



**Engagement & Communications Plan
for Internal and External Stakeholders**

2025/26

About Hanover & District Hospital

Hanover and District Hospital (HDH) was originally established in 1923 and a new acute care hospital was built in 1973. A state-of-the-art facility with a 24-hour Emergency Department, the hospital operates as a 28-bed acute care organization with services and programs that include day surgery, two operating suites, obstetrics unit, multi-purpose intensive care, palliative care services, rehabilitation services, dialysis unit, specialist clinics, laboratory and diagnostic imaging.

HDH's vision is to partner for excellence in rural health care. Our vision depicts our commitment to partnering with other health service providers in the Grey Bruce area and beyond to ensure that patients receive the care they need and deserve.

Executive Summary

The Engagement and Communication Plan outlines how HDH will communicate with internal and external stakeholders, including patients, staff, physicians, community partners, and the public. Key objectives are to:

1. Develop a process for clear, consistent communication through an annual Action Plan.
2. Improve information sharing between healthcare organizations.
3. Raise awareness of HDH's role and successes as a leader in rural acute care.
4. Better inform stakeholders about hospital services and resources.

Recognizing the importance of patient and community engagement, HDH has adapted Health Quality Ontario's Patient Engagement Framework (2016). This guide's purpose is to help HDH plan, implement, and evaluate patient engagement activities across personal care, program/service design, and organizational policy and strategy. The goal is to foster a strong culture of patient, caregiver, and public engagement to support high-quality, equitable healthcare.

Specific communication methods include the corporate website, social media, media relations, internal forums, electronic newsletters, and community engagement events. The plan emphasizes the importance of accessibility to ensure messaging reaches all stakeholders.

Evaluation metrics include media coverage, event attendance, website traffic, and stakeholder feedback. It will be reviewed annually.

Patient Engagement and the Patient Engagement Framework

Involving patients and their loved ones in the conversation about how to improve health care quality generates important results for people receiving care, for health care professionals, and for the health system at-large.

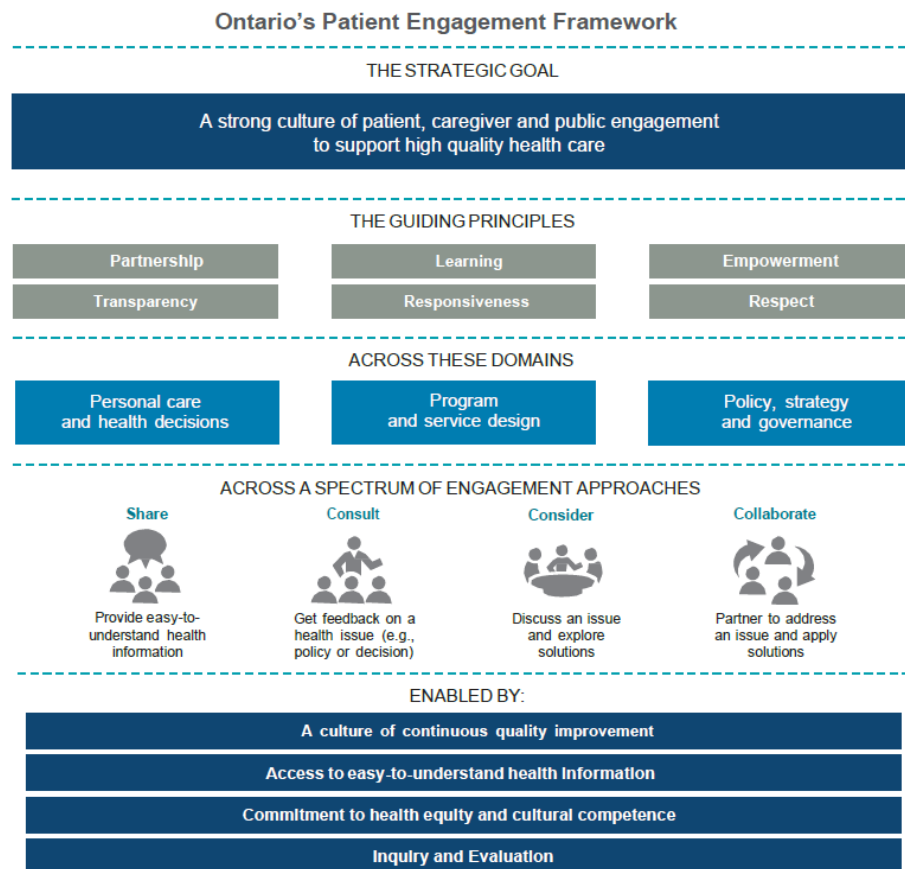
To promote and support the drive for active patient engagement, HDH has adapted Health Quality Ontario's Patient Engagement Framework. This framework was approved and modified in partnership with the Patient & Family Advisory Committee at HDH.

Its purpose is to guide HDH in planning for, implementing and evaluating patient engagement activities across each of the health system’s domains: in personal care and health decisions, program and service design, and in health care policy, strategy and governance.

The goal of patient engagement is to create a strong culture of patient, caregiver and public engagement to support high quality health care. Core principles for success include partnership, transparency, learning, responsiveness, empowerment and respect.

HDH engages with patients in a variety of ways including but not limited to:

- Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC)
- PFAC representatives are embedded into the following committees: Patient Safety, Health Equity, Infection Prevention and Control, Product Evaluation and Professional Practice, Ethics and the Board Quality Governance and Risk Management.
- Patient & Family Advisory are included in quality improvement initiatives and hospital project planning committees
- Patient Satisfaction Survey’s
- Through social media mediums and website



Resource: Ontario's Patient Engagement Framework, 2016

Stakeholders

Any person that is affected by healthcare is considered a stakeholder. The stakeholders for communication and/or engagement are:

External Stakeholders

- Patients, Families and Caregivers
- Donors
- Health Service Providers
- Health Care Community Partners
- Community
- Media
- Government (political leaders, mayors, town councilors)
- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ontario Health West (OHW)

Internal Stakeholders

- HDH Staff
- HDH Physicians
- HDH Auxiliary/Clinical Volunteers
- HDH Board Directors
- HDH Foundation
- HDH Patient & Family Advisors

The President & CEO will work with the Board Chair to communicate effectively. It is the goal of this plan to create a process of communication to ensure the success of HDH by engaging internal and external stakeholders in the process. Providing ongoing messaging through a variety of mediums develops trust and understanding with stakeholders. The communication plan can help raise awareness of the hospital's needs and challenges and also champion successes.

Planning Communication

With each communication the following questions will need to be answered:

1. Why is this important to communicate? **(What's the purpose?)**
2. With whom do we want to communicate? **(Who are the stakeholders?)**
3. What do we want to communicate? **(What's the message?)**
4. How do we want to communicate it and through which medium? **(What communication tools are to be used?)**
5. What is the timeline of communications/presentations? **(Define when and who plans, prepares and presents)**
6. What needs to be developed? **(Develop material, ads, news articles etc.)**

The answers to these questions will establish the **action plan** to communicate successfully with the intended audience. This action plan will focus the messaging making it possible to target the stakeholders accurately, providing structure to define who HDH needs to reach and the medium. This process will make communication more efficient, effective and long lasting. More importantly, flexibility is key in planning and being prepared to adapt messaging to ensure success.

Communication Tools

When the target audience is identified strategies can be defined as to which communication tool would be used to achieve maximum outreach and efficient information sharing. HDH is committed to provide

accessible communication for our patients and visitors. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others and will be considered when planning communication.

HDH uses several methods to communicate including:

- Patient Interactions (Staff and patient contact)
- Word of Mouth
- Website – www.hdhospital.ca
- Social Media (Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/HDHospital/>, X (Formerly Twitter) @HDHospital, Instagram, Linked In & YouTube)
- Advertising (Media Releases, News Stories, Other Publications)
- Community Engagements/Events
- Internal communications, including weekly e-blasts, staff forums and HDH Documents

Corporate Publications

Annual Report

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Hospital's annual report is released electronically on the website and social media.

Patient Information Guide

The Patient Information Guide is published annually at no cost to HDH as sponsors advertise in the publication. Hard copies are available in print for pick-up in high traffic locations (front lobbies & elevator), and electronically on the hospital's website.

Program/Service Brochures and Posters

These are developed as needed by program leaders and the Executive Assistant to the CEO using HDH's Graphic Standards. Templates are designed for patient information and presentation materials.

Media Relations

HDH recognizes that timely and accurate media attention can support recruitment and retention, employee and community engagement, reward and recognition, and fundraising and funding. Every effort is made to communicate with media in a proactive rather than a reactive manner via designated spokespersons. The hospital also provides press releases to the media when the need arises.

Digital Media

Corporate Website

The website is maintained by the Executive Assistant to the CEO and HR Administrative Assistant. The site will continue to evolve with new and improved content needed.

HDH Documents (Shared Drive) & Board Portal

The HDH Documents folder on the shared drive is used as a file storage and sharing system for memos, reports, hospital committee information etc. Memos and other items are regularly communicated via

the “HDH E-blast”. A portal for the Board of Directors is located on the hospital website. It houses policies, by-laws, agendas and other committee information.

Social Media

Guided by a Social Media Policy and Social Media Annual Plan, the Executive Assistant to the CEO creates and maintains social media presence on Facebook, X (Formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn and You Tube. Pages are regularly updated with timely content and photographs related to hospital activities, services, disruptions and wellness content.

Objectives

The Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing a communications action plan developed by the President & CEO which includes strategies for communication throughout the year to HDH’s stakeholders. The goal is ***to promote clear messaging and communication throughout the Hanover and District Hospital organization and to internal and external stakeholders***

Objectives include the following;

1. To develop processes for communication via the HDH Communications: Action Plan (Appendix A), which will be updated annually and reviewed by the Board of Directors through the Operational Plan;
2. To develop clear and consistent messaging and branding;
3. To improve the sharing of information between healthcare agencies/organizations;
4. To improve awareness of the role and successes of HDH as a leader in acute care; and
5. To improve information about services and resources.

The Hospital Brand

The Hospital is constantly growing and evolving. Communicating with a unified appearance for all formats will help our patients, staff, physicians and community better understand who we are, the services we offer and the values we share. (Refer to the Graphics Standards Manual) The *Accessibility for All Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the HDH Accessibility Plan will be referenced when making communication decisions around branding.

Evaluation

For *internal* audiences, feedback to leaders, questions in forums and meetings, attendance at meetings and special events help provide an indication of the effectiveness and receptiveness of corporate messaging.

Measure of *external* communication, effectiveness can be gauged by media coverage (positive, negative, neutral), participation in Hospital events, letters to the editor, survey responses, social media followers, complaints related to communications, website traffic, donation influence and volunteer recruitment.

Related Policies

1. Board Policy # 301 – Board Linkage with Community
2. Board Policy # 302 – Board Linkage with Other Organizations
3. Board Policy # 503 – Communication and Supports to the Board

4. Board Policy # 504 – Development of Collaborative Partnerships
5. Administrative Policy # ADM 1-60 – Media Release
6. Administrative Policy # ADM 1-105 – Social Media

Appendix

Appendix A – HDH Communications: Action Plan

HDH Communications: Action Plan 2024/25			
Description	Frequency	Format/Channel	Audience

1	Website Updates (Content & News)	Ongoing, as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Lemon Media Web Portal 	All External & Internal Stakeholders
2	Social Media	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook X (Formerly Twitter) Instagram LinkedIn YouTube 	All External & Internal Stakeholders
3	Earned Media	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Radio and News Stations The Post 	All External & Internal Stakeholders
4	Community Engagement/Events	Two per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Platforms In person 	External Stakeholders
5	Patient Information Guide	Reviewed once/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willow Publishing – no cost to HDH with advertising sponsors 	Patients & Families
6	Annual Report	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital publication 	All External & Internal Stakeholders
7	EBlast	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email newsletter 	HDH Staff & HDH Physicians
8	CEO/Staff Forums	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Forum Email Distribution of Recording 	HDH Staff & HDH Physicians
9	HDH Documents	Ongoing, as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared Drive 	HDH Staff & HDH Physicians
10	Review Communication Plan & Graphic Standards Manual	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document 	Internal Stakeholders