

Terms of Reference
Women's College Hospital's Network on Uninsured Clients
(formerly Collaborative Task Force on Uninsured and Undocumented Clients)
March 2009

Background

Women's College Hospital's (WCH) Collaborative Task Force on Uninsured and Undocumented Clients was established in April 2007 as an initiative of the WCH Women's Health Community Advisory Panel (WHCAP). The Women's Health CAP is a committee of the WCH Board of Directors. Community members of the WHCAP provide their expertise, knowledge and experience in an advisory capacity on general health issues, community partnerships, policies and programming at WCH. Access to health services for people without health insurance was identified at the WHCAP as an urgent community health concern for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Supported by the WCH Equity Vision, the Task Force was initiated to examine access to services for uninsured and undocumented people and to explore ways in which access to services at WCH may need improvement. This work is to be accomplished in collaboration with many health sector individuals, groups and organizations.

In February 2009, the Collaborative formally changed its name to Women's College Hospital's Network on Uninsured Clients. (The original Task Force Terms of Reference dated October 2007 were revised in March 2009 to reflect this change)

Goals:

- To develop a hospital and community strategy responsive to the needs of people without health insurance
- To improve access to and co-ordination of health services
- To provide more integrated, comprehensive, effective, efficient care and support services
- To raise awareness about issues facing people without health insurance and access to health services

Objectives:

As is relevant to people without health insurance,

To identify

- systemic issues of access to health care in GTA
- community health and hospital sector organizations that provide services
- systemic issues facing hospitals, specifically WCH, in the provision of services
- supportive mechanisms that hospitals and other providers can adopt which would reduce or eliminate barriers
- current clinical and financial procedures and practices at WCH

To make recommendations

- to WCH Board of Directors through the WHCAP about WCH clinical and financial policies and practices that would facilitate access to care at WCH
- about collaborative solutions within and between community based and hospital health sectors to the Board of the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network to improve access to care and support

To engage

- in activities that increase general population, hospital and health care communities' awareness of the issues

Guiding Principles

- 1) Operate as a collaborative and equitable working group
- 2) Engage a set of principles that will foster empowerment among team members
- 3) Engage in an open and transparent process in which the roles and expectations of team members are clearly outlined
- 4) Respect the lived experiences, knowledge and/or diversity of people without health insurance

Membership:

Network Members include:

- members of the WCH Women's Health CAP,
- health practitioners,
- representatives from Community Health Centres, Immigrant and Refugee Services, GTA Hospitals, Toronto Public Health, Volunteer Health Clinic for the Uninsured, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and
- other policy, research and community representatives as recommended by Network members.

Members on the Network have experience, expertise and knowledge about the health needs of people without health insurance and the systemic barriers they face when trying to access health care services.

Roles and Responsibilities of Network Members

The roles of the group members are to:

- Work together to achieve Network goals and objectives
- Contribute to the identification of current and future needs and relevant services.
- Advise on phases and aspects of the group work

- Ensure that the needs of people without health insurance and their diverse perspectives and experiences, are central to the work of the group.
- Ensure that diverse service provider perspectives, resource levels and experiences are considered in the work of the group.
- Help maintain interest in and commitment to the working group goals.

The responsibilities of Network Members are to:

- Attend all Network meetings (approximately one per month) or send regrets when needed
- Prepare for meetings by reading materials in advance and bringing feedback on draft materials.
- Contribute to the development of and abide by Network guidelines, values, and decision-making processes.
- Join Network working groups/sub committees
- Act with integrity and openness in advancing the goals of the Network.
- Advise on all items listed in the Network roles.

Chair/Facilitator:

The role of the Chair is to facilitate the participation of all members of the Network during the meeting and to ensure meeting timeliness. The Chair or designate will provide updates (e.g. meeting notes) on Network activities to WHCAP.

Meetings:

The Network will meet bimonthly and standing meeting dates will be determined in advance. Bimonthly email updates will also be provided for the months where meetings are not occurring.

Decision Making:

The Network will seek to establish consensus. In the absence of consensus, decisions will be by 50% plus 1 of the members in attendance.

Key decisions will be articulated in meeting minutes to be distributed by Women’s College Hospital Administrative Support.

Administrative Support:

WCH will

- provide administrative and secretarial support with respect to agenda and information distribution, meeting minutes/notes, booking meeting rooms, audio-visual support, etc.
- provide language interpretation and translation services for meetings as required and other supportive mechanisms to ensure/encourage participation of people without health insurance and/or their representatives.

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis and/or as deemed necessary by the members.