member of the support network for a veteran resident residing in the Veterans Centre. A member associated with a deceased veteran resident may continue their membership in FAC but will not have voting privileges and, except as outlined below, may not hold the office of Family Co-Chair.
2. The Veteran Residents Council will be invited to appoint one representative to act as a liaison with the FAC. The FAC will be invited to appoint one representative to act as a liaison with the VRC.

COUNCIL ROLES:

1. **Veterans Centre Co-Chair:** The Manager, Office of the Resident & Family Experience will act as the Veterans Centre Co-Chair and will be responsible for working with the Family Co-Chair to forward issues to the Veterans Centre Program Council.
2. **Family Co-Chair:** A veteran resident family member of the FAC will act as Family Co-Chair. The Family Co-Chair will provide a leadership role in recruiting FAC members, will work with the Veterans Centre Co-Chair in developing the monthly agenda, and will work with the Veterans Centre Co-Chair to forward items/issues to the Veterans Centre Program Council. The Family Co-Chair will assume the duties of the Veterans Centre Co-Chair in their absence, and will provide assistance to the Veterans Centre Co-Chair as required, e.g. attendance at Veterans Centre related functions/meetings as appropriate. The Family Co-Chair term will be for one year, with the possibility of re-election. The Family Co-Chair must have a veteran resident family member currently living in the Veterans Centre.
3. **Administrative Support:** The Administrative Assistant to the Manager, Office of the Resident & Family Experience will provide administrative support through taking minutes and distribution of agendas, minutes and other resource material.

ELECTION PROCESS FOR FAMILY CO-CHAIR

1. The Family Co-Chair shall be elected for a one year term. In the case of the death of the Family Co-Chair's veteran resident family member during their term, the Family Co-Chair may continue in office for three months if they so choose, to

support a smooth transition to the new Family Co-Chair. A new Family Co-Chair will be elected as soon as practicable.

2. A Family Co-Chair may be re-elected.

3. Thirty days before the election of a Family Co-Chair, the Veterans Centre Co-Chair shall: announce the election to all veteran resident family members who have provided their e-mail address to the Veteran Centre Co-Chair; post a notice on the board outside the Veterans Centre Co-Chair's Office; and post a notice on the Sunnybrook FAC website.

4. Any eligible veteran resident family member who seeks to be elected as Family Co-Chair may forward their name to the Veterans Centre Co-Chair. If there is only one candidate, the election shall be by acclamation. If a vote is required, it will take place via secret ballot conducted by the Veterans Centre Co-Chair at the FAC meeting.

5. Only individuals who have a veteran resident family member current living in the Veterans Centre, and who are recorded in the minutes of having attended a minimum of three FAC meetings in the previous 12 months either in person, or via teleconference, are eligible to vote for, or be elected as, a Family Co-Chair.

PROVIDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE VETERANS CENTRE PROGRAM COUNCIL:

1. Only persons who have a veteran resident family member currently living in the Veterans Centre are eligible to vote regarding FAC recommendations to be forwarded to the Veterans Centre Program Council. The Family Co-Chair may vote, but the Veterans Centre Co-Chair does not vote on recommendations.

2. FAC recommendations shall be decided by a majority vote of veteran resident family members present at the FAC meeting where the recommendation is presented.

3. In the event of a tie vote on a recommendation, the recommendation will be taken forward to Program Council.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:

FAC meetings shall be held once a month, or at the call of the Veterans Centre or Family Co-Chairs. The FAC shall not meet in July, August or December.