

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Narrative

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre



Overview

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (SHSC) is pleased to share its twelfth annual Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). This narrative provides a brief introduction to our hospital and describes our key priorities for quality improvement.

SHSC is a large academic health sciences centre that is fully affiliated with the University of Toronto. Sunnybrook has four campuses, ten clinical programs and is Canada's largest trauma centre. The Hospital provides a broad range of tertiary regional programs and services including (but not limited to) specialties in cancer, cardiovascular disease, neurological disorders (including mental health), high-risk obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedic and arthritic conditions, trauma and critical care, rehabilitation, and community care. In addition, Sunnybrook is Canada's largest facility caring for the country's war veterans. Sunnybrook is further advancing specialized care in geriatrics and brain sciences through new developments such as the Peter Cipriano Centre for Seniors Health and the Garry Hurvitz Brain Sciences Centre. Our Precision Diagnostics and Therapeutics Program is Sunnybrook's newest care program, launched in May 2021. This program will use and develop new and evolving molecular and minimally invasive image-guided procedures to diagnose and treat diseases in nearly every organ of the body.

The hospital has 10,000 staff and physicians as well as, hundreds of volunteers who support our vision 'To invent the future of healthcare'. Each year we:

- Care for 1.3 million patients (about 70% are from outside of Toronto)
- Teach 5000 students (from 95 countries around the world)
- Conduct in excess of \$100 million in research

Sunnybrook also has a dedicated group of approximately 140 Patient Partners, working with teams across clinical disciplines to support Patient & Family Advisory Committees (PFACs), working groups and other operational committees to guide decision-making, resource allocation and quality improvement activities from a patient centred lens.

The selection of our QIP priorities is guided by our Strategic Directions, as well as our Quality Strategic Plan.

Sunnybrook's four Strategic Directions aim to achieve excellence in the following areas:

1. **Personalized and precise treatments** - Sunnybrook understands that every patient is unique. This Strategic Direction is about tailoring treatments to meet the specific needs of patients
2. **Integrated and sustainable models of care** - Sunnybrook understands that a visit or stay in the hospital may only be a small part of the patient's journey through the health care system. Regardless of where a patient's pathway through the system may lead, this Strategic Direction aims to ensure people find their way and have consistent care throughout their experience.
3. **Quality and creating a better care experience** - Achieving the best possible outcome for patients while exceeding their expectations for care and service is Sunnybrook's primary concern. Through this Strategic Direction, Sunnybrook is building on its comprehensive strategy to continually improve the quality of care, and engaging patients and families to improve their experience
4. **High performing teams**- Sunnybrook is committed to building and strengthening high performing teams that invent the future of health care. To deliver high quality care requires teamwork – not only from

within the walls of Sunnybrook, but also in collaboration with partners in the system. In this Strategic Direction, the emphasis is on building high performing teams that centre the needs of the patient both at the hospital and in the community.

The Quality Strategic Plan (2020 - 2025) advances the quality aspects of the hospital's strategic directions (2021 – 2025) and elevates three specific goals that are core to achieving quality excellence. The three goals are: Safe Care, Seamless Care, and Sustainable Care. Three important enablers (quality culture, digital health and advanced analytics) have also been identified as vital to achieving these goals and supporting all quality improvement work at Sunnybrook. These goals and enablers provided an important framework for the selection of our annual quality priorities.

To learn more, please visit our website [Sunnybrook.ca](https://www.sunnybrook.ca)

In determining our annual QIP priorities we apply a selection criteria model that ensures each initiative aligns with these strategic priorities of our organization, those of Ontario Health Quality and/or other external or regulatory requirements such as our service accountability agreements and opportunities identified in our Accreditation Report. QIPs are then further evaluated based on their potential impact as well as strength of the data and proposed change ideas. Each plan also benefits from patient engagement and feedback through the plan's development and/or execution. In addition, we seek to focus on work that is in collaboration with our system partners.

Describe your organization's greatest QI achievement from the past year

Over the past two years, the health care community turned its attention to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Many of our regular services were put on hold to ensure adequate staff, space and resources were available when it mattered most. During these unprecedented times we remain very proud of the progress we have made on our 2021/22 QIP. Organizationally, phenomenal work by our interprofessional teams has allowed us to continue to care for patients safely and efficiently. Quality Improvement achievements this year from our QIP that we would like to highlight include Connected Care and Navigation, Palliative Care Access and the Virtual Emergency Department (ED).

To advance collaborative Quality Improvement Planning with the North Toronto OHT, Sunnybrook, SPRINT Senior Care, HHCSS Home Health Care Support Services and Baycrest developed a collaborative QIP in 2021/22 focusing on improving connection of complex patients to inter-professional primary care teams. In collaboration with Sunnybrook and SPRINT Senior Care sites, the Emergency Department (ED) Community Transitional Worker role was established to act as a point-of-contact between community and hospital, supporting both community social workers when their clients present to the Sunnybrook Emergency Department (ED) as well as the ED One Team.

Extensive work was also completed with our system partners this past year to improve timely access to Palliative Care. A standard Advance Care Planning/Goals of Care (ACP/GOC) template was adapted and approved for use at Sunnybrook following extensive consultation with Sunnybrook teams. In addition, the use of a Community Screening Tool for early identification of changing palliative needs was expanded to a Baycrest-supported Toronto Community Housing Building in December 2021. Lastly a public awareness campaign was launched in April 2021 that aligned with ACP Day in Canada, and National Hospice Palliative week. A blog post on the Sunnybrook website was shared on social media, with tweets viewed 11,969 times.

Sunnybrook is proud to be part of Toronto's Virtual Emergency Department (ED) that offers virtual appointments with emergency department physicians from Sunnybrook, University Health Network and Unity Health Toronto. Focused on addressing acute but non-life-threatening issues, patients can book a same-day appointment to see a doctor virtually. *"When Sunnybrook launched its own Virtual ED in 2020, we saw that providing this alternate option was meeting a need for many patients, and they were very pleased with the service. It is wonderful to join forces with two other exceptional institutions, and create a singular door to virtual emergency care"* says Dr. Justin Hall, Sunnybrook emergency physician and one of the leads on developing Toronto's Virtual ED.

Although not a formal part of our QIP, another important Quality Improvement success of 2021/22, is the continuation of Sunnybrook's Clinical Extern Program. The Clinical Extern Program aims to enhance safety and quality of care for patients and families, and supports our health human resource strategy. Externships provide opportunities for advanced year students to develop clinical and team collaboration competencies and to feel more prepared for healthcare professional roles.

These roles were introduced during earlier waves of the COVID pandemic, and were found to be tremendously successful in supporting clinical teams experiencing new staffing and workflow pressures. As one team member expressed, *"The additional experience in the hospital gave me a ton of confidence as I was heading into my final semester of school, and again now as I am looking forward to starting out as an RN [Registered Nurse]. I loved being part of the teams on each unit, and having the chance to learn from so many nurses and health-care professionals has been invaluable."*

To further enhance the impact of this role on quality of care and patient safety, Sunnybrook has begun the "Eyes on Safety" Program, created around this important Clinical Extern role. The *Eyes On Safety* program is a Sunnybrook-developed pilot project started in November 2021, which enhances and formalizes the role Clinical Externs play in addressing patient safety concerns, and meeting fundamental care needs of those patients demonstrating high risk behaviours.

"Externs have played a vital role on K3E in supporting both the patients and the staff. They work very closely with the team to identify patients who can benefit the most from additional support. For example, externs have been a huge help in ensuring that patients who are at risk of falls are frequently visited to offer bathroom visits." - Sarah Evans, Patient Care Manager, K3E.

Sunnybrook also underwent the accreditation onsite survey with Accreditation Canada in November 2021. During the onsite survey, the surveyor team observed care that was provided, and spoke to staff, patients and families across Sunnybrook's five campuses. The Accreditation Canada Surveyor team commended Sunnybrook for demonstrating a strong commitment to quality and safety by undergoing our onsite survey during the COVID19 pandemic and accredited Sunnybrook with Exemplary Standing.

The past years have been a unique and challenging time in health care. It has highlighted the importance of being able to deliver safe, seamless, and sustainable care under even the most extreme of circumstances. We will learn from this experience to propel forward our vision of quality excellence at Sunnybrook and beyond.

Collaboration and integration

Sunnybrook continues to collaborate with its community partners to ensure our patients receive high-quality, accessible and coordinated care.

Through our 2021/22 QIP:

- The North Toronto (NT) Palliative Care Journey Committee, chaired by Sunnybrook is comprised of provincial, Ontario Health, community and hospital provider stakeholders. Committee members participated in quality improvement planning exercises that identified timely access to needs-based palliative care as a priority area of focus, and four key change ideas to drive improvement of this priority.
- Sunnybrook collaborated with the HCCSS Home Health Care Support Services SPRINT Senior Care and Baycrest to improve connections of complex patients to inter-professional primary care teams.

Sunnybrook is also a partner organization with the North Toronto Ontario Health Team (NT OHT). NT OHT partner organizations include:

- Baycrest Hospital
- Client, patient, family, caregiver and community representation
- Home and Community Care
- LOFT Community Services (LOFT)
- Primary care partners
- SE Health (member of the SE family of companies)
- SPRINT Senior Care (SPRINT)
- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (Sunnybrook)
- Unison Health and Community Services (Unison)
- VHA Home HealthCare (VHA)
- Vibrant Healthcare Alliance (Vibrant Health)

The North Toronto OHT vision is to become a connected health care system for people living and seeking care in our North Toronto. This means working together with our partners to provide patients with access to services that are seamless, easy to navigate, and integrated across the continuum in order to meet their unique care needs. The North Toronto OHT has focused our efforts on designing an integrated care delivery model for frail seniors (individuals 65 years and older), as this population represents over 20% (38,036 individuals) of our OHT's attributed population.

In 2022/23, the NT OHT will continue to strengthen efforts to improve access and ensure seamless navigation and coordination supports for NT OHT patients, inclusive of frail seniors. Planning of services underway include:

- Development of neighbourhood care models in North Toronto to improve access to integrated and coordinated care for marginalized and vulnerable seniors;
- Enhancement of access and coordination of services for individuals living in long-term care, congregate and community settings in North Toronto through system integration;

- Integration of mental health and addiction services in North Toronto to meet the unique and complex needs of our community; and
- Implementation of a Collaborative Quality Improvement Plan (cQIP) in alignment with provincial and regional priorities in the following areas:
 - Improving access to care in the most appropriate setting;
 - Increasing access to community-based mental health and addictions services; and
 - Increasing access to preventative care.

Patient/client/resident partnering and relations

Sunnybrook actively creates a culture of patient, resident and family engagement to support the delivery of safe, quality and person-centred care. We partner with our Patient and Family Advisors to offer them a forum for sharing their unique thoughts and perspectives and to help ensure that the voice of patients, families, and caregivers are heard, considered, and included in programs and plans. Our aim is to ensure a Patient and Family's voice is consistently included at the table in the majority of decision making around new and ongoing initiatives.

The initial Quality Priority Setting Retreat that brought together a broad group of leaders, staff, OHT partners and patient partners, successfully highlighted relevant themes, and identified potential priorities for 2022/23. To help us further refine our list of priorities we arranged a second Patient Partner Focus group to discuss common areas of focus arising from the retreat, as well as their lived experience. Patient partners were again consulted in the early development stages of the QIPs where they provided feedback to the draft workplans.

Each of the QIPs chosen must engage patients and families in the implementation or evaluation of the change initiatives. One example that is embedded within the change ideas includes:

- Virtual Family Navigation Project: Explore opportunities to enhance access to MH&A (Mental Health and Addiction) services via a partnership with LOFT Community Services, by connecting with leadership and clients of LOFT to identify opportunities for improving access.

Additionally, patient partners have reviewed this narrative document to ensure appropriate language and a person-centred lens.

Workplace Violence Prevention

Violence in the workplace presents a risk to the well-being of Sunnybrook staff, physicians, volunteers, students, patients and visitors. We recognize that the majority of violent acts are preventable within the workplace and we strive to create a culture that supports this philosophy; to create a positive environment with mutual respect and open communication.

At Sunnybrook we begin with an approach to workplace violence that is guided by the principle that patients exhibiting behaviors can be a response to what is happening internally (e.g. medical condition) or externally in their environment. As such our strategy focuses on understanding and addressing the root cause of the behavior and preparing staff to use approaches to care that prevent harmful occurrences and manage high risk behaviours.

Workplace violence prevention at Sunnybrook is guided by:

- A Harassment, Discrimination and Violence Policy, which requires a full root cause analysis, review of processes and follow up to mitigate future incidents
- A Respect Policy, Diversity Statement and Principles, which includes respectful methods for communicating with patients, families and staff
- Harassment, Discrimination & Violence training which includes Code White training.

Sunnybrook has a comprehensive approach to violence prevention for staff and patients, which consists of:

- Continued focus on Verbal Intervention education for staff for areas identified as high risk of violent incidents, including key de-escalation and prevention techniques, and verbal / non-verbal skills for communicating with at-risk patients or families.
- Adherence to a “Framework for Responding to Reported Harmful Incidents” which follows the standard process including 1) debriefing, 2) creation of a patient safety care plan with family input regarding triggers following serious incidents, 3) root cause analysis for serious incidents and 4) implementation of recommendations.
- Employee incidents, events or occurrences that could or does result in employee injury or illness are also tracked by Occupational Health & Safety to identify and mitigate potential risks to patients/families and staff.

Understanding why these events occur is key to preventing future events. Encouraging reporting and situational awareness are two factors that are critical in the development of effective preventative measures. In partnership, the Quality and Patient Safety department, the Workplace Violence Committee and Emergency Preparedness Committee receive themes related to patient incident reports involving verbal or physical responsive behaviours that could produce harm in order to identify actionable themes. These findings are helping to inform ongoing quality improvement and education training.

Virtual care

Two years since the onset of COVID-19, patients and practitioners have experienced a substantial transformation in health care delivery through the use of digital health and virtual care tools. As Ontario continues to transition to a more community integrated approach to health care, digital health will play a crucial role in helping residents of North Toronto, Ontario and beyond, to access care closer to (if not directly from) home.

Digital health is a term that broadly encompasses all the ways healthcare providers remotely interact with their patients. Sunnybrook and other teams across the province have been offering care virtually through the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) for many years. Now, digital health and virtual care includes (but is not limited to) Zoom appointments (e.g. virtual urgent care), online scheduling, remote patient monitoring, telephone visits and more.

Last year, Sunnybrook launched a [Digital and Virtual Care Taskforce](#) to engage in a collaborative and inclusive Team Sunnybrook approach to virtual care and digital health and to develop a virtual care strategy that reflects the consistent and first-rate care that is synonymous with Sunnybrook. Building upon the outstanding work already underway at Sunnybrook, the taskforce produced a virtual care policy, a digital repository of digital health projects, a research study on the ways Sunnybrook patients and practitioners are using digital health tools, and a strategic vision to guide Sunnybrook towards the next chapter of digitally enabled care.

The [Virtual ED](#) continues to be one of the most impressive innovations born out of the pandemic. By offering same-day virtual appointments with emergency department physicians, the virtual ED reaches patients in their homes so that they do not have to come to the hospital. It also aims to reduce wait times and improve the patient and family experience *“Over the course of the pandemic, we have seen people delay their care due to fears around contracting COVID-19 and become more unwell before they eventually came in,”* says Dr. Justin Hall, who is leading the project. *“Virtual care provides an option for those patients who need care, but want to do it in a way that’s convenient for them.”*

In a note of gratitude, one of our former virtual ED patients wrote, *“My first visit to a Virtual ED was such a positive experience, exceeding all of my expectations! I am so deeply grateful for the compassionate care I received through the Zoom platform. I plan to become a strong advocate of Sunnybrook’s Virtual ED and hope that the hospital continues to offer this ‘virtual’ option even after the global pandemic passes.”*

The Digital Health and Virtual Care Taskforce recently undertook a research study led by [Dr. Sander Hitzig](#), Research Director of Sunnybrook’s St. John’s Rehab Program. The question the research team sought to answer: How do patients and providers use digital health tools and virtual models of care across Sunnybrook? Who has access to virtual care?

In order to improve access and to diversify the pool of respondents, surveys were translated into the five most-spoken languages at Sunnybrook. Researchers reached out to thousands of patients and hundreds of practitioners, with a substantial engagement rate. The study, which is nearly complete, is giving Sunnybrook leadership a window into the current state of digital health and virtual care, so that we can better understand how to make continuous quality improvements to care delivery.

Although these are projects of focus right now, other groups throughout the hospital have also been using virtual care as part of their delivery model, including the Odette Cancer Care Centre, Holland Centre and St. John’s Rehab Program. It is through the strategic direction of Integrated & Sustainable Care that Sunnybrook will continue to build and leverage digital health solutions to create virtual connections to provide care that best meet our patient’s needs.

Executive Compensation


For many years, Sunnybrook has had a performance-based component to its executive compensation for the CEO and the Senior Leadership Team. A percentage of the executive’s compensation (21-30%) is based on the achievement of annual goals and objectives that are aligned to the organization’s strategic goals and to the individual’s portfolio. Sunnybrook’s Executive Performance Management Program is well established, comprehensive and governed by the Performance and Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors. The Program includes both a 360° performance evaluation (built on the foundation of leadership competencies) and specific performance goals that are used to drive quality and organizational improvement.


Specific indicators selected for executive compensation for 2022/23 will be identified and approved by the Board of Governors.

Sign-off

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan

Board Chair  (signature)

Board Quality Committee Chair  (signature)

Chief Executive Officer  (signature)

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