

IAP2 Core Values Award Nomination Submission 2014

Title: The Community Engagement Advisory Network (CEAN)
Award category: Extending the Practice Award, Creative, Contribution and Innovation in the field
Organization name: Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)
Nominee name: Vancouver Coastal Health: Community Engagement Advisory Network

1. Outline the levels of engagement and project objectives for the public participation process, including the decision(s) to be made and the role of the public and the reasons for the use of the particular participation process.

Vancouver Coastal Health at a glance: [Vancouver Coastal Health](#) (VCH) is a large, public agency providing comprehensive health services including primary, community and acute care, as well as public health, to over 1 million people (25% of BC's population), including the residents of Vancouver, Richmond, the North Shore and Coast Garibaldi, Sea-to-Sky, Sunshine Coast, Powell River, Bella Bella and Bella Coola. VCH's region includes 22 municipalities and regional districts, and 16 First Nation communities.

Our organization provides a range of health services, including 14 hospitals, 15 community health centres, mental health and addictions programs, residential care facilities among others. Every year we provide 3 million+ patient days of care, see 308,000+ people in our emergency departments, see 640,000 visits to our clinics, provide 81,000 same day surgeries, conduct 79,000+ inpatient discharges and provide 2.3 million+ residential care days.

VCH vision and mission: At VCH we are a "People First" organization and our vision is to be leaders in promoting wellness and ensuring care by focusing on quality and innovation. Our mission is to support healthy lives in healthy communities with our partners through care, education and research.

To improve quality of care for the communities that it serves, VCH regularly seeks out patient/public feedback in a variety of ways. In order to facilitate this dialogue between the health authority and the public, the [Community Engagement](#) department has fostered the creation of a network known as the [Community Engagement Advisory Network](#) (CEAN). CEAN is a group of dedicated members of the public who give their time, knowledge and ideas to improve health services in our communities of care. Supported by the Community Engagement team at Vancouver Coastal Health, CEAN was established in July 2009 and has grown to over 95 members. Coming from diverse backgrounds, CEAN members share a passion for making healthcare more patient-centered, accessible and accountable to the public. CEAN members may join the network as a result of a personal experience with the health care system or are motivated by a desire to impact decisions that will improve the delivery of health services. VCH and ultimately the community benefit enormously from their experience, informed voice and perspective as they work in collaboration to improve health services for all. Click [here](#) to view our CEAN promo video!

CEAN provides opportunities for members to communicate with the health authority and with each other; to share, learn and enhance health initiatives; to learn about issues and support health programs and projects. In 2013, CEAN members participated in various engagement processes contributing over 1000 hours, providing their voice to improve health care by:

- Participating as decision-makers on VCH operational and advisory committees
- Contributing to discussions and forums about new health strategies
- Participating in surveys to inform decisions related to various health services
- Reviewing content and user-friendliness of patient information materials
- Linking VCH Staff with community groups and organizations
- Helping to create and sustain partnerships between VCH and community groups

The roles and responsibilities of CEAN members are to:

- Keep current on information circulated by the VCH Community Engagement Team regarding the CEAN and VCH
- Work collaboratively with Community Engagement to enhance patient and public engagement within VCH
- Share information about community health initiatives or concerns with other Network members and with the Community Engagement staff and with VCH leadership
- If invited, interested and available, take public seats on VCH advisory committees
- Disseminate information about VCH services and/or CE initiatives through community networks and contacts

Whatever type and level of involvement CEAN members engage in, their ultimate goal is to improve healthcare and make services more accessible for their communities.

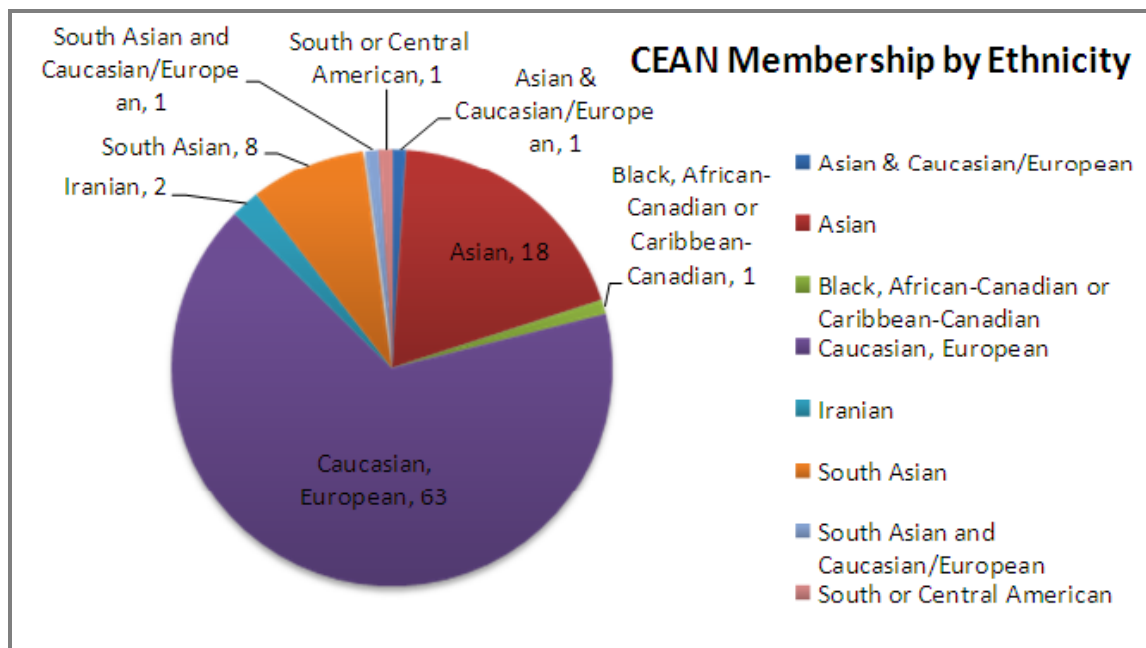
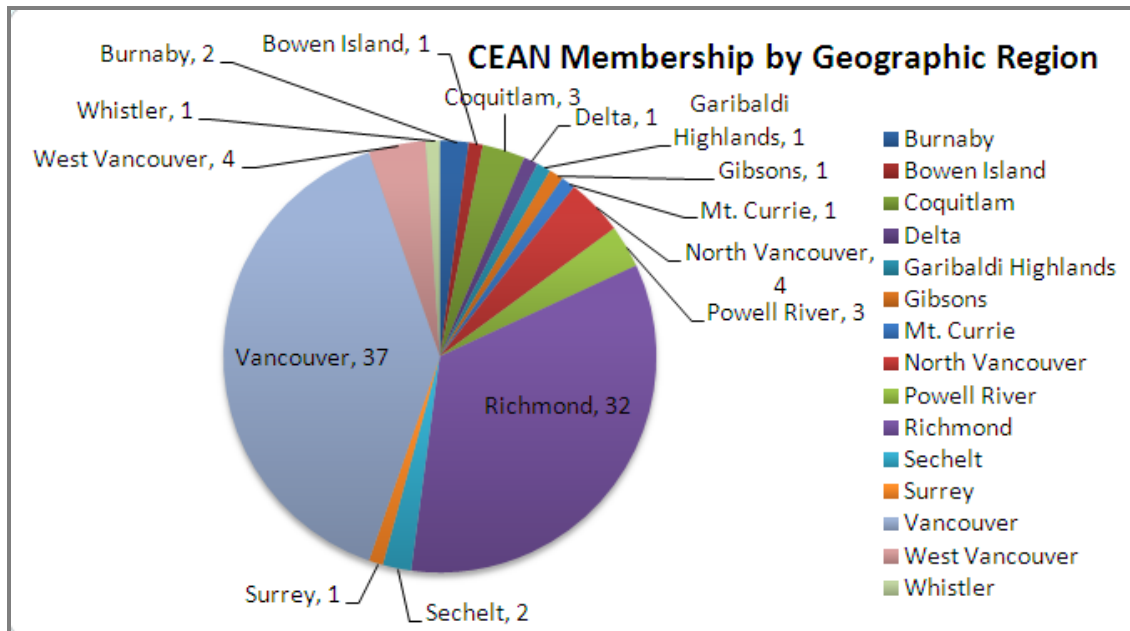
2. Describe specific challenges faced by the project, and how the public participation process responded to those challenges as it relates to the chosen category.

Vancouver Coastal Health sought to have a network of members of the public aligned with VCH and engaged in ongoing quality improvement work to enhance patient and public experience with health care services. To that end, the CEAN was established in 2009. The creation of CEAN gave VCH departments and senior leadership a prepared network of public members with diverse skills, ages, genders, ethnicities, cultures and socio-political backgrounds with whom they could collaborate in their planning. CEAN members provide a unique opportunity for VCH to build relationships with members of the public who are interested and motivated to engage for the purpose of improving a system that we have joint ownership of and have a vested interest in establishing mechanisms for continual, sustainable improvement

3. Describe how the IAP2 Core Values are reflected in your methodology and/or your findings with particular attention given to the following:

a) Provide evidence of diverse participation and inclusive engagement. What was the depth of engagement (measured by number and diversity of participants)?

The previous structure of advisory committees in VCH was demographic in nature and the members were involved in a consultative process to determine the model of advisory structure going forward. CEAN members reflect the diversity of VCH constituents and represent VCH residents. These pie charts detail the demographic make-up of CEAN members.



b) How were those affected by the decision identified and involved in the decision making process?

CEAN members identify areas of interest, which are logged into a database of network members. Opportunities are normally sent to all network members who can then choose what they would like to participate in Targeted requests are also sent to certain members who have identified interest or experience in a specific category such as Seniors Care, Emergency Services or Mental Health & Addictions. As we are able to target those CEAN members who are specifically interested or

experienced in certain categories, we have the opportunity to connect with members who would be most affected, or could provide the most relevant feedback.

c) Provide evidence about how they won the support or co-operation of, or improved relations and participation opportunities with communities/stakeholders in specific project category.

More and more departments in VCH are learning the value of having CEAN to collaborate with in planning and decision-making. The number of requests to engage with CEAN is continually growing. VCH Staff have expressed the value and impact of collaborating with public members.

“CEAN are highly committed, highly effective supporters and communicators of the people we try to serve. They are a critical intermediary between the larger community and Vancouver Coastal Health; they have a well-established 'foot in both camps' and provide an extremely important service to both VCH and their communities. I have always been so impressed by their commitment to the work they do as partners in the health care system. They go above and beyond!”

**-Jeff Coleman, VP Regional Programs & Service Integration
Vancouver Coastal Health**

“CEAN members provide value in so many ways for VCH and our partners! One example is in terms of supporting VCH to establish priorities: community members highlighted the importance of clinical care transitions for seniors in emergency, which led to the 2008 VCH "Transforming Seniors Care" initiative, which eventually led to the provincial mandated 48/6 guideline work that is currently a priority for all health authorities. Another example is in terms of providing feedback for a specific request – CEAN members provided very skilled support to the Complex Residential Care Working Group when we wanted resident/family feedback into what mechanisms are effective to ensure the resident/family voice are heard in residential care. This work led to a toolkit that is used in residential care and has been shared provincially.

In addition, CEAN members embedded into our planning work is invaluable to ensuring new service delivery models which keep the client needs front and center. For example, the CEAN members who have been involved with VCH Home Health Redesign have been very skilled at raising the "where is the client in this?" question at strategic points; and having the client voice at planning tables along with Home Health staff and physicians has led to very innovative solutions. An example is the self-assessment tool that a potential client can use, if they wish, to prepare for a formal Home Health assessment.”

**-Shannon Berg, Executive Director Home & Community Care
Vancouver Coastal Health**

In addition to more engagement requests, there has been an increase in the number of CEAN members who sit on operational and advisory committees within the Health Authority.

VCH Advisory Committee	# of CEANs
VCH Regional Patient Safety Advisory Committee	3
Home is Best Committee	2
Regional Cardiac Quality & Safety Council	2
North Shore Integrated Primary & Community Care	1
Richmond Integrated Primary & Community Care	1
Richmond Collaborative Services Committee	1
Richmond Mental Health & Addictions Family Advisory Committee	4
Richmond Health Advisory Council (RHAC) *several members of the RHAC also sit on various Richmond operational and planning teams	9
Clinical and Systems Transformation Project – Project Steering Committee	1
Clinical and Systems Transformation Project - Clinical Decision Group	1
Clinical and Systems Transformation Project - Privacy Working Group	1

There are now 28 members of CEAN sitting on various VCH operational and advisory committees. The Community Engagement department (who support the CEAN) have seen an increase in the number of committees throughout VCH that are seeking to collaborate with patient/public members. The growth in the number of CEAN members is an indication that patient and public engagement is desired by the public and they are seeking out mechanisms for engagement within healthcare.

d) Explain how information provided to participants supported meaningful participation and were informed about how their input affected the decision.

The Community Engagement Team utilizes a project plan that details the feedback mechanisms that will be present in each project or committee structure. There are deliverables related to the structure of patient/public engagement, what form it will take and what level of involvement will

be achieved and how the participants will be informed of the impact of their participation and the outcomes that were achieved as a result of their involvement. VCH Project teams contact CE with requests to engage with patients/ public. These requests are sent out to CEAN members in a weekly newsletter, who then determine what opportunities they would like to be involved in. Participation of CEAN occurs in a variety of ways – placement on operational teams, advisory committees, surveys, focus groups, document reviews, one-on-one interviews etc. When a long term placement, on an operational team or advisory committee, is the mechanism for engagement then CE facilitates the connection between the CEAN members and VCH staff and provides coaching and support to both as well as tools we have developed to build the capacity of our CEAN members and VCH staff to work effectively together. Please see the attached Advisory Committee Workbook and Patient and Public Advisors workbook as examples of tools.

For a short-term project, once feedback is gathered CE Leaders report it back to the project team and the CEANs who participated in the engagement process. Once the initial engagement has occurred, the CE team then checks back with the project team at a set time after the engagement (typically 3 months after) to see how the feedback gathered has been used in the project. The CE Team uses a survey as a way of collecting this information and also to evaluate the engagement process. We also ask participants to fill out a survey after every engagement session to further evaluate our processes, and ensure that both sides are finding the dialogue meaningful. Any new information collected is relayed back to participants at relevant intervals.

The CE team also puts out a quarterly newsletter, which provides an overview of recent projects and also gives updates on past projects. It is yet another opportunity to feedback to CEAN members on how they have contributed.



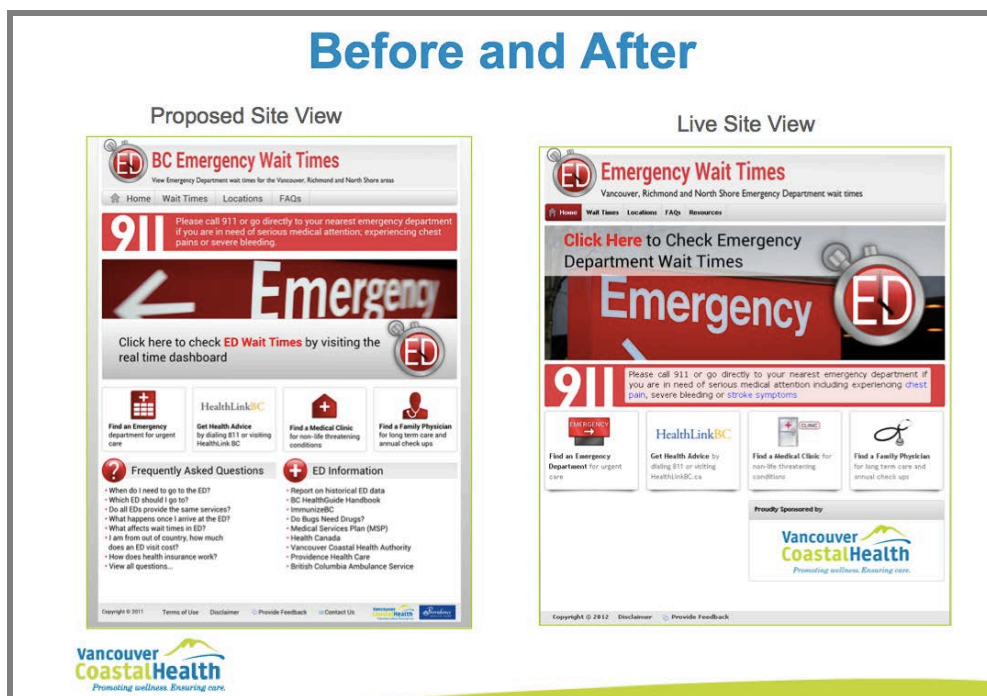
In addition, the CE Team writes reports on many of our projects and workshops, which are posted on our website under the [“CE Reports”](#) section

e) How did the input actually get used in the decision making process? How effective were the outcomes in influencing the decision?

The VCH Community Engagement Advisory Network has made an impact on improving healthcare in various ways. Their main goal is to bring the patient/public voice to health systems planning, supporting quality improvement and patient-centred care..

Projects that CEAN have been involved in for VCH include [My Health My Community](#) - an interactive web-based health and wellness survey that will generate local-level information about the health status and health needs of the local population. CEAN feedback was used by VCH to formulate and test the questions, shape the [promotional materials](#), and develop the partnership strategy.

In the spring of 2012, CEANs gathered to give their feedback on a project to create a website that would give the public real time information on [Emergency Department \(ED\) wait times](#) at select hospitals in Vancouver, Richmond and the North shore. Participants viewed a mock up of the website and gave comments on its design and functionality. Simplification of the website, in terms of the variety of information, quantity of information, layout, and level of detail, was the significant and substantial recommendation.



In January of 2012, members of the Richmond Health Advisory Committee (also CEAN members) worked with students in the [Health Design Lab at Emily Carr](#) on campaigns to promote Hand Hygiene for use within VCH hospitals. The CEAN members helped to decide on the Hand Hygiene campaign that is currently being used in several VCH sites.



4. How did you create relationships and build trust both in the process and post decision.

When the formation of health authorities occurred in BC in 2001 there was precedent for public involvement in health care decision-making within the previous health board structure. This established practice engendered advocacy from the public to have a continuation of this in the current iteration of health service delivery. That desire and effective advocacy succeeded in the formation of the Community Engagement department of VCH, which continues to this day. The role of Community Engagement is to enable a two-way interaction process between VCH and its communities, so that communities have a role in the planning and decision-making for health services and policies that affect their lives.

An integral part of that structure was the creation of an advisory network to allow for relationships to be built and trust developed between our communities and VCH. The CEAN is now an established and known network within VCH and is engaged regularly by VCH leadership and staff to impact planning and decisions related to health care services and delivery. The breadth and depth of projects and committees that CEAN members are involved with span the continuum of care and have directly impacted decisions at all levels of strategic planning and service delivery. The process, developed by CE in conjunction with CEAN, to access to CEAN is efficient and effectively connects these network members to various opportunities for engagement within VCH. CE acts as an intermediary to connect CEAN to the staff and leadership and builds the capacity of both VCH staff and CEAN members to work in collaboration to achieve the goals of the various projects or committees. VCH staff is asked to provide examples of how CEAN input was used to shift or impact a decision.

“BC is in the process of developing a new provincial patient experience survey that follows the patient’s journey through the continuum, centered on a hospital episode of care. On short notice, CE was able to mobilize CEAN members to participate in a prioritization exercise to inform the continuity of care themes to be included. We were thoroughly impressed with CEAN members’ enthusiasm to give their own personal time to participate in a rather lengthy, detailed (and somewhat tedious) exercise.”

The quality of the insight that came through in the exercise and the many narrative comments from CEAN members were top-notch, particularly the richness of detail and the focus on whole system rather than one individual patient story. Having a structure like CEAN within VCH made it possible to reach out to a wide variety of members of the public from all walks of life, which would have otherwise been very challenging to do given the tight timelines. The information that CEAN provided will be presented on March 6 to the survey's provincial consultation group, and will guide the selection of the survey question themes for the province of BC. Thank you for all you do to carry the voice of patients and their loved ones. I will definitely be reaching out to CEAN again to help us keep the patient in the centre of our quality improvement initiatives..."

-Serena Bertoli-Hayley
Accreditation and Patient/Client Satisfaction Leader

"We have two CEAN members on our IPCC steering committee in Richmond. They are very committed and attend our monthly meetings which start at 7:30am! One of the key contributions is that they readily provide their input from a "consumer" or patient perspective - and it is this feedback that often helps direct the conversation i.e. moving from focusing on what matters to a clinician to what matters to a patient and family/caregiver.

We have been fortunate to also have one of our CEANs sat a smaller working group - this working group worked on one of the integration initiatives which was to develop a seniors directory re. the non medical resources available in Richmond for Family Physicians and Community Clinicians. Our PVN representative would remind us to use plain language when creating the content for patients and also what resources to include that would be important to an individual/family (that we would have likely forgotten).

Also, one of our CEANs is very good at bringing the cultural lens to the discussion and highlighting the gaps or unmet needs of our patients with different ethnic backgrounds. I believe their presence and contribution has strengthened the work of our committee"

-JoAnne Douglas, Project Manager Integrated Primary & Community Care
Vancouver Coastal Health

5. Describe your evaluation process (for both participants and decision makers)

When CEAN members are asked to participate in a project or be part of a committee structure they are asked to evaluate their participation. As well, VCH staff who have benefited from the involvement of CEAN members in their project or committee are asked to evaluate the experience as well as provide clear examples of how the involvement of CEAN members and their input impacted the project outcome or decision being made. Currently we utilize evaluation tools designed in partnership with colleagues across Canada and with the support of Julia Abelson, Professor, Clinical Epidemiology & Biostatistics at McMaster University.

We utilize 4 evaluation tools; participant specific, project plan specific, project lead specific and leadership specific. We also engage CEAN members in evaluating the network itself and use the feedback we receive to dialogue with CEAN and determine what changes need to be made to the CEAN structure or interactions between CE and CEAN or what additional tools or supports CEAN members may require. We bring CEAN members together twice a year in a face to face model and use time in these sessions to dialogue on ways we can better support CEAN and gain understanding of challenges they are facing as well as gathering input from CEAN about issues or concerns they want to engage with VCH to dialogue on and improve.

6. Did the participants and the decision makers consider the process successful? Provide evidence about levels of participant satisfaction with the process (note: high levels of satisfaction will be highly regarded)

The evaluations are our indicators of the satisfaction levels of CEAN members as well as VCH staff and leadership. Levels of satisfaction in general are quite high for both the CEANs participating as well as the Project Teams who are engaging with them. In the 2013 CEAN Annual Evaluation Survey, we asked CEANs to rate the following questions:

- When I participate in CEAN activities, I feel able to express my views freely
- When I participate in CEAN activities, I feel my opinion is valued
- I feel that my skills and knowledge are valued when I participate in CEAN activities
- My participation in CEAN has increased my confidence that VCH values public involvement
- I find my CEAN work to be interesting and rewarding

The majority of respondents agreed to all of the above statements. At our most recent CEAN forum in March of this year, attendees evaluated the event, which included an idea lab to gather their feedback on the Choosing Wisely Initiative that was rolled out in Canada in early April. Workshop evaluation forms were completed by 24 of the 37 participants and indicated a high level of satisfaction for the event overall. You can click [here](#) to see the full report for the forum.

When asked what they liked about the workshop, respondents stated:

“Well engaged participants, enthusiasm of and respect for patients/volunteers as valued participants”

“Variety of people, access to high level VCH staff we normally would not have access to”

“Patient/public voice articulated clearly”

Truly, the key evaluative indicator for CE is the ever-increasing number of requests for CEAN involvement as well as the scope of the requests. Another key indicator of success is the level of engagement of CEAN members, as many CEAN members sit on regional committees with decision-making authority.

7. Describe how the decision-making process was different/improved compared with “normal” processes and what role public participation had in that change.

CEAN is a unique structure within a health authority in BC and we are not aware of a similar structure within a health entity in Canada. The inclusion of CEAN members, in an ever-increasing number of projects and committees within VCH, is indicative of the difference their participation makes to planning, project development, and decision-making. From the development of patient centered health materials, to patient safety practice decisions, to public input to inform decisions on large-scale region wide projects, CEAN members are integral participants.

8. Describe how any innovative practices in the project might advance the field of public participation

The current structure of CEAN is one that could and should be replicated in other health entities and CE and CEAN have shared broadly the structure, practice and tools associated with this network. The structure of CEAN informed the implementation of Patient Voices Network; a BC wide network to

support patient engagement within the other health authorities in the province. A collaborative approach to this work continues with CEAN members able to be PVN members and vice versa. The sharing of practice related to the CEAN structure has been ongoing since its inception and the CE Team fields regular requests from provincial, national and global entities for information on CEAN and how it supports public involvement in health care planning and decision making.