

## Patient and Family-Centred Care

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Patient and family-centred care, also referred to as person-centred care or client-centred care, is an approach to care that puts patients and families at the forefront of their health and care by building strong partnerships and involving them in shared decision making as well as the design, delivery and evaluation of healthcare services.<sup>1</sup>

### Background

Patient and family-centred care has been recognized as a key aspect to providing high quality care among healthcare professionals and organizations. Rather than delivering healthcare services that centre on the needs of providers and administrators, this approach to care requires services be built around the individual and their family.

While some progress has been made by healthcare providers and healthcare organizations in working towards this approach to care - such as engaging patients and families in the design, delivery and evaluation of services, making changes to visiting hour restrictions, and involving patients and families in rounds and shift reports - significant barriers persist. The way in which healthcare services are delivered in B.C. continues to be largely dominated by the needs of providers, and barriers to team-based care have added to this issue. Research and evaluation on patient-centred care practices have continuously indicated that this approach improves patient outcomes. By involving patients and their families as equal partners in their healthcare, patient-centred care improves the experiences of patients, increases adherence to care plans, and increases patients' self-management of their health.<sup>2</sup>

Many healthcare providers and healthcare organizations continue to struggle with conflicting views of what constitutes patient-centred care. Specific barriers include a lack of agreement on key elements to this approach, priority areas of focus, time constraints and the difficulties in shifting the perceptions of healthcare providers.<sup>3</sup> It is important for healthcare providers, such as nurses, to understand that improving the patient experience of care is a key component of the [Triple Aim](#) to work towards more optimal health system performance.<sup>4</sup>

Nurses understand that patient-centred care requires changes at the individual, team, organizational and systems level. Nursing also knows that patient-centred care requires strong interprofessional collaboration and communication to build consensus around policy directions, as well as accountability among all healthcare providers. The Ministry of Health has identified ARNBC as a key stakeholder in improving patient centred care, and there is much potential for B.C. nurses to take part in building the necessary structures and processes needed to work towards this goal.

1 BC Ministry of Health. (2014). *The British Columbia Patient-Centered Care Framework*.

2 Rathert, C., Wyrwich, M. D., & Boren, S. A. (2012). *Patient-centered care and outcomes: A systematic review of the literature*. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 1077558712465774.

3 Baker, G. R. (2014). *Evidence boost: A review of research highlighting how patient engagement contributes to improved care*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.

4 Institute for Healthcare Improvement. (2016). [IHI Triple Aim Initiative](#).



# Issues Brief

## Key Messages:

- Building partnerships with patients and families is essential in moving towards a culture of patient and family-centred care.
- Nurses spend a considerable amount of time listening to and understanding their patients' and families' concerns. As a result, they understand that patients and families are well-positioned to be in control of their own health and care.
- ARNBC has been identified by the Ministry of Health as a key stakeholder in improving patient-centred care.
- Nurses and other members of the interprofessional team must embed the patient centred principle of “nothing about me, without me” into every aspect of their practice.

## Questions for Nurses

1. Are you aware of any promising practices within your workplace that are improving patient-centred care?
2. What barriers have you experienced in your practice that have created difficulties in providing patient-centred care?
3. What systems level issues create and perpetuate barriers to patient-centred care? How can ARNBC address this?

## Further Reading

- Herbert, C. P. (2005). *Changing the culture: Interprofessional education for collaborative patient-centred practice in Canada. Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 19(sup1), 1-4.

