

OmbudsPEI enquiry about patient registry leads to more transparency for Islanders

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I. – Following an enquiry into how PEI patients are chosen to be assigned to a family doctor or nurse practitioner from the province’s patient registry, new information providing a more transparent understanding of how patients are assigned to family doctors or nurse practitioners is now available to Islanders.

OmbudsPEI was contacted by a concerned individual who felt family doctors or nurse practitioners who were taking on new patients who had not been on the registry as long as others in the same community.

When OmbudsPEI reached out to Health PEI to enquire about the patient registry and its operation, we learned that engagement with the registry was not mandatory and that patients would only be assigned if the practitioners requested new patients from Health PEI.

OmbudsPEI suggested that Health PEI update the information provided on its patient registry website to clarify the process and provide Islanders seeking a family doctor or nurse practitioner the knowledge needed to serve their medical needs best.

“We appreciate that practitioners have the right to choose who they will take on as new patients,” says Sandy Hermiston, Ombudsperson and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner for PEI. “We felt that the information presented on the provincial registry website could be clearer in how the registry works for Islanders. It’s important to be transparent on the voluntary nature of the patient registry, so Islanders fully understand that they can also advocate for themselves when seeking out consistent medical care.”

Health PEI accepted the suggested changes and promptly updated its website with the new information. This update can be found on the [Find a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner | Government of Prince Edward Island](#) web page under the ‘After you complete the form’ heading.

A copy of the summary for this complaint file is available to the public on our website at [Cases – Reports – OmbudsPEI](#).

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About OmbudsPEI

As an independent office of the Legislature, OmbudsPEI investigates complaints of unfair treatment by government agencies and provides general oversight of government's administrative processes under the *Ombudsperson Act*. The Ombudsperson has a broad mandate to investigate complaints about unfair treatment, process or decisions by public sector agencies such as government ministries, agencies boards and commissions, municipalities and Health PEI.

OmbudsPEI promotes fairness, transparency and accountability in the public sector to enhance good governance and public confidence in government. Our work improves public services for all Islanders.

If any Islander believes they have experienced an unfairness in their interactions with a provincial agency, they can contact OmbudsPEI to explore options for making a complaint. Our services are free and confidential.

Sandy Hermiston also serves as PEI's Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner pursuant to her appointment under the *Public Interest Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection Act*. Public servants can report wrongdoing by making a protected disclosure or complaint about a reprisal to the office. For more information about OmbudsPEI, visit [Whistleblowing – OmbudsPEI](#).