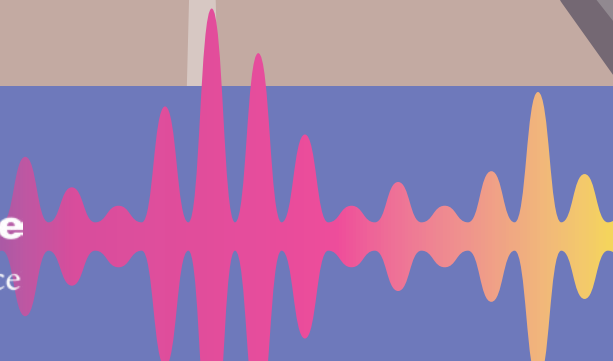


# Client Voice Report 2022



# Embedding Client Voice in All We Do

**Reflecting on 2022, the 9th year of Client Voice activity at VHA, we are struck by how the generous and important contributions of client partners translated into great impact for what matters most to clients receiving VHA services.**

From this year's report, you will get to see the breadth of contributions made, and most importantly, how including the client voice in our work has benefitted the care we provide.

We are grateful to all our client partners who have shared their invaluable perspectives. We are especially thankful to our dedicated Client and Carer Advisory Council members, including our first and longest-serving co-chair, Amr Elimam.

Together, alongside our diverse group of client and family partners, we will continue to look for ways to further embed client voice into our daily work to provide spectacular care that is meaningful to service recipients.



**Sandra Li James**

*Vice President, Quality, Best Practice and Education at VHA, Chief Nursing Executive and Co-Chair of Client & Carer Advisory Council*



**Stacey Ryan**

*Client and Family Voice Specialist*

# Client & Carer Advisory Council Highlights

VHA's Client and Carer Advisory Council is a representative group of clients and caregivers with lived experiences in receiving personal support, nursing and/or rehab services from VHA. The council is committed to advancing the organization's strategic plan and directly contributes to strategic initiatives that have an impact on the clients and families we serve.



**2014**

**COUNCIL  
LAUNCHED**

**10**

**CLIENT  
PARTNERS  
ON COUNCIL**

**8**

**MEETINGS  
EACH YEAR**

Areas of council focus for 2022 included addressing our complex, system-wide health human resource staffing and capacity challenges, improving the way clients and families connect and communicate with our office, and facilitating improvements for how care schedules are managed.

# Understanding Client Experience through Empathy Mapping

VHA is committed to incorporating client experiences to inform and shape our services. We are always looking for ways to gain insights into these experiences which in turn, help us co-design new and innovative solutions to provide better client-centred care.

One effective method used in the early stages of the co-design process is empathy mapping, a tool pioneered by User Experience (UX) Designers to gain access to a person's unique experience within a given interaction. The use of empathy mapping has proven to be invaluable as it gives deeper insight into clients' thoughts and feelings.

**How does it work?** Clients are asked to describe their emotions, needs, and wants, as well as likes and specific issues for a given interaction. The information provided helps create client profiles, generate client journey maps (when combining a sequence of interactions), and it helps identify areas for improvement and hidden strengths for further development.

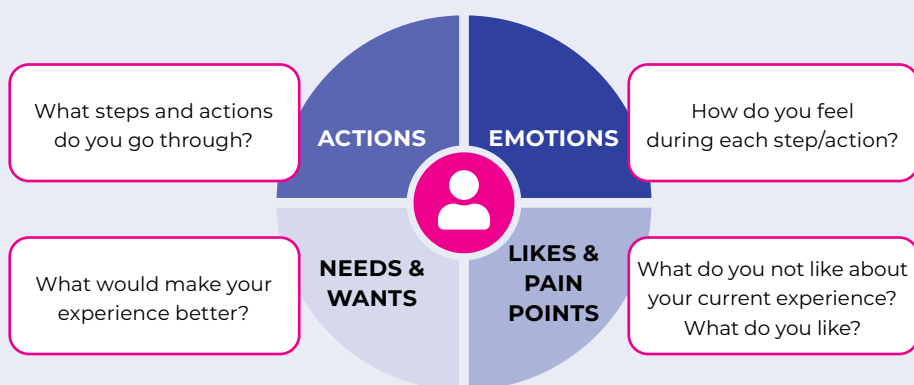
**"The approach is so powerful, it really allows us to listen and learn. It's immersive in that you can really feel what an experience is like."**

*- Kathy Sidhu,  
Director of Quality  
at VHA.*



## Empathy and Journey Mapping

Our goal is to **understand you** and your involvement in the onboarding, service changes, and offboarding processes at VHA. Guided by this understanding, we will work to make changes to **improve your experience**.



Empathy mapping was used in the co-design of two major customer service-related initiatives that involved how our client and families can connect with office care teams, particularly around scheduling. Input through mapping showed us specific dimensions of communication that were important, such as: responsiveness, preferences for how and when to receive information, as well as the need for service-change confirmations.

Data-driven decision-making is a gold standard in healthcare and the qualitative data generated through empathy mapping provides a rich source of information and direction not available with other forms of data-gathering.

"Quantitative data can tell us that 80% of clients are happy about a certain interaction and we could think, 'that's not bad.' But really, this is a number that doesn't give any insight into 'why' someone would provide that response."

**"The details behind client experience feedback are what truly brings the data to life," says Kathy.**



# Client Partner Engagement at VHA

Client Partners engaged in numerous activities to support VHA's work this past year. Here are some of contributions made by our client partners:

**38**

Active partners engaged

**6**

New client partners onboarded in 2022

**16**

Hiring panels to support candidate selection across roles

**3**

Empathy mapping sessions with 10 client partners

**100%**

Of VHA leaders included client partner engagement when planning priority initiatives

**10**

Steering committees including Reimagining Coordination, Patient Safety Advisory, myVHA Client Portal, Ethics

**9**

Unique one-time engagement activities including 1:1 interviews to guide hospital-to-home transitions, development of VHA's client engagement framework in research, testing VHA's new client portal, interviews for articles about VHA's work, client choice award selection committee

# myVHA Client Portal: Co-design in Action

In 2022, VHA made great strides using technology to advance the experience of clients and families. The creation of the new myVHA Client Portal marries VHA's strength in innovation with our commitment to integrating the client voice. Co-designed with clients and families, the myVHA portal is a one-stop shop for clients to access information seamlessly and securely.

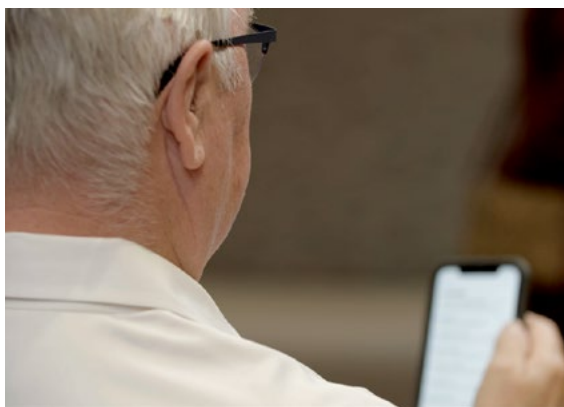
The first phase of the project involved the implementation of tools to view care schedules and cancel or reschedule visits, helping clients to feel more empowered and engaged in their service. Future developments of the portal will involve tools to communicate directly with care teams and access digital services like virtual care.

From conception and design, including the development of portal features and its usability, the client experience remained at the project's core.

"At the end of the day, this is an application that is being built for clients and their caregivers. Having their input from the start helps us continue to drive what is most important," says Kristy Yan, Project Lead for the myVHA Client Portal.

"Client Partners participated in an empathy mapping process early on to determine potential pain points during their care journey which helped us identify how myVHA could address those challenges," adds Kristy.

A varied group client partners were involved in the portal project, representing a wide range of unique care needs. One of the individuals most involved in the co-design process was Client Partner Paul Morse. "I'm really excited for the launch of the myVHA Client Portal. It gives patients an opportunity to stay on top of their scheduling and it improves the level of communication. It's a huge benefit to clients and care providers," says Paul.



"Participating in the co-design process is personally important to me. To think that my personal experience may positively affect others' is very rewarding and meaningful," he adds.

To learn more about the myVHA Client Portal, please visit [www.vha.ca/myvha](http://www.vha.ca/myvha).



# Hearing from Our Client Partners About their Experience

**What's it like to be a client partner at VHA?** We did a check-in with our client partners to learn more about their experience in the role.

**We were pleased to hear that our partners felt supported, energized and valued – see the results below.**

**100%** felt their involvement was **valued**

**100%** felt **confident** and prepared to participate

**100%** felt included, **respected** and able to express views freely

**96%** felt they received all the necessary **information** to participate and that they were given opportunities to **share** in sessions

**96%** felt **satisfied** with their experience as a client partner

**92%** are **enthusiastic** and look forward to partnering further

**92%** felt they knew the **purpose** of the work, their role and how their contributions would be used

**92%** felt they were **informed** about changes and that it was easy to participate by video-conference

**83%** felt their level of involvement was **“just right”** and the remaining 17% noted they'd like to be more involved

And we also learned how we can do better, with feedback indicating that we can do more to communicate back with partners about outcomes and outputs. We also have an opportunity to take a deeper look at our partner reimbursement model for time and effort given. We look forward to addressing these areas in the year ahead.



# Connecting with Amr Elimam,

the first Client Partner to transition  
to VHA's Board of Directors

Amr Elimam has been a VHA Client Partner for over five years. In this role, he has made a remarkable impact as Co-Chair of VHA's Client and Carer Advisory Council. In 2022, Amr began an exciting new chapter with VHA as the first Client Partner to join the organization's Board of Directors.

**"I'm excited  
by the prospect  
of finding solutions  
for some of  
healthcare's  
current  
challenges,"  
says Amr.**

Being a voice for clients and caregivers is what originally motivated Amr to join the VHA Client Voice community.

"At the time as a new caregiver to my sister, I felt lonely and isolated. When I joined my first Client and Carer Advisory Council meeting, I discovered there were others experiencing similar challenges as myself. The ability to deal with issues on a system-level and help make life better for people like my sister and I was a great outlet for me to channel my energy," Amr recalls.



In order to ensure those who are most vulnerable can continue to receive high-quality, client-centred care, Amr feels every individual has a responsibility to work towards building and restoring the health system, particularly as communities continue to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

As Amr put it, "I feel that my presence as a caregiver means that I have a responsibility as a Board Member towards people like my sister and I, and I need to continue to advocate on their behalf."

**We thank our client and carer partners for their time and dedication to improving client experiences alongside VHA staff and service providers.**

**We look forward to continuing to look for ways to continue to improve our care and services and further embed client voice in 2023.**

