

Patient Relations Measurement and Reporting



Overview

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is committed to improving patient relations through recent amendments to the *Excellent Care for All Act* and priorities set out in *Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care*. The legislative and policy changes set clear patient relations accountabilities for hospitals, established the Patient Ombudsman, and expanded Health Quality Ontario's mandate to monitor and report on and support quality improvement in patient relations.

Health Quality Ontario worked with a provincial advisory group to select and pilot test indicators and data collection in hospitals, home and community care and long-term care homes (Box 1). The advisory group also informed the development of patient relations quality improvement guidance tools and resources.

The Patient Relations Pilot

The patient relations pilot ran for 1 year, ending in March 2017. Five indicators developed through the Patient Relations Advisory were tested at twenty-nine sites including 13 hospitals, four Community Care Access Centres (CCACs), and 12 long-term care (LTC) homes spanning 13 Local Health Integration Networks. Pilot sites submitted aggregated 2015-16 fiscal year complaints data to Health Quality Ontario, from which comparative facility-level reports were generated. The facility-level reports allowed pilot sites to monitor and compare their organization within and across sectors on each indicator and share quality improvement ideas and information. Based on the pilot, the indicators were refined and supporting resources, like indicator technical specifications, webinars and guidance tools were developed. The pilot concluded with a final report on indicators and future reporting recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care in Spring 2017.

Box 1. Patient Relations Indicators

- ï Rate of complaints per 1000 patients/residents
- ï Percent of complaints received by complaint category
- ï Percent of complaints acknowledged to the person who made the complaint within two, five and 10 business daysⁱ
- ï Percent of complaints closed within 30 calendar days and 60 calendar days
- ï Percent of action(s) taken in response to a complaint by type of action

ⁱ Thresholds for complaint acknowledgement and closed timeframes were based on legislation and Patient Relations Advisory Group

Patient Relations Indicators and Reporting

The patient relations [indicator specifications](#) are available on Health Quality Ontario's website. Provider organizations are encouraged to use the new indicators to meet their legislated patient relations accountabilities, for reporting to their Board Quality Committees, and to support standardization of complaints data within and across the health system. One patient relations indicator, "Percent of complaints acknowledged to the individual who made the complaint in 2, 5 and ten

business days” is included as an additional indicator in the 2018/2019 Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs). No additional public reporting will be implemented in 2018/19. Any future consideration of broader public reporting will be done in consultation with the health system. To further support quality improvement in patient relations, Health Quality Ontario will publish sector-specific patient/resident relations guides for long-term care homes, hospitals and home and community care. Guidance documents are also available on the Health Quality Ontario website.

Health Quality Ontario will continue to work with health sector organizations, Local Health Integration Networks and associations to promote leading practices in patient relations. For more information on patient relations at Health Quality Ontario, please visit our [website](#) or contact pt_rel@HQOntario.ca.