



## **National BFI Quality Improvement Collaborative Project**

### **Tips to engage Parent Partners**

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*Thank you for your dedication to embracing Parent Partners (PP) as part of your team! We have heard during the project from several PPs about their experience as part of their local BFI team. Some PP expressed that they felt valued, but teams did not always know what to do with them. Specific tasks and direct requests can make a difference in involving your PP. Here are a few ideas of ways you can help your PP to be an active, fully integrated member of your BFI team.*

#### ***What are the expectations for the Parent Partner role?***

- attend BFI meetings and provide feedback from the community and their social connections
- share their birth experience and breastfeeding stories, why they got involved with your team, other related subjects (i.e., breastfeeding and mental health).
- participate in planning improvement activities and reviewing progress toward BFI designation.
- participate in the monthly National Parent Partner Network webinars

#### ***Other suggested activities for contributions:***

- review documents, policies, recent research, etc. and share their impressions
- create social media groups amongst their friends or community groups to gather impressions of experiences with one or two aspects of BFI (skin to skin, prenatal education, etc.)
- contribute to document development: for example, a pamphlet on skin-to-skin, handout on common breastfeeding difficulties, information on where to go for community breastfeeding support
- create opportunities for volunteer support in patient care areas such as helping distribute surveys for new parents, or pregnant women

### ***What are the expectations for the BFI hospital staff/physicians?***

- checking in regularly with your PP is critical. Text, email, phone, etc. Ideally having one point person on your team who is connected with the PP, and can make sure they are feeling engaged, and valued, and being as active as they would like to be.
- check in regarding any changes to their availability of being involved (return to work or other responsibilities) that may impact their time commitment or whether they want to continue as a PP.
- always pause to explain acronyms and medical terminology (i.e., RFP, SOGC, acronyms of the units at your hospital)
- if you are bringing on a new PP, collect some detail about BFI and where your centre is in your journey to provide to the PP. Consider sharing the [UNICEF pictograph](#) with the 10 steps plus a slideshow of a presentation your team gave to the Collaborative. These small gestures could help bring a PP on board and make them feel aware and connected. It can happen so easily that parents are involved for ages without having a grounding of the framework of the work being done - ideally, both awareness and involvement are happening and are strong!
- Create time on your meeting agendas to hear from PP. Consider having the PP Co-chair the meeting if they are interested. Create a standing agenda item at the beginning of each meeting that gives times for PP updates and contributions.
- Support the PP to share their experiences and ideas with others staff/physician groups beyond the BFI team. This could involve any group from hospital leadership, obstetrics, anesthesia, midwives, family practice, etc.

### ***Housekeeping/LOGISTICS to remember:***

- offer free parking for volunteers
- make efforts to arrange meeting times that fit the PP's schedule, involve them in setting meeting times
- offer child-friendly meetings (can bring kids/babes)
- make it easy to find the meeting space/easy to use the online platform (See attached document with instructions for using Microsoft Teams)

### ***A few other pressing questions...***

What does sustainability of Parent Partner involvement look like beyond the end of the project?

- many pregnant women/persons are getting their information and connections online - social groups, YouTube, virtual classes. Consider ways this can be harnessed to reach a wider audience and connect directly and widely with more families, while in-person connections are limited.

How to embrace the continuum of care from pregnancy to postpartum?

- this involves preventative care and prenatal education based on the BFI 10 Steps.

***Resources to support your work:***

***Two Sample Recruitment Letters for Parent Partners***

**Halton Healthcare Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) Parent Partner Volunteer Recruitment**

Halton Healthcare is seeking three volunteer Parent Partners to participate in planning, designing and implementing aspects of the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI). The initiative aims to protect, promote and support breastfeeding through the 10 Steps of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

Breastfeeding is an important, globally-recognized indicator of maternal child health. While most (96%) families in Halton Region initiate breastfeeding, many stop within the first weeks or month, and only 19% meet the target of breastfeeding exclusively to six months. The goal of the project is to increase breastfeeding rates in the region through implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

**Position Summary**

Parent partners will work in partnership with the Maternal Child Program and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada as a team member to assist with the process of improving breastfeeding exclusivity and duration for mothers and babies in the hospital.

This is a volunteer advisory role that will influence hospital decisions; provide an objective and balanced approach to infant feeding across a wide range of unit initiatives, programs, services and policies.

**A parent partner ideally has many of the following:**

- Has given birth at Oakville Trafalgar, Milton District or Georgetown hospital in the last three years
- Resides in Halton region
- Passionate about improving infant feeding practices in hospital
- Great communication skills
- Experience working as part of a team
- Willingness to share related personal experience
- Willingness to take on small projects that will help engage community and other parents

**Commitment/term:**

- The project will run for approximately 2 years starting (date)
- 4-6 hours per month
- Attend meetings at hospital and review monthly progress results (parking costs will be covered)
- Attend in-person learning sessions at the hospital
- Attendance at 3 face to face workshops (2 days each) throughout the project. The first workshop will be Sept 5-6, 2019 in Oakville. Travel across Canada may be required for workshops, and travel expenses will be paid.

You are welcome to bring your infant to any meetings or workshops!

Reminder!

Halton Healthcare Parent Partner

Volunteer Opportunity

There's still time to apply before the (date) deadline!

Halton Healthcare is seeking three volunteer parent partners to support our three hospitals with a new project as we work towards our Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) designation.

This exciting opportunity is your chance to have a positive impact on breastfeeding in your community!

Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Georgetown Hospital were selected as three of twenty-five hospitals across Canada to participate in this quality improvement strategy.

To learn more about this parent partner role and how to apply, see the attached description.

***Resources regarding engagement policies and practices:***

MacMaster University has some wonderful Engagement documents through their Public and Patient Engagement office. Linked below is the PPEET (Public and Patient Engagement Evaluation Tool) that they developed, in both English and French versions.

[https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppeet-complete-set-final.pdf?sfvrsn=d1617fe6\\_2](https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppeet-complete-set-final.pdf?sfvrsn=d1617fe6_2)

[https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppeet\\_version-2-0\\_full-set\\_french\\_2018-12-16\\_final.pdf?sfvrsn=c193caf2\\_0](https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppeet_version-2-0_full-set_french_2018-12-16_final.pdf?sfvrsn=c193caf2_0)

[https://ppe.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppec\\_oht-pe-early-experiences-summary\\_march2021.pdf?sfvrsn=3a72889f\\_0](https://ppe.mcmaster.ca/docs/librariesprovider61/default-document-library/ppec_oht-pe-early-experiences-summary_march2021.pdf?sfvrsn=3a72889f_0)

This is a report released recently by the Public and Patient Engagement Office at MacMaster. Here is what they say about the report:

As part of the PPE Collaborative's work with Ontario Health Teams through our role on the Ministry of Health's Central Program of Supports for OHTs, we are pleased to release our report "[Patient, Family and Caregiver Engagement in Ontario Health Teams: Learning from Early Experiences](#)". This report shares the findings of a series of interviews we conducted with patient, family and caregiver partners and engagement leads from a number of Phase 1 OHTs in late 2020. The focus of the work was on

understanding how patient, family and caregiver partners are recruited to OHTs; structures and activities established to provide opportunities for them to contribute, advise, partner or co-lead; the influences of COVID-19 on engagement, partnering and co-design activities; early assessments of impact; contributors and challenges to successful engagement; and recommendations for supporting engagement and partnering in OHTs moving forward.