

## **Patient and Family Advisors Make Important Contributions To Patient Experience At Pembroke Regional Hospital**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 24, 2020**

**PEMBROKE – Since its formation in 2015, the Pembroke Regional Hospital’s Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) has made great strides in partnering with staff to provide direct input into programs and practices which improve the patient experience.**

**A total of 14 patient advisors have made contributions over the past five years, either as members of the Council or as representatives working with program-specific Leadership Teams.**

**“Often it’s the small things, the small changes or improvements that can make a huge difference in someone’s overall perspective or hospital experience,” said Sabine Mersmann, PFAC Co-Chair and the hospital’s Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services – Partnerships and Integration.**

**“Having the patient and family advisors involved enables us to see things that have been developed and view things that we do, from a different perspective which can yield tangible results and improvements in things like communication tools, signage and accessibility,” Ms. Mersmann said.**

**The tremendous contributions have been recognized by staff, and now staff across the organization actively and regularly seek out patient and family feedback on items such as new policies, pamphlets, and a variety of patient-centred publications.**

**In fact, Ms. Mersmann said the experience of having such unique feedback has even led to the expansion of the concept in terms of who is an advisor – with staff, on occasion, polling patients regarding development of information tools such as a new pamphlet on breastfeeding rather than wait for the item to go through the PFAC or an advisor on a Leadership Team.**

**Patient and Family Advisory Council Co-Chair Richard Sheppard said he saw this role as an opportunity to provide a patient’s perspective on the health care system and a way to help improve the system for those who have to use it.**

**As a volunteer, Mr. Sheppard said it has been an eye-opening experience to learn the hospital works and to see how much is being done to improve the experience for patients and staff.**

**“The most rewarding aspect so far has been seeing the work we do through to fruition. We are able to identify areas for improvement, provide feedback on what can be done and then watch as changes are made and our ideas are put into action.”**

With so much demand for input and feedback, Ms. Mersmann said recruitment efforts are underway to gain additional advisors, noting that there are lots of opportunities for people who may have special interest in particular areas of care. The recruitment process includes a brief interview in order to ensure the right fit.

If you would like to join the Patient and Family Advisory Council or serve as a patient or family advisor on one of our Leadership Teams, please contact Sabine Mersmann at (613) 732-2811, extension 6162 or contact her by email at [sabine.mersmann@prh.email](mailto:sabine.mersmann@prh.email).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Carolyn Levesque, Public Affairs and Communications Coordinator  
Pembroke Regional Hospital  
(613) 732-3675, extension 6165 / [carolyn.levesque@prh.email](mailto:carolyn.levesque@prh.email)