

# Parents are How Essential Care Partner Programs Essential Support Family Integrated Care

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# Purpose of the Project:

Family caregivers are essential and play a critical role in providing unpaid physical, emotional and cognitive support in care settings, including children's hospitals.



**75%** 

4 million caregivers across **Ontario provide** an estimated 75% of the care in the system<sup>3</sup>.

**Essential Care Partner** (ECP) programs foster a family-centered care culture by including, identifying, and supporting family caregivers as part of the care team.

When family caregivers are not able to participate in care there is a risk to patients and the health system<sup>1</sup>.

If caregivers are not included as essential care partners

Risk and harm to **Patients** 

Risk to Healthcare System

## Implementation:

## **Essential Care Partner** Support Hub



 Provides support (guidance/ coaching, resources/tools, leading practices, learning opportunities) to Ontario hospitals planning to implement or enhance an essential care partner program.

 Facilitates the Essential Care Partner Learning Collaborative, an interactive forum for healthcare organizations, with a focus on caregiver inclusion<sup>2</sup>.

## Implementation of an Essential Care Partner Program:



Build leadership commitment, form interdisciplinary teams, and review policies and practices.



IMPLEMENT

Design processes and communicate clearly to staff, patients, care partners.



SUSTAIN

Evaluate and improve your essential care partner program<sup>2</sup>.

## Essential Care Partner (ECP) Leading Practices

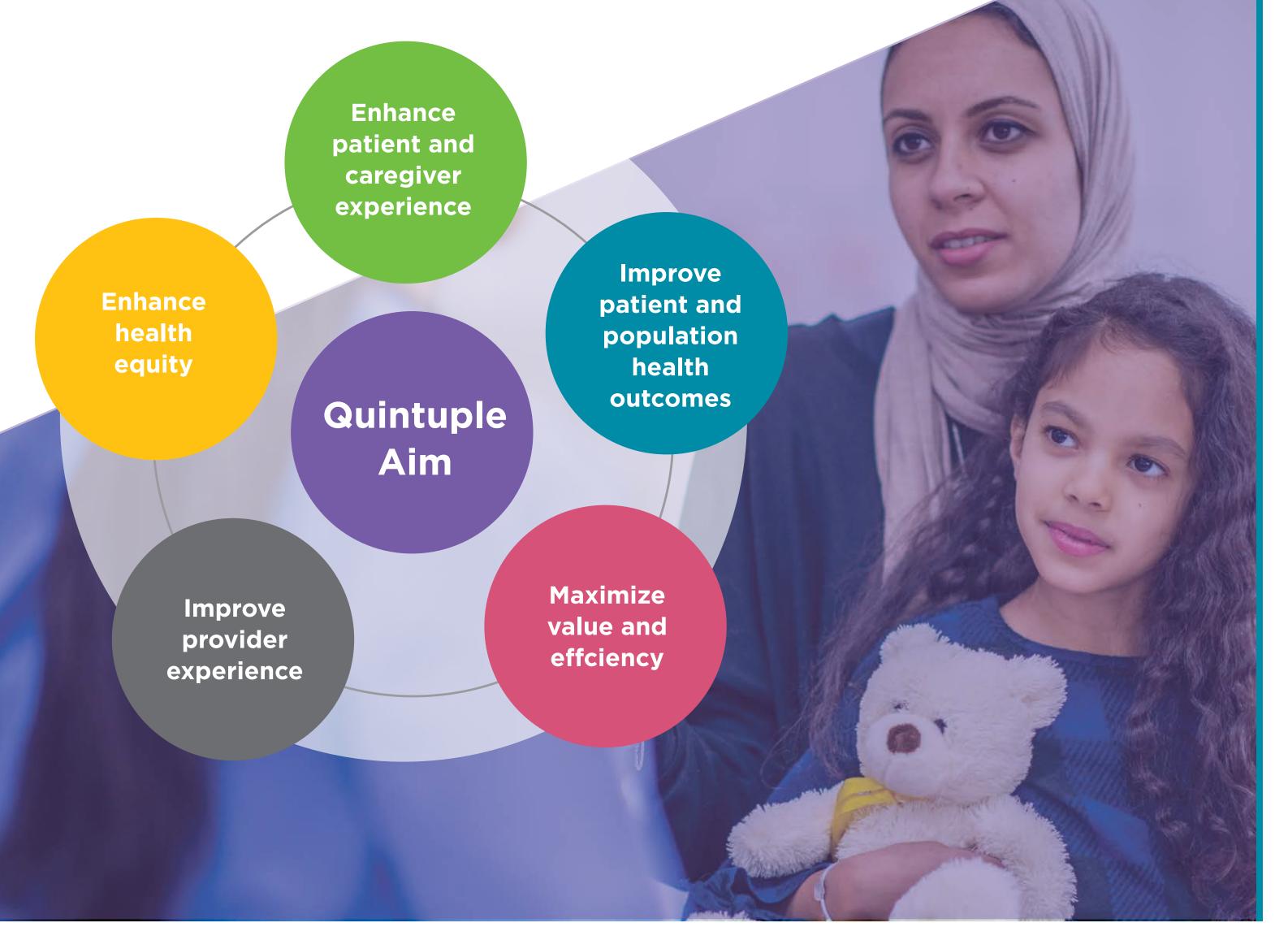






# How ECP Programs Contribute to Practice:

- Enables presence and inclusion of caregivers, which can have positive impact on patient and staff experiences.
- Are a contributor to achieving the Quintuple Aim for healthcare quality



# Summary of Findings:

### Impact of Caregiver Inclusion:

- Including caregivers improves patient outcomes, leads to a better experience for staff and caregivers and alleviates system pressures.
- Caregiver inclusion is an enabler of high-quality care, decreases hospital usage and demands on staff and reduces health system costs<sup>3</sup>.

### Impact of Caregiver Exclusion:

• Excluding caregivers can lead to increased staff workload, secondary trauma, psychological distress, decreased morale and workplace culture<sup>4</sup>.

## Strengthening Family-Centered Care:

19(4), 614-624. https://doi.org/10.1513/annalsats.202105-629oc

 Essential Care Partner programs lay the foundation for long term recognition of the essential role of caregivers and strengthens the relationship between staff, patients and families<sup>1</sup>.

# Implications for the Patient Population:

- Including essential care partners improves quality of care and patient outcomes<sup>4</sup>.
- When caregivers are included, it allows for: increased communication and trust, improved discharge, transitions, accuracy of information, and recovery, decreased readmissions and risk of death<sup>3</sup>.
- Caregivers are critical for NICU patients who are vulnerable and requires an advocates<sup>3</sup>.
- Not including caregivers in neonatal units has a negative impact on breast feeding, bonding and parental mental health<sup>4</sup>.

- 1. Correia, T. S., et al. (2022). The implications of family members' absence from hospital visits during the COVID-19 pandemic: Nurses' perceptions, International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19(15), 8991. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19158991
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