

niagarahealth



REIMAGINING PATIENT EXPERIENCE

2025 - 2028

niagarahealth

PURPOSE, VISION & VALUES

OUR PURPOSE:

Extraordinary Caring.
Every Person. Every Time.

OUR VISION:

A Healthier Niagara

Our Values inspire us to be

EXTRAORDINARY

by guiding our decision
making and behaviour.



Compassion in Action

Our compassionate and respectful culture is one in which we quickly take action to meet the needs of those we serve and to make healthcare better. We treat each other well.



Driven by Optimism

We are hopeful and optimistic in tackling our challenges. In partnership we accomplish more. We are resilient through change and drive innovation.



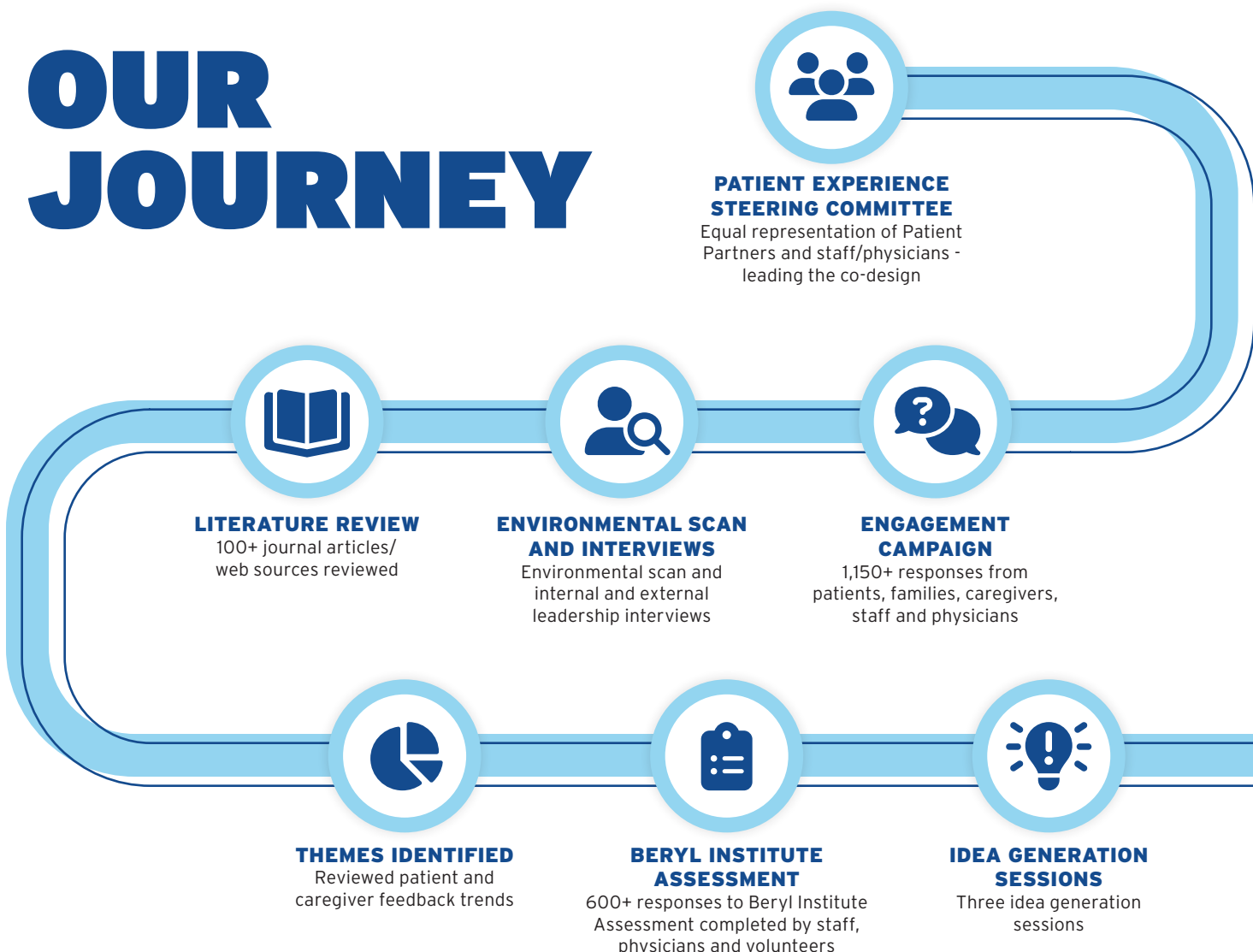
Achieving Ambitious Results

We hold ourselves to the highest standards. We are accountable for high-performing, high-quality, sustainable and innovative healthcare. We are transparent about performance and commit to improve.

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OUR JOURNEY



The Niagara Health 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, **Transforming Care** is dedicated to redefining the patient experience, focusing on enhancing the way patients experience their care journey and empowering them to achieve the best possible health outcomes. This plan builds on that commitment.

We are grateful to those who have shared their experiences – their challenges, hopes and aspirations for change. Their voices have not only inspired this plan but will also drive the actions our organization will take to create meaningful and lasting improvement.

A heartfelt thank you to the Patient Experience Steering Committee – comprised of Patient Partners, staff and physicians – for their vision and dedication to co-design a plan that puts patient experience at the forefront.

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DEFINING PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Experience is challenging to define, especially in healthcare.

To understand what influences patient experience and what we must do to improve it, Niagara Health's Patient Experience Steering Committee undertook a robust engagement campaign. Over 1,150 patients, caregivers, staff/physicians and community members shared their perspective on what a positive patient experience means to them.

At Niagara Health, **patient experience is how the process of receiving care feels and is shaped by all the interactions throughout the care journey*. It is about being known, respected, listened to, involved, supported and provided with the best care.**

As Niagara Health continues on its journey towards Reconciliation, we are learning about two-eyed seeing and in keeping with Indigenous ways of knowing, patient experience can be understood

"Only when we understand it with all four aspects of our being: mind, body, emotion, and spirit."

Native scholar Greg Cajete as cited in *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013.

Our definition is supported by six (6) key elements that reflects how a positive patient experience should look, sound and feel to our patients and caregivers:

KNOW Me

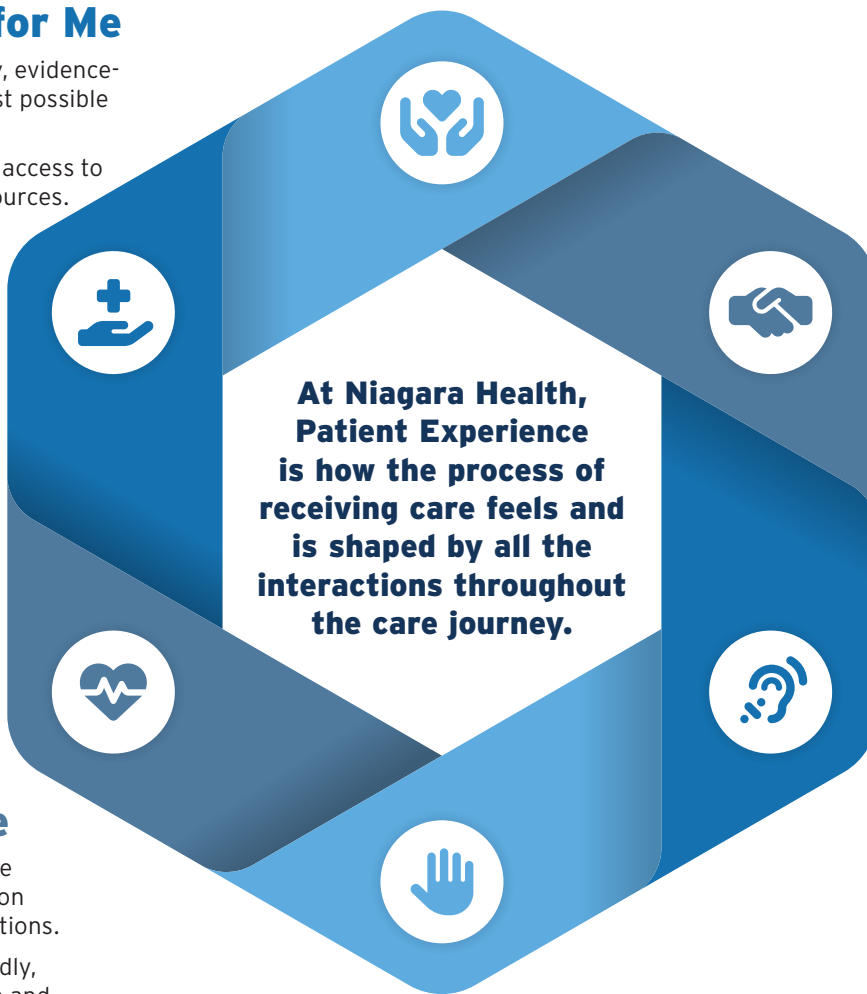
- Get to know me as a person, not just a patient.
- Don't make assumptions about me.
- Include and support those important to me.

BEST CARE for Me

- Provide me with quality, evidence-based care with the best possible outcomes.
- Provide me with timely access to care, services and resources.
- Make my care consistent, no matter where I receive it.
- Communicate and collaborate with each other about my care.

RESPECT Me

- Accept and respect me for who I am.
- Treat me with dignity and kindness.
- Support me without judgement.



**At Niagara Health,
Patient Experience
is how the process of
receiving care feels and
is shaped by all the
interactions throughout
the care journey.**

SUPPORT Me

- Be empathetic, show me kindness and compassion with your words and actions.
- Provide me with a friendly, accessible, comfortable and safe environment.
- Support my physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs.

LISTEN to Me

- Hear my worries and concerns.
- Act on my feedback for improvement.

INVOLVE Me

- Nothing about me, without me.
- Help me understand why.
- Explain what to expect in my journey before, during and after.

These key elements are the foundation of our definition of patient experience and the basis for the actions we will take.

OUR ACTIONS

Putting People First



"A trusting environment that supports patients to verbalize their needs. A caring, compassionate team that values every patient encounter."



"Eye contact, active listening and a people-first mindset."



"Staff who make patients 'people'. Feeling confident in your treatment and doctors."





GOAL

Create an environment that enables a positive patient experience.

KEY ACTIONS

1. **Develop and implement patient experience service standards:** Develop education and training programs that set clear expectations and standards for patient experience and person-centered care. Emphasize opportunities for service recovery, empowering our teams to proactively address and resolve issues.
2. **Integrate patient experience key elements into human resource practices organization-wide:** Embed Niagara Health's patient experience key elements at every stage of the staff and physician employment life cycle, from hiring, onboarding, leadership development and performance management.
3. **Celebrate and reward patient experience excellence:** Create recognition programs that celebrate individuals and teams who excel at delivering extraordinary patient experiences.



OUR ACTIONS

Delivering Safe and Quality Care

"An environment where the patient feels safe, comfortable, respected and heard."



"Clinical competence. Friendly, compassionate care. Clear and frequent communication. Treating all patients as people, not just clinical challenges."

"A positive patient experience should include holistic care which is rooted in compassion and professionalism. Patients should always be heard and listened to."





GOAL

Involve and support patients and caregivers in a meaningful, culturally safe, and equitable manner, every step of their journey.

KEY ACTIONS

1. **Embed patients and caregivers in care planning and decisions:** Using person-centred care approaches, introduce practices that purposefully involve patients and caregivers in the circle of care.
2. **Strengthen our commitment to a culturally safe and inclusive environment:** Support the Indigenous Health Services and Reconciliation and Health Equity teams to embed care practices that reflect diverse lived experiences and promote inclusive, person-centred care.
3. **Co-design patient and caregiver education resources, including information about support services:** Co-design simple and clear information on what patients and caregivers can expect at all points of their care journey in an accessible way.
4. **Support patients in navigating their journey, so that their care is seamless as they move in and out of our hospitals:** Co-design referral pathways to connect patients to necessary services and supports within and outside of the hospital, leveraging technology where possible.
5. **Enhance the overall comfort and well-being of patients and caregivers:** Act on opportunities to improve the way in which patients and caregivers experience the physical environment.
6. **Increase opportunities for patient and caregiver feedback, including those from equity-deserving groups:** Introduce innovative ways to increase and act on feedback in real-time and at different points in the care journey.
7. **Establish an experience improvement loop:** Use patient experience data and patient experience storytelling to drive action and continuous improvement, empowering our teams to act on opportunities.

OUR ACTIONS

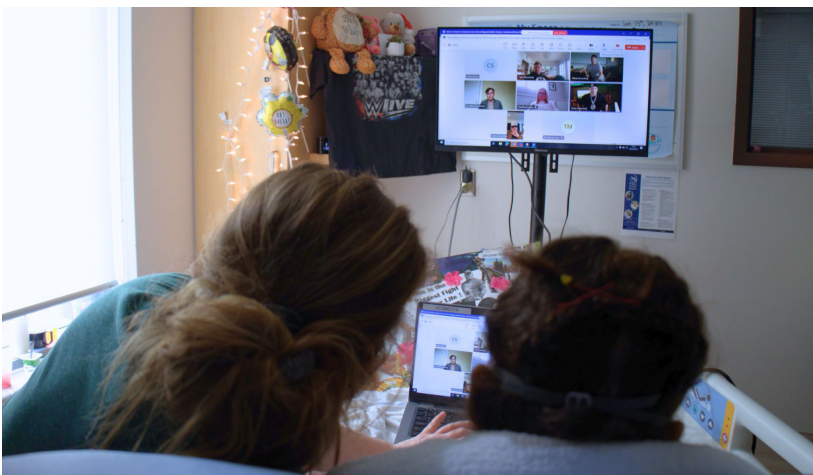
Transforming How We Work



"A calm environment and clear understanding of what to expect upon entering a healthcare facility to departure."



"Validation. Feeling that I as an individual am respected and my concerns will be heard."



"I am more than a chart or billing number. I am more than a diagnosis or treatment plan. A positive experience means I am part of the treatment, not just a recipient."



GOAL

Foster meaningful volunteer and patient partner engagement, ensuring continuous evaluation of patient experience initiatives.

KEY ACTIONS

1. **Recognize and celebrate volunteers as patient experience champions:**
Strengthen the role volunteers play in enhancing patient experience.
2. **Recruit more Patient Partners, including those with diverse perspectives:**
Increase the number of Patient Partners, particularly those from francophone and equity-deserving groups.
3. **Create more opportunities for authentic Patient Partner engagement:**
Expand meaningful opportunities for Patient Partners to participate in decision making, quality improvement initiatives and program and service design.
4. **Align work being conducted by the Niagara Health Knowledge Institute (NHKI) and the Office of Patient Experience:** Partner with the NHKI to assess and evaluate how actions are adopted into practice and their impact.

POSITIONING OURSELVES FOR SUCCESS

Success requires a shared commitment – every team member at Niagara Health is accountable for a positive patient experience. By fostering accountability, continuous learning and collaboration, we are positioning ourselves to transform care and enhance the patient experience.

As we move forward, we are committed to continuous evaluation of our patient experience initiatives and will measure our progress. We will continue to listen to those we serve, and adapt to meet the evolving needs of our patients and communities.

Examples of ways in which we will measure our success include:

- Increase in overall positive patient experience scores
- Reduction in patient complaints
- Increase in staff and physician compliments
- Increase in the number and diversity of Patient Partners
- Increase in the number of programs and services that are engaging Patient Partners in their work

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou

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