



Institute's Patient Advisory Committee Embraces Enhanced Communications Between Patients, Families and Practitioners as an Important Tool to Improve Patient Safety

During Canadian Patient Safety Week the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety Patient Advisory Committee (MPAC) urges all patients and families to let their voices be heard about health care.

The committee endorses the Canadian Safety Week message that “healthcare is a team effort between patients and all caregivers” and that “the best decisions are made together”.

“Communication is of enormous importance to patients and their families,” says Kim Poppel, the chair of the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety’s recently created Patient Advisory Committee (MPAC). “We all know someone who has not fully benefited from their health care experience. They felt that they have not been listened to or they have been too afraid, embarrassed or intimidated to question health care providers when they don’t fully understand information or agree with decisions being made about their healthcare or the care of a family member.”

MPAC was created in January 2007 to provide a voice for patients and family members who have an interest in patient safety, experiences and opinions about provisions of healthcare and safety and the health care system – positive and negative – and an interest in working collaboratively with MIPS to promote patient safety in healthcare settings.

“We are all on the Patient Advisory Committee because we have had fairly extensive involvement with the healthcare system as patients and family members, and some of those experiences have been far less than satisfactory,” said Poppel. “But at the end of the day, we would like to be able to use what we have learned from those experiences -as hard as some of them have been – to ensure that other patients and families can benefit from the improvements in care.”

MPAC members concur that their committee’s present goals will be:

- Promotion of the health literacy initiative “It’s Safe to Ask”
- Better access to personal health information for patient advocates
- More involvement of the public in health professions regulatory bodies

The Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety Patient Advisory Committee is a standing committee of the MIPS Board and is comprised of 10-15 members, including at least one Institute board member. Current members include:

- Mrs. Kim Poppel, Brandon (Committee Chair, Board of Directors, MIPS),
- Mr. Ronald Black, Flin Flon,
- Ms Sylvia Boudreau, Winnipeg,
- Ms Marj Heinrichs, Rosenort,
- Ms Marilyn Hendzel, Winnipeg,
- Ms Robyn Reynolds, Brandon,
- Mr. Blake Taylor, Winnipeg,
- Ms Bev Trachuk, Fisher Branch,
- Ms Susan van Koughnet, Winnipeg

PREMIER MEMBERS

“During Canadian Patient Safety Week we applaud all Manitoba practitioners and health care centres that are recognizing the important role effective communications plays in the quality and safety of patient care every day of the year” said Poppel.

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