

<b>Niagara Ontario Health Team – Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara</b>	
<i>Communications and Engagement Working Group</i>	
APPROVED BY: Communications and Engagement Working Group	EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2023
	REVISION DATES: n/a

**1.0 Background**

The Niagara Ontario Health Team – Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara (NOHT-ÉSON) is a local health integration network of more than 45 health care providers, social service agencies, educational institutions, and patient/client and family/caregiver representatives in Niagara. It is committed to working together to build a more integrated, inclusive and seamless health care system with a goal of improving the overall experience and health outcomes for people in Niagara.

**2.0 Purpose**

This Terms of Reference (TOR) provides overall guidance for the NOHT-ÉSON’s Communications and Engagement Working Group (CEWG) with regards to its mandate and function. This version of the TOR will be in effect for 12 months as of the date of adoption. The TOR will be reviewed at minimum every 12 months, with formal opportunity for discussion and revision by the NOHT-ÉSON’s CEWG at that time.

Various subject matter experts have come together to strategically promote communications and engagement that will make the most impact within Niagara.

**3.0 Membership Structure**

**Co-leads:** This working group will be co-led by two representatives of the working group membership.

**Members:** The intent of the working group is to draw upon knowledge from a variety of subject matter expertise, professional, lived experience, and administrative perspectives.

**4.0 Representation**

**4.1 Working group members will:**

- Be leaders/champions, both internally and externally, for communications and engagement
- Provide a conduit for dissemination of communications and engagement information through appropriate channels and as decided by the working group
- Provide guidance on min/max working group size
- Leverage existing planning table membership

- Ensure representation of the different sectors across the NOHT-ÉSON within the working group. Additionally, ensure adequate representation of Francophone and Indigenous communities (as approved and appointed by working group co-leads)
- Provide input in terms of skills/expertise being sought, as well as an equity lens, on ensuring representation is available from: Indigenous and Francophone populations, and other marginalized groups, typically experiencing barriers

#### 4.2 Current working group members:

1.	Janice Gardner-Spice Co-Lead	Community Addiction Services of Niagara (CASON)
2.	Ron Laroche	NOHT-ÉSON Manager of Communications and Engagement
3.	Josie Faccini	NOHT-ÉSON Engagement Coordinator
4.	Sabrina Piluso	NOHT-ÉSON Director of Planning
5.	Ibolya Csiszar	NOHT-ÉSON Administrative Assistant
6.	Carolyn Askeland	Community Support Services of Niagara (CSSN)
7.	Shaun Baylis	Pathstone Mental Health
8.	Linda Boich	Niagara Health
9.	Annie Boucher	Entité <sup>2</sup> de planification des services de santé en français
10.	Sarah Cannon	Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver Representative
11.	Valerie Chartrand	Foyer Richelieu
12.	Ashley Chiarello	Bridges Community Health Centre
13.	Mary Jane Johnson	Niagara Health
14.	Lori Kleinsmith	Bridges Community Health Centre
15.	Olga McNeill	Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver Representative
16.	Katie Stranges	Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre
17.	Nadine Wallace	Contact Niagara for Children's and Developmental Services

Other parties may be identified for permanent or ad-hoc roles as tasks outlined from the working group progresses.

#### 4.3 Co-Leads

CEWG co-leads will adhere to the roles defined in the NOHT-ÉSON's Planning Table Terms of Reference.

#### 4.4 Terms

- The co-leads of the CEWG will be selected by the members of the CEWG, with a term of two years, renewable by the CEWG to a maximum of six years.

#### 5.0 Mandate and Scope

On behalf of the NOHT-ÉSON, the CEWG will:

- Promote positive, balanced and consistent messaging through media coverage with the goal of building the public reputation of the NOHT-ÉSON
- Provide content expertise and structure to communications that are sent on behalf of the Planning Table
- Ensure that social media tools and branding bearing the NOHT-ÉSON name are used effectively and appropriately to present a favourable public image of the NOHT-ÉSON.
- Build the capacity of identified members (from our approved media policies) to appropriately respond to media requests
- Reinforce the Engagement Framework to assist members of the NOHT-ÉSON to ensure that the organization is deliberate in a consistent and planned approach to engagement
- Ensure effective engagement for the purposes of health, community and social service planning in an effort to build trust, relationships, transparency, and collaboration
- Assist working groups to identify ways to embed communications and engagement into their workplans

### **5.1 In Scope**

The following criteria are in scope for the CEWG:

- Support the vision and work of the Planning Table and working groups by providing content expertise in communications and engagement
- Make recommendations and appropriate actions pertaining to communications and engagement across partnering organizations within the NOHT-ÉSON
- Ongoing development of the CEWG workplan
- Develop and endorse the NOHT-ÉSON brand

### **5.2 Out of Scope**

The following criteria are out of scope for the CEWG:

- Provide engagement opportunities that are outside of the mandate of the Planning Table and working group initiatives
- Provide communications support to individual partner organizations instead of the collective membership

### **6.0 Governance**

The CEWG will govern in adherence to the NOHT-ÉSON decision-making process and standardized documents outlined by the Planning Table. These are:

- Mission, Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles;
- Collaboration Agreement;
- Consensus Decision-Making Framework;
- Alternative Conflict Resolution Framework;
- Code of Conduct Policy;
- Confidentiality Policy;
- Conflict of Interest Policy;
- Co-lead Facilitation Guidelines policy;
- Social Media Policy;

- News Media Policy;
- Communications Plan;
- Branding Policy;
- Engagement Framework;
- Patient Declaration of Values;
- Indigenous Principles;
- Conflict Resolution Policy;
- French Language Communications Policy;
- Onboarding /orientation Policy;
- Health Equity ToR/Framework;
- Data, Privacy Management;
- Governance Policy and Framework; and
- Briefing Note Template

### **6.1 Compliance**

The CEWG will ensure compliance with any applicable legislation/ policy / requirements.

### **6.2 Accountability and Reporting Structure**

Working groups report to the Planning Table. Any subgroup of a working group will report back to that working group. Members of the NOHT-ÉSON may participate in any of the working groups or subgroups.

Agendas, minutes and reports from the Planning Table and working groups will be posted and shared in a manner that can be accessed by NOHT-ÉSON partners.

### **7.0 Policy Development**

The CEWG is responsible to ensure the development of applicable processes, policies and procedures related to communications and engagement which will be submitted to the NOHT-ÉSON's Planning Table for approval.

### **8.0 Annual Planning, Performance Measurement and Monitoring**

The CEWG is responsible to:

- (a) Develop key performance indicators as part of the annual work plan; and
- (b) Ensure timelines are monitored and actions taken to implement decisions and mitigate deficiencies / variances.

### **9.0 Resource Allocation**

The CEWG will provide recommendation to the Planning Table on any required budget or resources to implement NOHT-ÉSON initiatives and for the ongoing operations of the CEWG. The consensus decision-making framework and/or the alternative conflict resolution framework will guide all discussions, decisions and processes.

### **10.0 Meeting Operations**

CEWG members will make every effort to have a constant representative with the necessary authority and knowledge to participate.

The CEWG will generally meet twice per month, to a minimum of 12 meetings held per fiscal year. Upon agreement by members, the frequency of meetings can change. Members should receive a meeting agenda and materials at least two business days in advance. Meetings may take place in person or via tele/videoconference where possible. The meetings will not require a specific number of members in attendance.

Information and recommended actions taken from the CEWG to the Planning Table will use the format of a briefing note, using the recommended Briefing Note Template.

### **10.1 Sub-Committees**

The CEWG will form sub-working groups as appropriate that may be time-limited or of indefinite duration depending on the subject matter. All CEWG sub-working groups will report to the CEWG.

### **11.0 Communications and Engagement**

The Planning Table will inform, include, and partner with our interested and affected parties in health and community social care planning and decision-making for a healthier Niagara. The Planning Table will follow the Engagement Framework, and abide by the Engagement Values and Operating Principles outlined therein.

### **12.0 Review**

This Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the CEWG on an annual basis, and any significant changes will be approved by the Planning Table.