

**Ottawa Valley**  
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



L'ÉQUIPE DE SANTÉ DE  
**la Vallée d'Ottawa**

## PATIENT, FAMILY, & CAREGIVER NETWORK (PFAC)

# ORIENTATION GUIDE

A Resource for Members of Ottawa  
Valley OHT PFaC



August 2023

## **Welcome!**

Welcome to the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) Patient, Family, and Caregiver (PFaC) Network!

Whether you are a patient, family member, or caregiver, you have firsthand experience with the healthcare system in the Ottawa Valley. Your experience and insight are what drives positive change in healthcare. We value your feedback, opinions, and recommendations to continuously build on our understanding of the patient, family, and caregiver experience.

The collective goal of the OVOHT is to transform healthcare through focus, integration, and coordination. Your voice and collaboration will help influence necessary change that transforms healthcare services in our community.

Thank you for becoming a member of the PFaC Network! We are so grateful for your time and efforts to enhance integrated healthcare in the Ottawa Valley.

We look forward to working together!

The Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team

## Introduction

The purpose of this orientation guide is to provide direction and advice as you step into your role as a volunteer with the PFaC Network.

As individuals with lived experience with the healthcare system, patients, families, and caregivers can provide expert insight and recommendations on healthcare services within the Ottawa Valley.



## What is an Ontario Health Team?

Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) are a new way of organizing and delivering care that is more connected to patients, families, and caregivers in their local communities.

Through OHTs, groups of healthcare providers including hospitals, doctors, and home and community care providers, work together to deliver a full and coordinated system of care for patients, no matter where they provide care (even if they're not in the same organization or physical location).

## The Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team

The Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) was launched in October 2021. The OVOHT is made up of more than 50 local health professionals, health care providers, organizations, and community members who are working together to improve our health system and connect patients to the services they need in a more consistent and timely manner.

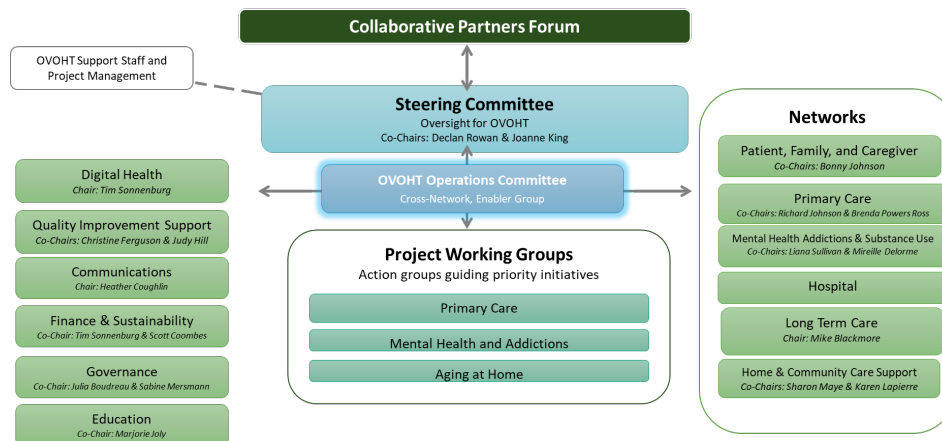


## Mission, Vision, and Values

The collective goal of the OVOHT is to work together to transform health and healthcare through focus, integration, and coordination. Our members represent the broad range of health and health care organizations, the diverse geographic communities, as well as patients, clients, and families with lived experience.



## OVOHT Structure



OVOHT organizational members participate in integrated work according to their experience, expertise, and interests.

**Collaborative Partners Forum** is open to all OHT members and provides guidance and direction to the Steering Committee.

**Steering Committee** provides strategic oversight, guidance, and accountability for the OHT and acts as the governing body for the OVOHT. It is made up of key member representatives from across the sectors and networks.

**OVOHT Networks** are sector-based tables. Each OVOHT member is assigned to a network when they become a member by signing the Collaborative Decision Making Agreement (CDMA).

**Enabler Groups** support the development and foundational work of OVOHT. They are advisory and make recommendations to the Steering Committee.

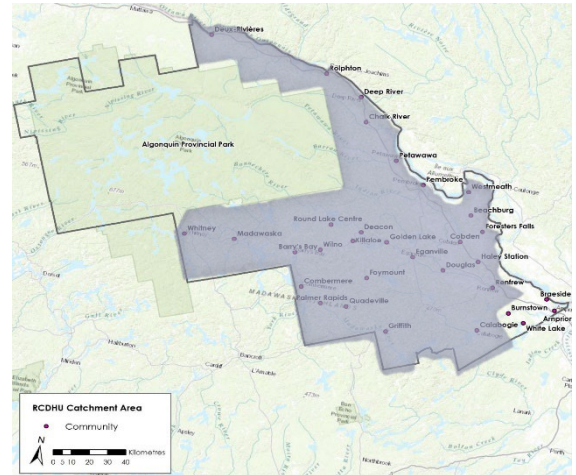
**Project Teams** are time -limited action groups that work on specific tasks and activities of OVOHT.

## Our Geography

The OVOHT represents a large part of Renfrew County that stretches from Renfrew to Barry's Bay and the South Algonquin area, to past Deep River.

Our service area includes a broad and diverse set of communities in and around the Ottawa Valley, including Calabogie, Barry's Bay, Eganville, Cobden, Pembroke, Petawawa, and Chalk River, to South Algonquin Township.

The OVOHT spans across 7,600 square kilometres in a mainly rural area and provides services to nearly 80,000 residents.



## The People

The OVOHT has approximately 9% Indigenous population, which is 3 times higher than the overall Champlain region or the Ontario average. The OVOHT region includes the traditional territory of the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation.

The OVOHT is also home to the largest of Ontario's military bases, Garrison Petawawa. It is estimated that approximately 6,000 people directly connected to the base live in communities between Deep River and Pembroke.

The OVOHT community is also distinguished by its Francophone population. While the region is predominately Anglophone, Renfrew County is recognized as having high concentrations of Francophones, particularly in Pembroke, Laurentian Valley, and Whitewater Region.

## Priority Projects

Priority projects (or priority areas) are populations that are considered the initial focus of the OVOHT. However, it is important to note that the intent of the OVOHT is to be responsible for the planning and delivery of healthcare services within our attributed population. While the populations listed below are the current focus, everyone within the OVOHT service area is a priority. We will be moving from priority populations.

## **Access and Attachment to Primary Care**

A significant portion of the OHT catchment population is not attached to a family doctor/nurse practitioner (NP). Currently, it is estimated that about 19% of patients living in the OVHT do not have a consistent primary care provider.

## **Individuals Experiencing Mental Health and Addictions Concerns**

The rate of hospitalizations for mental health and addictions conditions increased by 14% between 2009 and 2018 and remains higher than the provincial rate.

In Renfrew County and District, increasing numbers of people sought health care for help with mental health and addictions, mood and anxiety disorders, and intentional self-harm over a ten-year period (2009-2018).

In recent years (2017-2018), the use of hospital and physician-based mental health care services is significantly higher in Renfrew County and District than the rest of Ontario.

Furthermore, in 2017, 19,938 Renfrew County and District residents made 90,456 outpatient visits to physicians for mental health and addiction conditions (Renfrew County and District Health Unit).

## **Aging at Home**

According to population projections from the Ministry of Finance, by 2040, the number of individuals over the age of 65 years will increase by over 60% on OVOHT. That's approximately 34,000 people in our communities. It is estimated that 16% of those aged 65-74 and 29% of aged 75-84 years live with frailty.

## Joining PFaC

### What is the PFaC Network?

PFaC Network brings the views and experiences of patients, families and caregivers into the design, implementation, and ongoing operations of the OVOHT, working to ensure the healthcare system is responsive to and engaged with patients, families, and caregivers.

### Who can become a member?

Anyone that lives in the OVOHT service area and has experience with OVOHT member health care services, can apply to become a member of the Patient, Family, and Caregiver Network. There are no special qualifications required to join!

### Member Roles and Responsibilities

Some roles and responsibilities of PFaC Network members include:

- Identifying healthcare needs and gaps.
- Providing input on policy and program development.
- Supporting making new or revised OVOHT materials, including communications, education and informational resources, forms, policies, and procedures.
- Contributing to the understanding and improvement of the patient, family, and caregiver experience.
- Participating in project-related work.

### Sharing Stories and Experiences

Patient, family, and caregiver stories and experiences are central to creating positive change within our healthcare system. As an individual with lived experience, your story allows us to gain a better understanding of the patient/family/caregiver perspective. Based on this insight, we can determine where change is needed, as well as how we can implement those changes to reflect patient, family, and caregiver needs. When referring to your experience during discussions, consider: Which aspect(s) of the experience would I like to share? What point do I want to emphasize?



## PFaC Meetings

### What to Expect

PFaC Network meetings are usually online and scheduled monthly.

### Meeting Preparations

- Be prepared by reviewing the meeting agenda beforehand (the agenda is set prior to the meeting by the Co-Chairs).
- Think about what you would like to contribute to the various discussions, as well as any questions you may have.
- Having note-taking materials readily available will allow you take notes on discussions and gather your thoughts throughout the meeting.

### Virtual Meeting Tips

- During the meeting, make sure your mic is on when you are speaking, and turned off when others are speaking.
- Having your video turned on is encouraged (if you feel comfortable doing so), so you can get to know your fellow members.
- Most virtual meeting platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) have a “Raise Hand” feature. If you have a question or want to contribute at any point during the meeting, the “Raise Hand” feature is a great way to notify the speaker to call on you.
- Be an active listener and engage in discussions.



## **OVOHT Community Engagement Strategy**

The OVOHT Engagement Strategy aims to set out overarching principles that will guide the appropriate inclusion of the PFaC Network in all work of the OVOHT. The OVOHT fosters a culture of sustainable system co-design through embedding patients, families, and caregivers across the structures and initiatives, and within collaborative decision-making. Members of the PFaC Network are included in policy, strategy, and system level discussions and structures.

This includes:

- Two representatives from the PFaC Network actively participating as full members of the OVOHT Steering Committee.
- At least one member of the PFaC Network or a community member with lived experience on each of the enabler and project working groups.



## **Contact Information**

For more information, please contact:  
**Jama Watt, OVOHT Strategic Implementation Lead**  
[jamwatt@ovoht.ca](mailto:jamwatt@ovoht.ca)