

Ontario Government Releases Patient Declaration of Values for Ontario

April 5, 2019

On March 8, 2019, the Ontario Government released the *Patient Declaration of Values for Ontario* (the Declaration). The release of the Declaration aligns with the Ontario Government's recent messaging that they are striving to create a healthcare system that is "truly patient-centred".

The Declaration was developed by the Patient and Family Advisory Counsel (the PFAC). The PFAC is a formal advisory body that provides advice and recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on issues pertaining to patients, families, caregivers and health systems.

In creating the Declaration, the PFAC consulted with health system leaders and patient advisors recruited by the government to join a "virtual pool" of patient advisors.

The Declaration is centred on five core elements:

- Respect and dignity
- Empathy and compassion
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Equity and engagement.

The stated purpose of the Declaration "is to articulate patients' and caregivers' expectations of Ontario's health care system. The Declaration is intended to serve as a compass for the individuals and organizations who are involved in health care and reflects a summary of the principles and values that patients and caregivers say are important to them".

Many hospitals and other health services providers already have similar codes or standards in place that set expectations for the delivery of care. These were also developed with the input of caregivers, patients, volunteers, and the community. It would be an interesting exercise for health services providers to compare their own standards with the Declaration and use it as an additional reference for what Ontarians identify as their values and needs from healthcare providers.

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