## Patients as Partners and Island Health: Regional Engagement Table

December 13, 2017 | Nanaimo, B.C. Executive Summary







## **Executive Summary**

Patients, Family Caregivers, Practitioners and Health-care Staff: Engaging Together on Rural and Remote Access to Primary Care – December 2017



represent the most-repeated responses.

**Background:** The B.C. Ministry of Health's Patients as Partners Initiative is hosting a series of Regional Engagement Tables, and a final wrap-up meeting to discuss what was learned at each table – all of which will provide information to both community and provincial health leaders as they are developing new policies and strategies on primary-care improvements. Patients as Partners and Island Health partnered to host a Regional Engagement Table on December 13, 2017. The full-day workshop was held in Nanaimo with 39 participants, comprised of patients, family caregivers, healthcare practitioners and health-care administrative staff. The purpose of the event was to discuss and receive input on a variety of topics related to accessing primary care in rural and remote areas in the Island Health region. This document summarizes the key themes and innovative ideas from the discussions.

Summary of the Workshop Format: The engagement table brought together many people from rural and remote communities across the Island Health region. An Indigenous elder sang and offered a prayer to start the day. Guest speakers included a family caregiver who shared some of his personal experiences caring for his mother; a short presentation from Island Health's Chief Nursing Officer Dawn Nedzelski; a short presentation from Shannon Holms, Director of Patient Engagement and Community Programs from the Ministry of Health; and a presentation from Island Health's Phil Lawrence, Director of Community Health and Care, and Marie Duperreault, Director of Port Alberni/West Coast, about primary health care in a rural and remote context.



The majority of the day was dedicated to meaningful engagement activities with the group, with a variety of opportunities for discussion and input. For example, participants played a brainstorming game in small groups to generate ideas for the Patients as Partners Initiative to increase engagement of patients and families in the health system. Some of the discussions centred on what's working well in rural and remote communities, and which of those existing strengths could be applied to health care.

Actions to Realize a Future Vision of Care in Rural and Remote Areas: A major focus of the workshop was to envision an ideal future for health care in rural and remote areas, and then brainstorm actions that would help achieve that future vision. Through a variety of activities, participants worked to prioritize the actions. These are the top 12 actions that received the highest levels of support from workshop attendees, in order of support:

- 1. Develop a clearing house to distribute non-medical information about what's available for patients, families, caregivers and providers, with additional information on cultural safety.
- One electronic medical record.





- 3. Team-based care: Integration across all levels community, public health, non-profit, rec centre, traditional, health providers.
- 4. A physical space in each community: focus on peer support; access to health care inclusive, safe, accessible for all.
- 5. Community-based action plans, including an audit of what currently exists, so that community-specific plans can be developed.
- 6. Promote self-management and self-care: help patients, families and caregivers feel confident.
- 7. Change the funding model to incentivize the integration of all areas of care: public health, community health, allied health care, clinicians. Funding to cover skill-building to integrate and provide team-based care.
- 8. Increase and improve public education and systems for end-of-life planning.
- 9. Create and promote one easily accessible and searchable directory of available services (medical + non-medical) that includes currently available services (HealthLink, 811, 211, Fetch).
- 10. Supports for effective community care and could include: checklists, questionnaires, surveys, integrated and consistent communications.
- 11. Clearly define the protocol for identifying, supporting and including family caregivers in care for rural and remote areas.
- 12. Re-distribution of funding.



In the evaluation survey, 100% of participants said it was valuable to hear from others, and 97% said the Regional Table was interactive.

"The brainstorming was invaluable – such a kaleidoscope of ideas."

"It was important to hear from the variety of people attending and share rural experiences and realities, as well as innovative ways to provide care in these areas.

Very well organized and led."

**Ideas for the Patients as Partners Initiative to Increase Engagement:** Workshop participants were asked to brainstorm how the Patients as Partners Initiative could help increase efforts to engage patients and families in the health system. Below is a summary of the most-repeated ideas recorded through this activity:

- Offer education, training and awareness for patients and providers, on everything from rights to data and privacy to navigating the health system.
- Establish community-based feedback processes, work to engage larger segments of the population, and support more community roundtables.
- Ensure communications materials for patients and families are clear, accessible, inclusive and culturally appropriate.
- Support the collection and sharing of stories and experiences from patients and families .
- Use technology to share information and deliver services such as support to navigate the system.



