



# Alliance for Healthier Communities

## *Advancing Health Equity in Ontario*

Client & Community Research Partners Committee

## Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The Alliance for Healthier Communities (Alliance) is committed to health equity for everyone living in Ontario. This means we believe everyone should have what they need to be as healthy as they can. Our research program helps us understand how we can improve health care in our member organizations and the health system to get us closer to this goal. Client and Community Research (CCR) Partners can help us make sure that our research is focused on the things that matter most to the people who access health care. They can also help researchers ensure that their research is done in ways that are inclusive and appropriate.

Client and Community Research Partners will help Alliance researchers to:

- Decide what research questions to focus on.
- Choose methods that are appropriate for the people and communities the research is being done with.
- Develop knowledge products and tools that are clear and useful.

They will do this by:

- Sharing their health care experiences with the research team.
- Telling the research team what is most important to them about their health.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on research questions, methods, and knowledge products.
- Telling us what research findings they think are most important for their health care providers to understand, in order for them to get the best care.

- Telling us what research findings they think are most important for themselves, their families, and their communities to understand, in order for them to experience their best possible health and wellbeing.

## Membership

### Qualifications

The Committee will consist of eight to ten residents of Ontario who:

- Is a client of the health care system or a caregiver, family, or friend of a client.
- Are interested in learning about research and supporting decisions based on personal experience and perspectives.
- Have previous experience as a member of an advisory Committee, community board, focus group, or similar.
- Respect people with diverse opinions, backgrounds, and abilities.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of other participants.

Priority will be given to people who self-identify as:

- Belonging to one or more of the Alliance's moral owner populations (2SLGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous, Francophone, or Rural/Remote/Northern);
- Having one or more chronic or complex health conditions;
- Having lived or living experiences of homelessness, low income, newcomer status, or other barriers to health care; and/or
- Being a client of an Alliance member primary health care organization.

Alliance staff are excluded from membership in the committee.

### Selection

Members will apply by completing an application form. Alliance staff will select Committee members who meet the qualifications, and they will do their best to ensure that the Committee includes people with diverse identities and experiences.

### Term

CCR Partners are asked to participate for 2 years, with the option to apply for

additional terms.

## Expectations

All Partners are expected to:

- Participate in at least 5 meetings/year for approximately 1.5 hours each meeting.
- Inform the staff liaison if they will miss a meeting.
- Prepare for meetings by reading the assigned meeting materials.
- Create a safe and supportive environment for one another.
- Sign a [confidentiality agreement](#).
- Attend orientation and training sessions.

## Reimbursement and compensation

Research partners will be compensated \$62.50 per meeting, which is calculated as \$25 per hour for 2.5 hours of work (1 hr for preparation and 1.5 for the meeting).

Clients who cannot accept compensation by cheque or bank deposit may opt to receive a gift card, to be paid for by the Alliance.

## Chair and Vice Chair

### Qualifications

The Chair and Vice Chair must:

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of the CCR Partners.
- Understand the mission and vision of the Alliance and the purpose of community-led research.
- Be able to provide leadership and support consensus-based decision-making.
- Be able to represent the collective voice of the CCR Partners, even when it is different from their personal opinion.
- Be committed to working constructively with staff and CCR Partners.
- Be respectful of different people and committed to making sure all voices are included at the table.

## Selection, Term, and Succession

The CCR Partners will elect a Chair and a Vice Chair from among their members for a term of 2 years. At the end of the Chair's term, the current Vice Chair will be expected to take over the role of Chair, and a new Vice Chair will be elected. If the current Vice Chair declines to take over the role of chair, a new Chair and Vice Chair will be elected.

## Duties

The Chair will:

- Develop the meeting agenda with the staff liaison.
  - The staff liaison will work with the Chair to set meeting dates and times.
  - The staff administrator will send calendar invitations, agendas, and meeting documents to the committee members on behalf of the Chair.
- Facilitate meetings:
  - The Chair will open and close the meeting, introduce speakers, and ensure the meeting stays on schedule,
- Review and revise draft meeting minutes.
- Work with the staff liaison to write an annual report.

The Vice Chair will perform the duties of the Chair if the Chair is unable to do so.

## Additional Compensation

The Chair will receive an additional honorarium of \$50 per meeting. If the Chair is unable to perform some or all of their duties, their honorarium will be shared with the Vice Chair proportionally.

## Meetings

### Frequency

The CCR Partners will normally meet 8 times each year for 1.5 hours.

### Notice

Meeting dates and times will be shared at least one month in advance.

## Decision-Making

The CCR Partners will normally contribute insights and feedback that will inform researchers' decisions. However, there may be situations where they are asked to make a decision as a group.

In making decisions, the CCR Partners will try to find solutions that everyone in the group can agree on. When this doesn't happen, the decision will be made by vote.

- When reporting participants' feedback to researchers, the Chair and staff liaison will not share how individuals voted or what each person said in the discussion.
- Information will be shared without names to protect privacy.
- Meeting minutes will show whether the decision was by consent or vote.
- When a decision is made by vote, the minutes will show how many votes were cast for each option.

## Quorum

- At least half plus one of the CCR Partners must be present for a vote.
  - If there are not enough people present for a vote, it may be deferred to the next meeting or done using an online survey.
  - People who miss the vote will have an opportunity to review the decision and have their opinion included in the reporting or request a re-vote.

## Voting Procedure

- Voting will normally be done by voice or show of hands.
  - If a secret ballot is needed, voting will be done through an anonymous poll within the meeting platform (i.e. Zoom).
- An option will be chosen if it receives 51% or more of the vote.

## Proxy

- If a member is unable to attend a meeting where a vote is to be held, they may assign another member of the committee as a proxy by informing the staff liaison.

## Minutes

The staff administrator will take notes during each meeting and will work with the Chair and staff liaison to finalize and send out draft minutes. Minutes will:

- Reflect discussions in broad strokes. They will not indicate who said what.
- Indicate who was present.
- Indicate how decisions were made.

The staff liaison will send minutes by email to all Client & Community Research Partners. Partners will have the opportunity to suggest changes to the minutes.

## Reviewing and Updating Terms of Reference

The Committee and staff liaison will review these terms of reference together every 2 years to determine if changes or updates are required. They may also amend them between review periods if needed. The Partners will approve any revisions proposed.

