



Seniors, caregivers improving healthcare experiences through partnership

Thanks to all who have responded to the Northumberland PATH project's call for interest! Supported by funding from The Change Foundation, hundreds of local seniors and caregivers are working together in Northumberland with healthcare providers and social care organizations to improve transitions in healthcare services.

Local in focus, the project is hoping to have an impact far beyond our region.

Driven by a common goal to improve experiences and, specifically, transitions for seniors in our community as they move in, out of and across the healthcare system, PATH is testing a process called "experience-based co-design"—an approach to planning that includes patient and caregiver input in decision making.

In this, our latest PATH News, we are pleased to share an update on Northumberland PATH's progress to date. We've been busy!

- **Connectivity** - local seniors involved in the project are using a patient portal and smartphones to store their personal health story, monitor their chronic health conditions and communicate with their healthcare providers - a true first for Ontario
- **Information/planning** - a new web-based resource, pathwaytoagingwell.com, has been created with information, planning tools and resources to minimize the health-related challenges that often come hand-in-hand with our later years—new resources specifically geared to caregivers are coming on stream soon
- **Support** - 31 Volunteer Transition Coaches have

been recruited, trained and assigned to seniors in our community to help support those with the new technology tools and those who might not have support from family members or others as they manage the numerous transitions across the healthcare system

- **Person-Centred Care** - a Person-Centred Care Model is now complete and (related to this) a Patient and Family Advisor Model is being developed to help healthcare providers in our region tap into and use input from patients and their caregivers
- **Sustainability** - a business case has been completed for submission to government and other possible funders to propose ways to carry the work of Northumberland PATH forward and sustain and build on PATH learnings in our region and beyond

The voices and experiences of local seniors, their caregivers and local health and social care providers have powered all this work. Thank you to the seniors and caregivers involved, the representatives from Northumberland Hills Hospital, the local Central East Community Care Access Centre, the Central East Local Health Integration Network, Community Care Northumberland, the Golden Plough Lodge, the Northumberland Family Health Team, Palisade Gardens Retirement Residence, YMCA Northumberland, QoC Health, our research partners Health System Performance Research Network, Patients Canada and all the PATH partners. Thanks, especially, to The Change Foundation for entrusting our community with this exciting project!

RISE Team Members

- Gayle Einarsson, Cobourg - Patient/Caregiver Lead
- Bill Bachellier, Grafton - Patient/caregiver
- Ralph Curtis, Cobourg - Patient
- Del Cressman, Cobourg/Hamilton Township - Caregiver
- Susan Eddy, Cobourg - Caregiver
- Irene Johnston, Roseneath - Patient
- Jane Pinchin, Port Hope - Caregiver
- Art and Yvonne Seymour, Cobourg - Patients
- Barry Vail, Baltimore - Caregiver
- Ann Zegarchuk, Port Hope - Caregiver
- Weldon Carlyle, Port Hope - Patient

Meet PATH's RISE team - the "nucleus" of Northumberland PATH

A small and very committed group of local residents has been part of the PATH project since its inception, sharing personal healthcare experiences as patients and caregivers for the benefit of others.



Ralph Curtis
Northumberland PATH Project
RISE Team Member

"I got involved in this and as soon as I did...a whole new world opened up.... There are people that were in the same situation I was. We all had a common interest. We could all see that, yes, the healthcare system in Ontario is very good, but it needs a lot of help." Ralph Curtis, RISE Team Member

Initially set up as a support system for the seniors and caregivers working on PATH, the RISE Team—which stands for Respect, Information, Support and Empowerment—has become much more than originally intended. The "nucleus" where ideas are generated, tested and improved, RISE team members are informing all aspects of PATH, ensuring the patient and caregiver voice is heard.

The Change Foundation has highlighted the unique work of the 12-member RISE Team in a six-minute video featuring members explaining in their own words why they are volunteering to be part of PATH and what they think the project means for Northumberland. To see the RISE Team video and more on the PATH project's progress to date, visit www.changefoundation.ca/projects/path.