



Client and Family Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference

Role and Purpose

The purpose of the Client and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC) is to empower clients of Canadian Mental Health Association-Niagara (CMHA-N) and associated family members or caregivers to have input and involvement in the areas of planning, program evaluation and service provision.

The CFAC is responsible for advising and making recommendations to the Director Service Quality and Capacity and CMHA-N staff. These recommendations will ensure that clients with CMHA-N receive the highest quality care based on the use of evidence-based, best practices. The CFAC helps ensure that client consultation and feedback are considered in any service redesign or improvement processes.

The following values of CMHA-N will guide the CFAC's decision making and actions:

- **Service:** We work in a culture of service with the ten fundamental components of recovery: self-directed, individualized/person centred, empowered, holistic, non-linear, strengths based, peer supported, respected, responsible and hopeful.
- **Respect:** We show respect for those who seek our service, co-workers, community partners and ourselves by being open to different opinions, beliefs and values.
- **Integrity:** We have congruence between what we do and what we say, such that our actions and decisions are sincere, transparent, consistent and reflective of our values and policies.
- **Teamwork:** We are accountable for our common goal of enhanced well-being and contribution to the mission, vision and strategic goals of the Branch.
- **Competency:** We demonstrate service at the highest professional level, through our attitude and ongoing skills attainment.

Mandate

1. Program Review

- Review client experience survey results and provide perspective related to trends and results
- Review services practices and provide input and suggestions for improvement
- Review the CMHA-N website and make recommendations for improvements

Mandate (cont'd)

Program Review (cont'd)

- Participate in service focus groups as necessary

2. Client Advocacy – General

- Assist in identifying the needs and priorities of clients and caregivers in partnership with CMHA-N staff
- Promote opportunities for communication and collaboration among clients, caregivers and CMHA-N staff
- Review the process to bring forward concerns and complaints and make necessary recommendations
- Review intake process and make necessary recommendations
- Serve as forum for clients and make recommendations

3. Client Advocacy – Special Committees Participation

- Review responses to client or caregiver complaints on a quarterly basis
- Provide support as witnesses to individual clients through the concern, complaint and appeal process when requested

4. Work Plan and Evaluation

- Develop an annual work plan for tasks related to all of the above including an evaluation and review of successes

Reporting Relationship

The CFAC has a direct communication relationship with the Executive Director and through them to the CMHA-N leadership team and the Board of Directors.

The Director, Service Quality and Capacity acts as a liaison and provides resource support to the CFAC to identify and coordinate topics of interest and focus.

Membership

Clients, former clients and caregivers are welcome to apply to be members of the CFAC. Whenever possible, representation will include a current or previous client from a cross-section of CMHA-N programs including longer term and brief/immediate services.

No more than two caregivers will be on the committee at any time.

The committee will have a minimum of eight members and no more than 12.

The Executive Director is an ex-officio member and may attend at any time. CMHA-N staff will attend meetings as needed or at the request of the CFAC.

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

A committee member will be nominated by the group to serve as Chair of the committee for a two year term. The initial Chair will be nominated by the CMHA-N Liaison and approved by the committee members.

In the event that the Vice-Chair is unable to succeed the Chair at the end of their two year term, the Chair may serve an additional year with the unanimous agreement of all committee members. A new vice Chair will be selected from among the members and will serve a one year term before succeeding the Chair.

The Chair will be responsible for the following:

- Meet with the CMHA-N Liaison in advance of every meeting in order to develop the agenda
- Chair the meetings by facilitating the participation of all members in items of discussion and ensuring that the agenda is followed
- Ensure that the Guidelines for Group Meeting developed by the committee is adhered to at the meetings

Vice-Chair

A committee member will be nominated by the group to serve as a Vice-Chair of the committee for a two year term.

The Vice-Chair will succeed the Chair at the end of their term and will then serve a two year term as Chair.

In the event that the Chair is unable to complete their term of office, the Vice Chair will fill the role of the Chair for the remainder of the term and a new Vice Chair will be nominated from among the members.

The Vice Chair will be responsible for the following:

- Reviewing the agenda with the Chair in advance of every meeting
- Chairing the meetings in the event the Chair is unavailable to chair a meeting
- Ensuring the Guidelines for Group Meeting developed by the committee is adhered to at the meetings
- Provide support to the chair by monitoring committee members' desire to speak next, either at in person meetings or via chat messages or reaction buttons used during virtual meetings

CMHA-N Liaison

The CMHA-N Liaison will be assigned by the Executive Director for as long as deemed appropriate.

If members of the CFAC have concerns about the CMHA-N Liaison they will contact the Executive Director to discuss same.

The CMHA-N Liaison will be responsible for the following:

- Meet with the Chair in advance of every meeting to develop the agenda
- Ensure that minutes are taken for the meetings and distributed to members in a timely fashion
- Arrange for guest speakers to attend meetings as determined by the committee Chair and/or members

Meetings

The CFAC typically meets monthly for approximately 2 hours and will meet a minimum of eight times per year. Meetings may also be called at the discretion of the Chair and the CMHA-N Liaison.

Members will be responsible for reading reports and documents related to each agenda prior to the meeting. Typically this will take approximately one hour per meeting.

Members may be requested to participate in focus groups, client experience surveys, client concern reviews and other meetings as needed in addition to the regular meetings.

Financial Considerations

Members without internet or computer access will be provided with resources as available. Light refreshments/meals will be provided at meetings.

Decision Making

Decisions made by the CFAC will be reached by consensus whenever possible. Where no consensus can be reached, a simple majority will suffice.

Quorum

A quorum will be defined as 50 percent plus one of the members of the CFAC.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually in February.