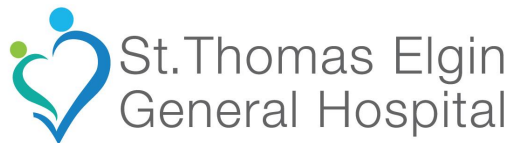




Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Narrative for Health Care Organizations in Ontario

May 31, 2022



OVERVIEW

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital (STEGH) is dedicated to delivering health care excellence to the City of St. Thomas and all seven municipalities within the County of Elgin. We have a proud history and legacy in the community with over 65 years of service. A fully accredited hospital, we offer a full range of services, including: outpatient care, diagnostic imaging, inpatient acute care, emergency services, post-acute care, and regional satellite services. To achieve the best possible health outcomes for our patients, we continually seek innovative ways to deliver services, engage our patients and community, invest in our people, and collaborate with our health care partners.

More than 1,000 employees work at STEGH, including over 200 credentialed professional staff (physicians, dentists, and midwives) who provide in-hospital care ensuring the highest quality of service delivery to every patient that walks through the door. STEGH is also supported by 70 active volunteers as well as students who come from colleges and universities to complete their educational requirements.

Expanding to Better Serve the Community:

In early 2018, STEGH celebrated the opening of the North Tower, which houses the Emergency Department (ED), surgical suite, sterile processing department, and mental health care unit. STEGH continues to be a provincial leader in ED wait times. STEGH has a Lean management philosophy for quality improvement and continues to focus on improving efficiencies to lower patient wait times and improve workflow.

REFLECTIONS SINCE YOUR LAST QIP SUBMISSION

Throughout the pandemic, STEGH has remained steadfast in its commitment and accountability to patient and staff safety. The pandemic brought about the need for providers and leaders to respond rapidly, making significant changes to all aspects of healthcare operations within the walls of the hospital.

In response to COVID-19, STEGH initiated a number of quality improvement initiatives that focused on pandemic safety protecting both patients and staff. This quality improvement work involved creating protocols for patient transport, airway management, and management of personal protective equipment and medications in short supply. STEGH continues to be fully committed to maintain an environment that prioritizes pandemic safety practices and timely access to care.

In spite of the COVID-19 situation over the last 2 years, STEGH has continued to monitor and track its efforts around quality and performance. STEGH is extremely proud of how staff and physicians have maintained practice that fosters a culture of patient engagement and promotes positive patient experiences.

Organizational goals and objectives for 2022/23 have been set and are aligned with the four existing strategic directions:

- Achieving operational excellence to ensure quality and sustainability.

- Empowering our team to reach their full potential.
- Creating collaborative networks to connect patients to services they need.
- Partnering with patients to enhance their care experiences.

STEGH is excited to develop and submit this QIP as a demonstration of the organization's intent to remain laser focused on the quality of care it provides over the next year.

STEGH's QIP demonstrates commitment to the strategic directions, mission, vision and values. As a leading hospital in the province in Emergency Department wait times, STEGH remains fully committed to delivering quality in all aspects of care and embraces open, transparent dialogue with stakeholders.

PATIENT/CLIENT/RESIDENT PARTNERING AND RELATIONS

Throughout the pandemic, listening to the concerns of patients and families has been more critical than ever. STEGH has been sensitive to how the COVID-19 pandemic has increased patient anxiety regarding the healthcare environment. One of the biggest challenges during the pandemic has been managing communication and providing patients with consistent, accurate messaging.

STEGH has strived to ensure that patients and families are provided with the most up to date information around care delivery, visiting arrangements and discharge planning. STEGH has utilized multiple vehicles for external communication, including the external website,

local media (television and radio) and social media.

Staff were provided with the required technology to support patients through virtual visits with loved ones during the height of the pandemic, as well as to facilitate family meetings with hospital care team.

Listening to and involving patients, families and caregivers in all stages of the care design and delivery process is a key driver of STEGH's operational platform. Patient and family engagement is critical to STEGH's daily work and quality improvement efforts.

Over the last year, STEGH's Patient Experience and Engagement program has continued to align with a continuous improvement framework, using Lean practices to support improvement activities that centralize the voice of the patient and family. The Spectrum of Engagement is a tool STEGH has used that has five levels of patient engagement listed: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Co-design. The goal for the organization is always to be practicing on the Spectrum of Engagement by keeping patients, families and the community engaged in discussions about patient experience. The ultimate aim is to have patients and families provide ideas for improvement and co-design the changes.

STEGH has enhanced its process of collecting information and measuring the patient experience using internal surveys. Through our internal patient survey process, STEGH accesses a rich source of information about our performance as a hospital. Each month, short surveys are collected and the data collated to produce electronic

patient experience dashboards. These dashboards show trends in feedback over time, allowing each care area to recognize room for improvement and make changes to support the patient experience. The teams use the dashboards to discuss the feedback from the previous month, determine what strategies have been working, and set new goals to improve the patient care they provide.

STEGH has five patient experience feedback indicators embedded onto its monthly Patient Safety and Quality Scorecard. The questions are:

- Overall, how would you rate the care and services you received at the hospital?
- During this hospital visit or stay, did the hospital staff explain things in a way that you could understand?
- During this hospital visit or stay, did the hospital staff treat you with compassion and respect?
- During this hospital visit or stay, did the hospital staff treating and examining you introduce themselves?
- When you left hospital, did the hospital make sure you had the follow-up care with a doctor or other health care professional?

In alignment with the continuous improvement philosophy at the hospital, STEGH will continue to drive the quality of care through Experience Based Co-Design (EBCD) activities in 2022-2023. EBCD is an approach that enables staff, patients and family caregivers to co-design services and/or care pathways, together in partnership. It focuses on the patient and staff experiences and empowers both groups to make changes together.

This year STEGH endeavors to carry out 100% completion of three co-design activities that include the voices and perspectives of indigenous patient partners by March 31, 2023. This is an exciting opportunity for the hospital to collaborate with the indigenous community and make collaborative improvements to care delivery.

In addition to this work, STEGH has also added the following question to its internal patient survey:

“During your hospital visit, were you and your family involved as much as you wanted to be regarding decisions about your care and treatment?”

Through stakeholder involvement, STEGH has set a current year target of “By March 31 2023, 75% of patients/families at STEGH will answer “always” to the question: “During your hospital visit, were you and your family involved as much as you wanted to be regarding decisions about your care and treatment?”

For patients and families that do not answer “always” to this question, STEGH will be soliciting their engagement using experience data and co-design methods to make improvements to the patient experience on clinical units in order to help address this metric.

PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

STEGH takes the health and wellbeing of its employees and professional staff seriously and is always looking at opportunities to

make improvements to the work environment based on the feedback of staff. As such, STEGH carries out an employee experience survey once a year and has a robust method for circling back with staff to share outcomes and survey results.

Following the survey, leaders are given a short period to review and digest the survey responses of their teams. Departmental action plans are then drafted and shared with staff members to describe what survey themes have been identified and how they will be addressed. This loopback strategy is known as "You said, we did".

In June 2021 and during the COVID-19 pandemic, STEGH surveyed its workforce with 75% of employees responding to the survey.

- 80% of staff felt STEGH was a safe place to work.
- 79% of staff felt that they were satisfied with their job.
- 88% of staff positively rated STEGH as a place to work.
- 93% of staff would recommend the hospital to a family member to receive care.

STEGH has recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic over the last two years has continued to take its toll on staff and physicians. As such, enhancing staff experience by improving the wellbeing and the safety of our workplace has been a priority.

A number of initiatives were initiated to achieve this strategy and include:

- An established Wellness Committee whose purpose is to provide

advice on the wellness needs of staff and to recommend initiatives to support staff wellbeing.

- Providing a number of wellness education events for staff:
- Mental Health First Aid
- Crucial Conversations Training
- Resilience Training
- Combatting Compassion Fatigue Training
- Team Building Sessions
- Therapy dog visits
- Stretching and mindfulness sessions
- Free coffee and tea in the Staff Support Centre
- Leveraging Employee Assistance Program resources

STEGH was thrilled to learn that in early 2022 it was named as one of the best hospitals according to Newsweek. STEGH proudly shared this news with staff taking the opportunity to thank them for delivering such a high standard of care to the community it serves.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

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OTHER

Approval signatures.

Sign-off

It is recommended that the following individuals review and sign-off on your organization's Quality Improvement Plan (where applicable):

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan

Board Chair  (signature)
 Board Quality Committee Chair  (signature)
 Chief Executive Officer  (signature)
 Other leadership as appropriate _____ (signature)

SIGN-OFF

It is recommended that the following individuals review and sign-off on your organization's Quality Improvement Plan (where applicable):

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan on **May 31, 2022**

Peter van der Westen, Board Chair

Amy Dale, Board Quality Committee Chair

Karen Davies, Chief Executive Officer

Craig Watkin, Other leadership as appropriate
