



MODULE 3

Setting up and Running Your Committee

Key Highlights

- Seek a diverse and strategic membership for the Committee using the Partnership Pentagram Plus framework to include representatives from healthcare providers, community members, health managers, education institutions, local and First Nations governments, and linked sectors.
- Successful Committees focus on collective decision-making and shared goals rather than individual organizational agendas.
- Creating a clear Terms of Reference and Committee Agreement helps members unite around a common vision, build trust, and develop a collaborative foundation so all members feel valued and connected to the Committee's core purpose.
- Committees naturally go through different stages of development and understanding these dynamics is crucial.
- Committees should regularly evaluate their focus and geographical reach.
- Committees should be open to adjusting their membership, priorities, and operational boundaries to best serve community needs.
- There is considerable value working with your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant who can provide resources, facilitate meetings, help with conflict resolution, offer mentoring, and support the Committee's development through various stages of its lifecycle.

This module will provide resources and information for new community Committees and for existing Committees that are evaluating their work, setting new goals and redefining their commitment to attraction, integration and retention.

There may be value for existing groups to review the information about establishing a new Committee, especially around boundaries and membership.

Setting up a New Committee

Deciding to create a community Committee to support the attraction, integration and retention of healthcare professionals is a huge first step.

Congratulations - and now the works begins!

As noted in Module 2, it's important that whatever form a new Committee takes that it reflects the needs of your community and the work you want to accomplish.

A formalized Attraction, Integration and Retention Committee affiliated with RHPAP brings many benefits including being part of the RHPAP Attraction, Integration and Retention Network, having access to RHPAP Rural Community Consultants, RHPAP funding, best practices developed by other communities and coaching and facilitation support for your Committee's work.

Or you can start with a more informal working group to test the waters and start building your community relationships. Once things are a bit more established, you can choose to formalize your Committee. It's your choice

The table below might be helpful to see the differences between an informal group and a more formalized Committee:

Function	Working Group	Committee
Decision Making	Individuals decide and act	Collective and formalized
Orientation	Specific tasks/projects	Longer-term strategy
Accountability	Short-term results	Shared and individual
Duration	Temporary	Ongoing
Leadership	Facilitator	Chair

Either way, you are still able to access the different resources and templates in the Toolkit as well as get help from RHPAP Rural Community Consultants.

Defining Your Community

One of the first steps toward developing your new Committee is defining your community to understand who you are serving and representing.

An effective approach is to define your Committee's boundaries with those of your municipality. Alternatively, it might make sense to create a more regional Committee that includes nearby areas, villages and towns with strong connections to your community. Additionally, you may wish to consider other nearby communities, counties and municipal districts as well as summer villages, Hutterite Brethren and Mennonite communities as part of your Committee's membership umbrella.

Including neighbouring Indigenous communities as partners on your Committee can bring valuable context and historical perspectives, while strengthening the focus on cultural safety and respect to the dialogue about healthcare professional attraction, integration and retention. Many Indigenous communities are recruiting to their own health services and may wish to coordinate efforts to increase success.

Taking a broader approach by encouraging neighbouring communities to work together and pool their resources to attract, integrate and retain healthcare professionals can create a real win-win situation. This approach recognizes that healthcare services and the workforce can be connected to your town as well as the surrounding region. For example, a physician may practise in Brooks but have their home in Duchess. When both communities are working together, it's easier to coordinate integration and retention supports. Working together on shared goals can foster stronger collaborative relationships between stakeholders, further contributing to the likelihood of success. As an example of how broader Committee inclusion can pay off, a local healthcare employer may Committee up with the neighbouring First Nations health service to hire a full-time nurse by combining the two half-time nursing positions that these employers can offer, creating an interesting, sustainable and easier-to- fill job.

Recruiting Your Committee Membership

When considering who should be part of your new Committee, reach out to people and organizations who are already doing similar work. For example, your local health centre manager, the town's economic development officer, and neighbouring First Nations communities may be working on ways to attract and retain people. Other potential stakeholders to consider are local non-profit services, health foundations, school districts, as well as business and industry representatives who have a shared interest in health services and community sustainability.

Consider starting with an informal coffee meeting, phone or Zoom call to see who's doing what in and around your community. See if the people with whom you connect might know of others who are also working on attraction, integration and retention of new residents and workers.

Once you have a sense of who's doing what, be proactive and invite people to an exploratory meeting or even a larger public town hall meeting to get a better idea whether they're interested in working together. If you need help organizing this event, your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant has experience with these arrangements and can be a great resource.

Be open to the experiences of other people and organizations in the community that are involved in attraction, integration and retention as they may have a lot to offer. That said, some of these groups may have never considered collaborative action and may be wary at first about working with others. Be patient and speak to the benefits of working together to achieve results and strengthen your community (see Module 2).

These initial connections and discussions will start to identify potential members for your new Committee. The size of your emerging Committee is important and will reflect members' interest in this area along with the history and dynamics of your community. You'll want to find a balance that ensures a good cross-section of stakeholders while maintaining a manageable size. Although there is no magic number when it comes to Committee size, a workable membership is usually between 6 to 10 people. A smaller group (less than 10) usually enables greater engagement and easier decision making. And, if you find that the group needs more

input, you can always add a few more members or have some of your Committee's work delegated to small working groups that include interested community members.

In the next section, we explore why your new Committee's membership needs to reflect a good cross-section of the different partners, stakeholders and residents in your community.

Seek a Diverse Committee Membership

Each member of your new Committee brings something unique to the table. It is important to know what skills, strengths, and interests are represented so that the Committee can best match members with the work you plan to do. Being intentional in this respect also keeps people interested in what they are doing and makes it more likely that they will stay involved. .

Purposefully building a diverse Committee also avoids the “*Same Ten People*” (STP) problem. You may have come across instances where the same small group of people are involved in several different Committees and projects. While the STP problem is sometimes hard to avoid in a small town, the lack of diversity can sometimes impact the effectiveness of a Committee or group.

You can overcome the STP problem by using tools such as the Partnership Pentagonram *Plus* framework.¹³ This framework provides a handy lens to ensure that all the different voices in your community are represented on the committee. In addition, the framework seeks to level the playing field, helping different partners and stakeholders to understand where they might share common goals, equalizing power relationships, while the connections (arrows around the outside) imply collaboration and dialogue^{14,15}

Each of the circles in the model describes a different group of partners or stakeholders who can bring valuable insights and resources to your Committee.



¹³ Boelen, C. (2000). *Challenges and Opportunities for Partnerships in Health Development: A Working Paper*. World Health Organization. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/66566>

¹⁴ Markham, R., Hunt, M., Woolard, R., Oelke, N., Snadden, D., Strasser, R., Betkus, G., & Graham, S. (2021). Addressing rural and Indigenous health inequities in Canada through socially accountable health partnerships. *BMJ Open*, 11:e048053.

¹⁵ The original framework devised by Boelen (2000) included only five nodes. It was modified by Markham, et al. (2021) to add a sixth node for Linked Sectors and renamed Partnership Pentagonram *Plus*.

1. **Healthcare Providers** includes the local physician community, as well as nurses and allied health providers. These are people on the front line of health services in your community working for your health employer or in the private sector, including your industry partners, who will have great reflections attraction, integration and retention strategies and how to best implement them with local providers.
2. **Community Members** are people interested in sustaining health services in your community by attracting, integrating and retaining healthcare professions. This group can include citizen associations, service clubs, as well as clergy, which can add a specific, community focused lens that complements healthcare members.
3. **Health Managers** include the leaders of local health service organizations (e.g., Alberta Health Services, Primary Care Alberta, Covenant Health, etc.) including the community health centre, hospital, long-term care facility and non-profit healthcare agencies.
4. **Education Institutions** can include representatives from the K-12 school system, a local college or a nearby university. It could also include researchers who have an interest in rural health attraction, integration and retention.
5. **Local and First Nations Government** includes municipal and regional levels of government, and neighbouring First Nations communities, who all share a genuine interest in health services sustainability and can advocate on the Committee's behalf with higher levels of government.
6. **Linked Sectors** include local non-profit organizations, business community, industry and others with an interest in rural healthcare, especially RHPAP. This group may include your local health foundation, hospital auxiliary and housing foundation reps. Some of these partners may be trying to attract and retain new workers, and having a robust healthcare system is an important factor in this recruitment. Having your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant and representatives from other organizations engaged with your Committee can help you access additional resources and potential sources of funding.

The Partnership Pentagram Plus framework also encourages you to consider people who may not normally be involved in conversations about healthcare professional attraction and retention but should be there. Consider, for example, nearby Mennonite communities, Hutterite colonies, your 2SLGBTQ¹⁶+ community, as well as newcomer and immigrant community members. Each brings valuable perspectives and unique experiences of choosing and settling into your community—insights that can inform your committee's attraction and integration efforts.

Committee Structure – Who Does What

A well-organized committee can be a real benefit by ensuring roles and accountabilities are clear. Having a designated leadership team supported by engaged members-at-large and sectoral representations can lead to efficient meetings, good information sharing and informed decision making.

The following chart is intended to be used as a guideline and is flexible based on community needs and who is currently at the table. The roles and key skills are only suggestions but should be considered in volunteer recruitment strategies and designing role profiles. (See Appendix 3-1 for a template guide on committee roles).

¹⁶ 2SLGBTQI+ is an acronym that refers to the community of people who identify as Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and more. The '+' is inclusive of people who identify in other ways.

Title	Role	Optional Roles	Key Skills & Characteristics
Chair*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates and attends all meetings Calls the meetings/sets the agenda Calls for any motions Moderates Committee discussions Represents the Committee to stakeholders, media, etc. Has signing authority, if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes meeting space and/or virtual meeting (Zoom) Creates agenda Sends meeting package Ensures all Sub-Committees (if applicable) stay on track and provide updates <p>Note: These tasks may also be done by the Vice-Chair and Secretary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized Able to facilitate discussions Dependable Engaged Experienced in conflict-resolution Able to delegate Well-spoken Prior Committee experience
Vice-Chair/ Co-Chair*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs meeting, as needed Shares duties with the Chair, as needed Acts as Chair, when the Chair is not available Has signing authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs Sub-Committees Supports agenda and meeting preparation with Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependable Enthusiastic Engaged
Treasurer*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates financial reports Tracks revenue and expenditures Writes/signs cheques Prepares and presents annual budget Has signing authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains financial records in a safe and secure manner Notes motions and outstanding actions pertaining to finances May be a municipal delegate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail-oriented Basic knowledge of financial management Trustworthy Cash handling experience
Secretary*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes meeting minutes at meetings Collates and manages Committee reports and documents Manages action items and follow up as needed 	<p>If not done by the Chair...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sends out meeting minutes to the Committee Compiles agenda package Sends meeting package (agenda, prior meeting minutes, attachments, etc.) Books meeting/ sets up virtual meeting (Zoom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized Able to facilitate discussions Dependable Engaged Experienced in conflict-resolution Able to delegate Well-spoken Prior Committee experience

<p>Board Members (Voting)</p> <p><i>MMay include communications Coordinator, Past President, Healthcare Representatives, Public Members at Large, etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to the Committee conversations in an open and collaborative manner • Brings and/or is open to new ideas • Promotes the Committee and its work in the community • Votes on all motions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May chair a Sub-committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to do some work outside of meetings • Open to dialogue, new ideas • Enthusiastic • Collaborative • Punctual • Professional • Engaged • Well-connected in their community
<p>Non-Voting Members</p> <p><i>May be Public Members at Large, Physician Resource Planners, RHPAP Rural Community Consultants, or visiting speakers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens and provides appropriate input in a collaborative manner • Provides an external perspective • Presents reports, as required • Attends as requested • Does not vote on motions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have a standing invitation • May have dedicated space on meeting agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to dialogue, new ideas • Enthusiastic • Collaborative • Punctual • Professional • Engaged • Well-connected in their community

**Indicates required roles; others are optional. Sometimes, more than one role is held by a single person.*

A Word about Sub-Committees

Committees may choose to create sub-Committees to help advance their routine work and priorities. Sub-Committees are usually struck on an ad hoc basis, usually focused on a particular project. Most of the time, sub-Committees have a strict lifespan (e.g., 3 months to plan an event).

Sub-Committees can be chaired by any voting member, including the Committee Chair or Vice/Co-Chair and are focused on specific topics or projects. As needed, sub-Committee members may also include subject matter experts, community partners and stakeholders who are not normally part of the larger Committee.

Sub-Committees are accountable to the broader Committee. They are generally less formal than the broader Committee, and will appoint members to assemble agenda packages, take notes, present reports and facilitate.

When the work of the sub-Committee is done, the Committee has the option of dissolving it, putting it on hiatus, or assigning new or follow-up work.

Getting Down to Work

The first step of working effectively is ensuring that everyone on the Committee has a clear understanding of the Committee's role in supporting the attraction, integration and retention of healthcare professionals and knows how best to carry out each of those roles.

Making Sure You're Ready

Committee organizers and members may be able to tap into their previous experience working in community groups and organizations. But sometimes that previous experience may not be enough. The collaborative nature of Committees might be a little different than what you're used to, and some extra training and resources can help jumpstart the work of the Committee and ensure that all members are well prepared and rowing in the same direction.

It's helpful to check with your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant who may be able to offer some resources, coaching, and help facilitate some of your initial planning and your first (inaugural) meeting. In addition, the Government of Alberta's Community Development Unit offers consulting services to help with collaboration and partnership brokering, coaching and facilitation skills free of charge.¹⁷ It's okay to ask for help. Taking some time at the beginning of your Committee development work to ensure your facilitation and engagement skills are the best they can be will help ensure the long-term success of your Committee.

Hosting Your Inaugural Meeting

The inaugural meeting of the new Committee will be a great way for everyone to get to know each other, start scoping out the Committee's purpose, and facilitate some initial discussion and planning for healthcare professional attraction, integration and retention.

Consider working closely with your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant at this stage. They can help you put together the agenda for your inaugural meeting and provide tips on meeting facilitation, content, timing and format.

Best practice for establishing your Committee is adopting a formalized set of ground rules to manage your meetings. Agreeing to these rules before you are in a situation where you must address a contentious issue, allows you to fall back on these tools when discussions get heated. If you wait to establish these rules in the middle of a conflict, people are more likely to perceive rules as targeting them, rather than being a de-escalation tool. See Appendix 3-2 for an overview of standard parliamentary procedures for running effective meetings.

Depending on your defined community, where your Committee members live and the meeting spaces that are available, you may choose an in-person, hybrid or video meeting. However, keep in mind that an in-person inaugural meeting better fosters relationships and enables more natural and spontaneous conversation. It can be easier to have hybrid or remote meetings after you've had the chance to meet in-person. Nevertheless, an in-person gathering is not always possible in a rural or remote community or region and options such as a hybrid (i.e., some people are in-person, others on video) or a video meeting can serve as the next best thing to an in-person meeting.

If you do find that in-person meetings are preferred, choose a space that enables members to sit around a table, with ample room to spread out, if needed, for small group work and discussions. Avoid audience style seating with a table across the front and chairs facing. Access to a whiteboard is also helpful when doing brainstorming and planning work, and a TV/video system can be useful if someone wants to show a video or a member is joining by video conference (e.g., Zoom).

When planning a hybrid or video meeting, take time to ensure that each Committee member has access to

¹⁷ <https://www.alberta.ca/community-development-unit>

the software being used, as well as high-speed and reliable broadband services. Not being able to access or properly connect to a video meeting can be highly frustrating for everyone and undermines trust, goodwill and interest. If people cannot attend in-person, work with them to explore options to ensure a video link will be stable so they can participate fully. Make sure during the meeting that you check in with the participants who are on video, delegate someone to monitor the Chat box and encourage participants to have their cameras turned on but microphones off (unless they are speaking). Position your camera or laptop in a way that people can see who is attending the meeting, who is speaking and also make sure that audio is good so people joining virtually can hear in-person people speaking and vice versa. It's always a good habit to have people briefly say their name when starting to speak, just in case it's not clear.

Keeping a Record of The Meeting

Consider creating a summary or more formal minutes for the inaugural (and subsequent) meetings. Some Committees also produce a record of decisions to summarize key decisions and assigned tasks. Templates for agendas, meeting minutes and workplans can be found on [RHPAP.ca](https://www.rhpap.ca).

If you plan to record the meeting, ensure that all participants consent to it. For video or hybrid meetings, some people may wish to disable their cameras if there are children or other things in the background which they would like to keep private. Also, recent changes to platforms like Zoom enable meeting transcripts to be recorded and written using Artificial Intelligence (AI). Like an audio and video recording, this AI data may be stored in foreign countries and not secure. Make sure people provide informed consent to this feature before you turn it on.¹⁸ If people are not comfortable with the AI technology, don't use it.

Developing a Terms of Reference

The inaugural meeting can generate some good feedback and direction that can be used to establish the new Committee's Terms of Reference.

As you start thinking about your Committee's Terms of Reference, there are some key sections that will help ensure that the document is clear and effective. They are:

- **Purpose:** A well-defined Terms of Reference establishes the Committee's exact purpose, mission & vision, objectives, and scope of work which serves to prevent mission drift and helps members stay focused on core responsibilities. It also answers the following questions:
 - Why has the Committee been formed?
 - What is the problem it's trying to resolve?
- **Stakeholder Mapping:** Identify potential representatives from each Partnership Pentagon Plus group (i.e., policy makers, health managers, health professionals, academic institutions, and communities). Create a detailed list with their roles, expertise, and contact information.
- **Membership:** Determine how many members you are planning to have and ensure that you align that number with the different groups you intend to include in the Partnership Pentagon Plus. Be mindful that a workable size for your Committee is between six and ten people to start.
- **Decision-making:** Determining decision-making processes and voting procedures upfront enables the Committee to operate more efficiently including defining a quorum and how conflicts of interest will be managed. Consider, for example, whether decisions will be made by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) or by consensus (where everyone agrees to broadly accept the principles of the decision and can live with it even if they don't fully agree with it). It is very helpful to have decided on these processes before the Committee has to make a contentious decision.

¹⁸ Zoom provides information on where AI data is stored and who has access to it. https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0057861

- **Governance:** Decide if you will have formalized positions (e.g., Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, etc.) or simply a facilitator for each meeting. One option is having a rotating Chair method so you can share the role and build skills amongst the Committee members. A well-written Terms of Reference clearly outlines the responsibilities for each position on the Committee to avoid confusion and overlap. As Committee membership changes over time, having clear Terms of Reference ensures consistent operations, enhances institutional memory and makes it easier to onboard new members.
- **Accountability:** When roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships are explicitly outlined, it becomes easier to hold Committee members accountable for their duties including attendance, participation, and deliverables. Consider including answers to the following questions:
 - To whom does the Committee report?
 - Will it provide regular reports to its main stakeholder groups and funders?
- **Conflict Resolution:** How will the Committee resolve conflict amongst its members, or with another organization? Who will it turn to for help?
- **Onboarding:** Create an onboarding package for new members that includes:
 - The finalized Terms of Reference
 - Background information on the Partnership Pentagram model
 - Expectations of members
 - Meeting schedules and logistics
 - Contact information for committee members
- **Communications:** Create a communication plan for regular updates to all stakeholder groups, transparent sharing of Committee decisions and obtaining input from the wider community. Consider who will speak for the Committee to the public, stakeholders, etc. (e.g., Chair).
- **Committee Support:** Make sure you have sufficient administrative and resource support to help with meeting coordination, minutes, reports, and technical support. Your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant may be able to provide advice in this area.

Developing a Terms of Reference is an area where your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant can help as you begin to set out the purpose of the new Committee, its responsibilities and how it will conduct itself. They can also provide assistance in your initial draft of your Terms of Reference – an example template can be found [here](#).

Developing an Effective and High-functioning Committee

At first, your Committee may feel like a group of like-minded people coming together to talk about and develop strategies and action plans to attract, integrate and retain healthcare professionals in your community.

On one level, that's a correct observation. Getting together to strategize and plan is what you are all at the table to do. But there's more to it.

To maximize its effectiveness, the Committee will want to start thinking about how it wants to work together to become a high functioning Committee. Simply working together doesn't make you a Committee and building the conditions necessary for a high-functioning Committee requires some strategic effort.

The key to becoming a high-performing Committee is a commitment by members to a collective agenda and shared decision-making. In other words, while Committee members may represent different groups and organizations, their priority at the Committee table should not necessarily be to advocate or take strong positions for those organizations. Rather, they contribute most meaningfully if they are able to personally commit to the shared purpose, goals and desired outcomes of the Committee and respect the Committee's collective decision-making outcomes.

Committees should strive to create a culture of belonging and engagement. This environment is what draws people into your work and keeps them connected. A culture of belonging and trust emerges when all Committee members feel valued and have a clear shared sense of connection with the core purpose of the Committee's work.

There's a strong network of Committees across Alberta and they are often eager to share their recipes for success when it comes to working together effectively. Connect with your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant who can facilitate a meeting with another Committee, offer some best practices and learnings, or even provide some ongoing mentoring to help you get your Committee running effectively.

Creating a Team Agreement

A good way to start building an effective, high-functioning Committee is to develop a Committee Agreement.¹⁹ A Committee Agreement is different than the Committee's Terms of Reference, which describe your structure and requirements (i.e., what you will do). A Committee Agreement, on the other hand, focuses on *how* you will work together. This includes things like creating a shared understanding of how you want to work together, what each Committee member brings to the group, and how Committee members want to engage with their colleagues in a collaborative and constructive way.

Spending one or two meetings working through a Committee Agreement is a great way for the Committee to do the following:

- Unite around a common vision for your collective work
- Start building trust amongst Committee members
- Develop a solid collaborative foundation to enable the Committee to function effectively and efficiently

Your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant is an excellent resource to help you set up and facilitate the creation of a Committee Agreement. Appendix 3-3 provides an example of a Committee Agreement template that you can review and complete with your Committee.

Understanding Team Dynamics

When a group of individuals work together — and are passionate about the work they do — it is important that differing perspectives are encouraged, recognizing that those perspectives and opinions can enrich discussions and decisions. However, those same differing perspectives and opinions can cause your Committee to struggle if not handled appropriately leading to conflict or difficulties reaching consensus.

It's important to understand that what may seem like difficult challenges or disagreements are often opportunities for reflection and positive growth. Remember that differing opinions can highlight perspectives or opportunities you might have otherwise missed.

If you avoid addressing these disagreements altogether, they have the potential to negatively influence both the Committee's work and the participation of the individuals involved. The commitment of your Committee

¹⁹ Committee agreements are sometimes known as team or communications compacts, team contracts and sometimes, ground rules.

members cannot be taken for granted; effort needs to be put in to ensure opinions, perspectives and contributions are recognized and valued, and conflict is addressed, which helps sustain members' passion and enthusiasm for the work.

When your Committee is struggling with conflict, you need to address it quickly (see next section). Dealing with conflict is also an opportunity to reach out to your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant who can be a real help providing advice, resources and, if needed, helping to facilitate the difficult conversations needed to resolve the issue.

Getting Unstuck (When You're Stuck)

As your new Committee gets down to work, the clarity provided by both the Terms of Reference and the Committee Agreement will help support respectful and productive discussions, fostering trust and stronger relationships, and the successful development of strategies and action plans to attract, integrate and retain healthcare professionals.

Sometimes a Committee can get stuck because of differing perspectives on a specific topic or problem, or an overarching desire for harmony that can ironically undermine the decision you're trying to reach.

Getting stuck is a common occurrence in Committee work. Like a car stuck in the mud, some Committee members may decide to floor it and try to power-through the issue to get to a resolution. Forcing a resolution can damage trust and result in people quitting or the Committee itself becoming ineffective or worse, dysfunctional. Alternatively, they could reach out for help (in our car stuck in the mud analogy, calling a tow truck might be helpful). By choosing to embrace the fact that getting stuck is a normal part of Committee work, outside help can get help you get un-stuck pretty quickly.

Feel free to reach out to your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant for tools to address disagreements or for help facilitating discussions.

Being Aware of the Groan Zone

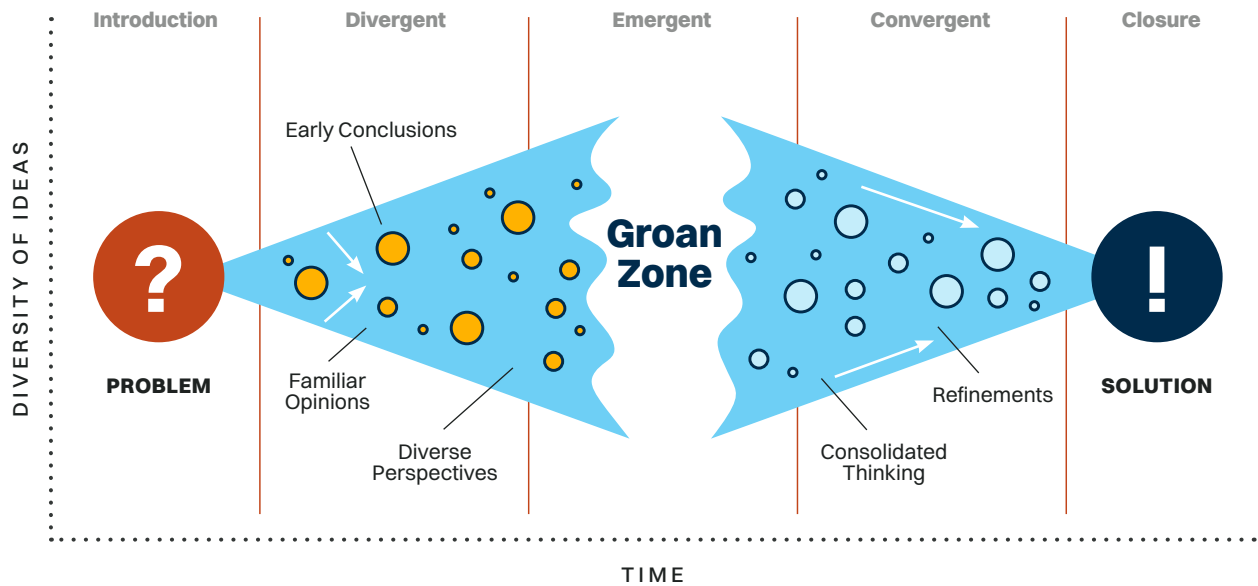
Researcher Sam Kaner²⁰ has developed a collaborative decision-making model that helps us understand how Committees can get stuck in what he calls “the groan zone.” Kaner's model consists of three zones that Committees enter as they approach decision making:

The Divergent Zone: In this zone, the Committee members explore different perspectives, generate ideas, and gather diverse viewpoints. Committee members tend to share information openly and the range of possibilities expands.

The Groan Zone: This challenging zone is where the group struggles with all the different perspectives put on the table. This struggle can lead to confusion or frustration. Sometimes, this divergence causes emotions to arise and opinions to harden. The Groan Zone is a valuable place to be, because it encourages Committee members to work to understand each other's viewpoints, arriving at consensus on the way forward.

The Convergent Zone: The final zone where the group's commitment to collaboration enables them to narrow down the options, find common ground, and work toward a resolution to the problem. The focuses in this zone are to evaluate, prioritize, and make the decision.

²⁰ Kaner, S. Lind, L., Toldi, C., Fisk, S., & Berger, D. (2014). *Facilitators Guide to Participatory Decision-Making, Third Edition*. Jossey-Bass.



Source: <https://slidemodel.com/templates/groan-zone-powerpoint-template/>

Kaner’s choice to shape the model like a diamond reflects that, while a problem may initially appear focused and small, as the discussion ensues it can become more difficult to manage (when the group enters the Groan Zone). A Committee can emerge from this zone through respectful discussion and listening first to understand different perspectives, combined with effective facilitation with a focus on principles and a commitment to achieving consensus.

Kaner’s model emphasizes the importance of skilled facilitation to guide Committees through each of the zones of the decision-making process, and especially the Groan Zone. Your RHPAP Community Consultant is trained in facilitation and can be an excellent resource to help your Committee if it gets stuck on an issue or achieving consensus.

Funding Your New Committee

The primary focus of Committees is bringing together different partners and stakeholders to share ideas and develop strategies and actions. Most of your work will not normally require a lot of money, pending your Committee’s strategic priorities.

That said, there may be some activities that will require funds to develop and initiate. It is important to identify and budget for the activities that will require funding before they are initiated. Funding needs vary significantly between Committees depending on the projects they are undertaking. There are several ways to fund your work, including, for example:

- Annual funding from your local municipality or regional government
- Fixed yearly contributions from invested stakeholders and organizations around the table
- Grants related to community development, including the [RHPAP Attraction and Retention Grant](#)
- Funding opportunities available through your local health foundation or business groups
- Gift-in-kind resources: look at who is sitting around the table and what is available in terms of local support

Advocating For Your Community

As you create and further develop a representative and collaborative Committee, you will have the well-being of your community top of mind and will want to ensure that healthcare leadership in addition to decision makers in government, business, industry and potential funders are aware of your work, and encouraged to support your goals.

You may, for example, wish to engage with your local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) or Member of Parliament (MP) to ensure they are aware of your Committee, its goals and work and, more importantly, how they can help support your rural healthcare workforce strategies at the policy and funding level. Having your local MLA on board with your Committee's work may offer the opportunity for them to bring your message directly to key Government Ministers and executive leaders.

Advocacy at the elected official level can also include making connections with your local municipality or surrounding Counties and Municipal Districts. Work to have Town and County Councillors, as well as the Mayor and/or a Reeve sit on your Committee. Many Mayors and Reeves are influential at the provincial level as they can hold executive roles with groups like the Rural Municipalities of Alberta and Alberta Municipalities. Their connections may give them a direct line to the provincial government. In addition, your local elected officials are invaluable resources for help understanding some of the opportunities and challenges that may affect the Committee's work from a grassroots local government angle, including awareness of potential business and investments coming to the area.

It's the same approach when advocating with your local business community and industry. Employers in your community and region are actively recruiting workers and your efforts to support a robust healthcare system (alongside education, daycare and housing) can play a key role in employers' work attracting workers and their families. Business and industry are encouraged to be part of a Committee as they can bring important system-level perspectives as well as their connections and access to funding opportunities that can be focused on the attraction, integration and retention of healthcare professionals.

Engaging with elected officials, businesses and industry, and other potential funders can be an effective way to raise the profile of your community and the Committee's work.

The Art (and Science) of Advocacy

Advocacy can involve anything from a couple of Committee members having a coffee on a Saturday morning with your MLA, or a more formal meeting or presentation. Either way, here are some suggestions and approaches for effectively advocating with elected officials, funders, businesses and corporations:

- **Do your homework:** Undertake some thorough research on the officials with whom you'll be meeting to understand their background, priorities, and voting history. The political party they represent means the difference between having a pipeline into Government or the Opposition. This information helps you frame your message in ways that aligns with their interests and concerns.
- **Make your case:** Document clear, specific impacts of healthcare attraction, integration and retention on your rural community's ongoing sustainability using facts, data, stories, and concrete examples. Messages get better traction when you are able to combine both the human element (stories) with data and measurable outcomes.
- **Find your allies:** Build broad coalitions with other community groups, business leaders, and stakeholders who share your goals. Avoid 'us' and 'them' comparisons and try to show that your message has widespread support across different groups and organizations in the community and region.

Once you have your meeting set up, make sure you are prepared and have concise briefing materials that you can share with them ahead of the meeting. These materials should include the following information:

- What is the specific issue or need?
- Are there any proposed solutions you can offer?
- What are the benefits to the community and region of any proposed solutions?
- What do you want the person or group with whom you are meeting to do to support you? What is your ask?
- Supporting data and stories

When meeting with elected officials, keep in mind that you are representing both your Committee and your community. It's important that you focus on the needs of the community, and not politics or policy, which helps build trust and credibility. Avoid confrontational or antagonistic comments and behaviour, even if you're frustrated. Focus on building long-term working relationships rather than short-term wins.

When meeting, be transparent about who's on your Committee, your funding sources, and decision-making processes. Officials will want to know who you represent and how you operate. Avoid oversimplifying complex issues or making promises about outcomes you can't guarantee. Acknowledge rural healthcare workforce attraction, integration and retention is complicated and you need their help. Understand and respect official processes and protocols for meetings and communications that are shared with you. Work through proper channels and maintain professional relationships with the elected official's staff members where appropriate.

Some examples of how Committees have undertaken advocacy include the following:

- Writing letters to elected leaders advocating for services and supports
- Inviting the local MLA to attend Committee meetings
- Attending local village, town and county meetings to make presentations on Committee work and needed support

If you'd like more information about how to facilitate collaboration between your community partners, please contact your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant.

Sustaining Your Existing Committee

Whether your Committee has been operational for a year or is well established, it's important to take stock and evaluate how things are going. Setting aside meeting time to do this demonstrates your shared commitment to ongoing improvement aimed at supporting not only the Committee's work, but the engagement and contributions of its membership.

Committees are encouraged to take an appreciative lens to their performance evaluation. Using this lens means deliberately focusing on strengths, possibilities, and what's working well rather than dwelling on problems or deficits. It's an approach to viewing situations, people, or organizations that emphasizes positive aspects and potential opportunities. An appreciative lens is akin to seeing a glass half-full instead of half-empty.

When evaluating the committee and its work, consider the following questions:

- What is working well, and why?
- How can we build on our strengths to improve for the year ahead?
- What could we have done differently?
- Are there community partners or stakeholders who should be added to the Committee?

Engage your entire Committee membership in this discussion and even consider having other stakeholders and groups participate. For example, the human resources and recruiting staff at your local health centre or hospital might be able to provide good feedback on your Committee's impact.

Your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant is ready to help and is a great resource to involve in the assessment of the Committee's effectiveness to help you commit to ongoing improvement and effectiveness.

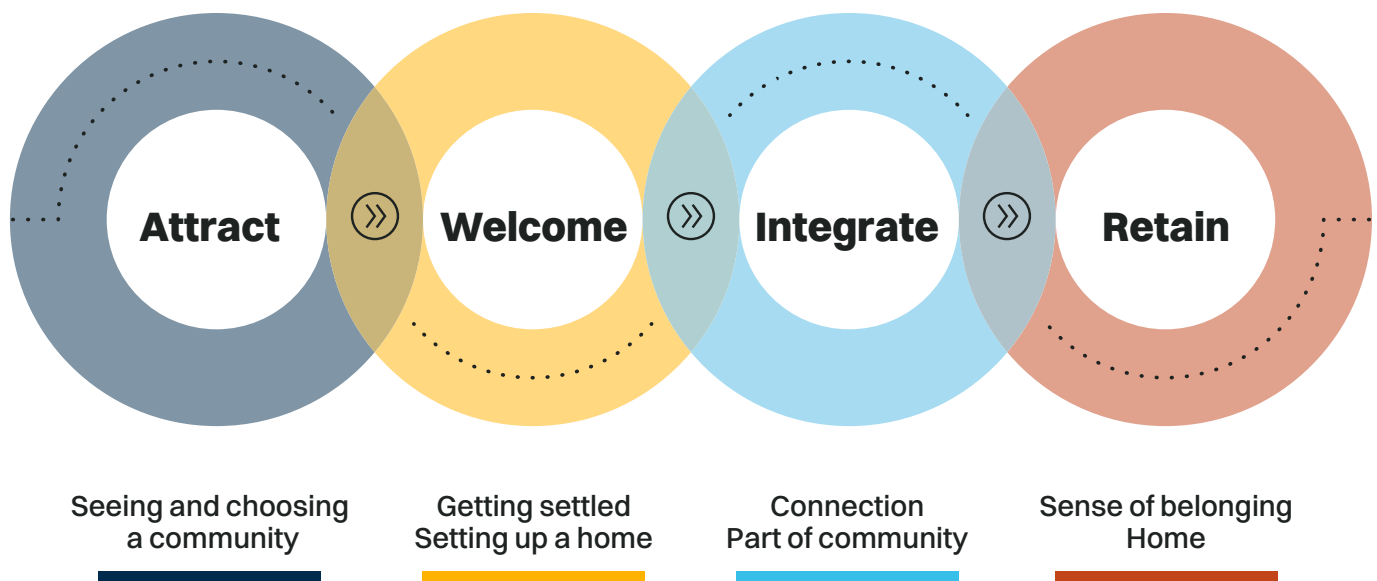
Is Your Committee's Focus Still Appropriate?

Committee evaluation and continuous improvement can start with reviewing your Terms of Reference. Consider your priorities and whether the purpose of the Committee remains the same. Is the work that's being done what is needed most? Take time to also review your Committee Agreement and your shared Committee vision, goals and commitments. Ask if Committee members remain committed to the Committee and its success.

Committees are often formed based on a community's immediate need for more healthcare professionals. In this context, a newly formed Committee will likely focus a lot of its efforts on attraction work and supporting the recruitment of professionals by your local health employers or medical clinic. However, once that initial goal has been addressed, Committees should take the next step and ask themselves, "what's next?"

This evaluation is a great opportunity to refocus the Committee's work. Consider whether there are other healthcare professionals that your community needs now or will need in the future. Alternatively, would the Committee be better off switching from attraction to health professional integration and retention? Your reflections on how attraction, integration and retention opportunities may have changed will likely determine the work that can and needs to be done. Changes in focus may also require a change in some of your membership.

Of course, the Committee does not need to focus on only one of these areas of work. As we discussed in the Welcome module, the attraction, welcoming, integration and retention of healthcare professionals is a continuous process that requires the Committee's focuses to evolve to be in line with the needs of the community. Where the Committee chooses to focus may change from year to year depending on the current and emerging state of the community's health workforce.



During your evaluation, you may find that your Committee's original focus is still your top priority. That's okay. The successful attraction, integration and retention of healthcare professionals is a long-term project. This work may be an ongoing project to ensure your town or village becomes (and stays) a community of choice for healthcare professionals. In the meantime, investing in maintaining a consistent effort around attraction, integration and retention has the potential to pay off in both the short and long terms.

Who Should Be at the Table?

Reviewing your priorities and adjusting the focus of your Committee may be an opportunity to consider whether certain community organizations or sectors should be represented on the Committee. Other times, the inclusion of a particular set of expertise or perspectives may be helpful in advancing the Committee's work. In these cases, proactively adding a new member (or members) may be desirable.

Supporting the core of experienced members with regular inclusion of new members and perspectives based on the Committee's focus and priorities can help sustain your Committee and energize it to meet its goals. Committee membership made up of both newer and longer-term participants guarantees that the experiences, learnings and outcomes of the Committee's previous work are accessible and shared, while new ideas keep the work fresh and interesting. Adding new members is also a great opportunity to revisit your Terms of Reference and Committee Agreement, to provide additional clarity and to re-commit to the shared vision, goals and commitment to collective effort.

Consider a Committee Member Onboarding Plan

Your Committee may also wish to develop an onboarding package for new members. A well-designed and structured onboarding process provides new Committee members with an overview of the Committee's vision and goals in addition to an overview of the rural healthcare system, skill development and mentorship opportunities and regular feedback opportunities.

A defined onboard process can positively influence volunteer retention and engagement and contribute objectives.

A summary of the key elements of a volunteer onboarding program can be found in Appendix 3-4 of this Module. And don't forget to contact your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant as they can be an excellent resource to help you develop your onboarding plan for new volunteers.

Revisiting Your Geographical Area

The evaluation of your Committee is a good opportunity to consider its reach and who you are representing.

You may have originally formed the Committee to focus on your specific community. But as you got down to work, it may have become apparent that a larger, regional focus with neighbouring towns, villages, and Indigenous communities might help support stronger collaborative and healthcare professional attraction, integration and retention. For example, a group of towns, counties and First Nations communities may identify a strategic need to work together since the hospital in one town provides service for more than one municipality. In this situation, it may make sense for the Committee to represent a larger region that can offer more resources to support additional health-service delivery for multiple municipalities and the larger population they serve.

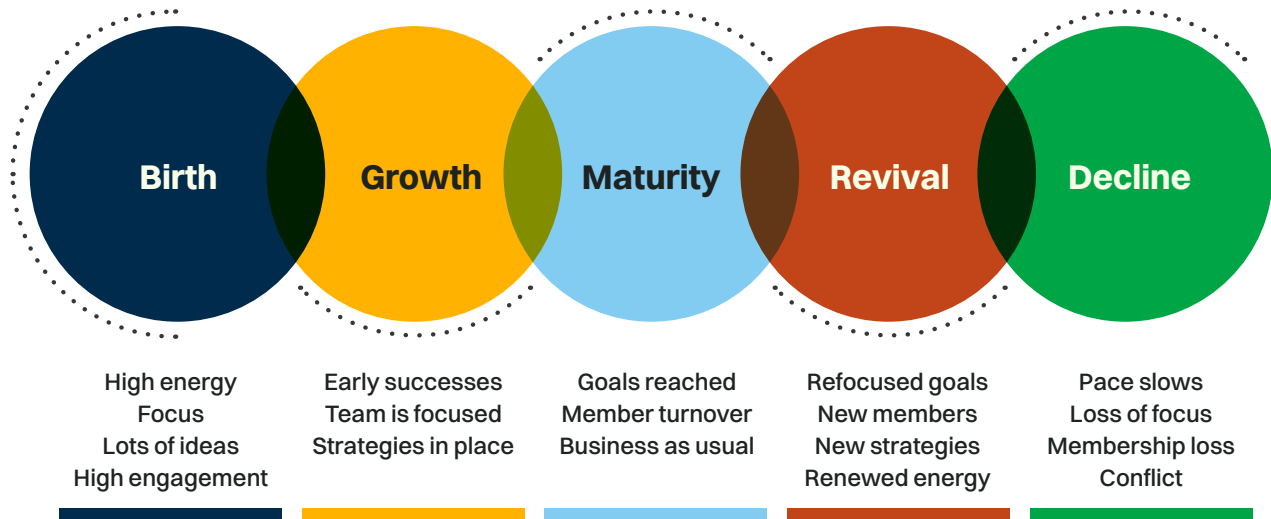
Alternatively, there may be a need to focus on a smaller area due to a current local situation or reality. For example, a particular health facility may need attraction, integration and retention support because several of its health professionals are retiring, or a new service (e.g., CT scanner) is going to be offered that requires new positions to be filled.

Engage your membership and RHPAP Rural Community Consultant in a discussion about whether the Committee might benefit from expanding or contracting its geographical focus to improve its effectiveness.

Assessing Your Committee's Health

Your Committee's commitment to ongoing development and improvement includes recognizing and accepting that organizations often have a natural lifecycle. Most Committees and Committees have a normal ebb and flow to their work, member engagement and overall health. In some ways, this lifecycle approach is like the natural world where Committees, like ecosystems, experience changes as they grow and mature.

Researchers at McGill University in Montreal developed a lifecycle model that suggests that organizations (and Committees) follow five stages over their lifetimes.²¹ Like trees in the forest, Committees and organizations often grow, mature and decline in a predictable way.



Understanding Your Team Dynamics

Much like the health and lifecycle of your Committee, how the Committee itself matures and learns to work together can also have its own development path. Part of your Committee evaluation needs to look at how well the Committee is working together by assessing what's working well and identifying areas for improvement.

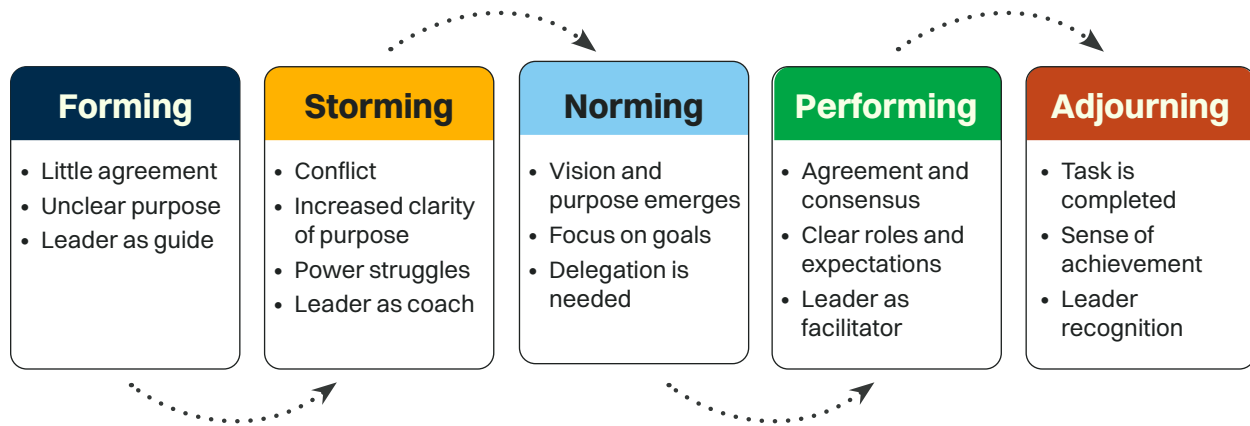
Sometimes, the commitment of Committee members to the goals and expectations set out in the Committee Agreement can get off track. This diversion can happen over time when Committee members veer away from the collective agenda and, instead, start coming to the meetings with predetermined goals and positions. Left unchecked, this kind of behaviour can upset the Committee's ability to consensus and seriously undermine collaboration and effectiveness.

The ebb and flow of Committee effectiveness is quite common. Committees can follow a predictable pattern as members get to know each other, understand their individual and shared needs, establish norms, manage conflict, get the work done, and eventually end their relationship. There is a risk that failing to assess your Committee's functioning can lead to frustration, turnover and burnout.

One time-tested model of Committee dynamics identifies five predictable stages that a Committee goes through over its life span.²²

²¹ Miller, D., and Friesen, P.H. (1984). A Longitudinal Study of the Corporate Life Cycle. *Management Science*, 30(10).

²² Tuckman, B. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63:6, 384-399



Let's quickly review each of these stages:

Forming

- This stage covers the Committee's early days when initial meetings are held, membership is stabilized, and the Terms of Reference and Committee Agreement are established.
- During the Forming stage, Committee members are often in a bit of a honeymoon period where everyone is on their best behaviour and trying to get along.

Storming

- Once the Committee gets down work, members are trying to sort out their roles and purpose. Differing opinions, personality conflicts, power dynamics and politics can pop up.
- The storming stage can be challenging, but your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant is an excellent resource to help you navigate through this stage.

Norming

- This stage is reached when partners around the table begin making a consistent effort to reach consensus, feel comfortable sharing needs, and are beginning to develop Committee routines. Communications and Committee member needs have been sorted, and the Committee is poised to move into the next stage.
- Keep in mind that a Committee at this stage can easily revert to Storming if a conflict arises, or unmet needs are identified. Occasional returns to earlier stages are completely natural.

Performing

- This stage is where the Committee begins to really gel and get down to work. Communication is open and trust is strong. Committee members have begun to anticipate each other's needs and feel a sense of belonging. The Committee is ready to set some goals and take action.
- Again, it's possible (and quite normal) for a Committee to slip back into Norming and even Storming if something goes sideways. If you sense the Committee is moving back into Norming or Storming, consider revisiting your Committee Agreement for guidance. If returning to earlier stages becomes a pattern, or the Committee members get stuck, reach out to your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant for help.

Adjourning

- With every beginning also comes an end. The process of adjourning may come when Committee members decide to establish a different focus and strike a new Committee, when a sub-Committee is no longer needed, or when the Committee itself decides to dissolve.
- Adjourning can be a relief to some and upsetting for others. People may be feeling discouraged, apprehensive, or excited for new possibilities. It is important to ensure everyone is respected in their stance and supported in this transition.

Keep in mind that this model is not strictly linear. Committees do not always flow from Storming and Norming into Performing. In fact, it's quite common for a Committee that moves quickly into Performing, to find itself slipping back to Storming if a serious conflict or problem with the project arise or has been ongoing for some time! Knowing where your Committee is at in it's stages will help enable you to be strategic in your trajectory, and where to focus your efforts as a group.

This kind of back-and-forth movement is normal and expected. It doesn't mean that the Committee or any of its members are doing anything wrong. Instead, keep an open mind, be aware of these stages, and consider how you can best support the group to move towards Performing. For example, you might find that your Committee is potentially stagnated and a review of stages may help suggest how it can be reinvigorated. Being open and honest around your Committee's health and where the group sits is key to moving forward.

Avoiding the Trap of Group Think

It can be tempting when you're working in a Committee to hope that everyone gets along. There's nothing wrong with that. Conflict can be uncomfortable and feel unproductive. Nevertheless, occasional constructive conflict can be productive, and avoiding conflict altogether can be damaging to the Committee, its members and the work.

The term *group think* was coined in the 1970s to describe a psychological phenomenon where a group prioritizes harmony and consensus over clarity and critical thinking.²³ Group think can lead to unrealistic expectations and irrational or dysfunctional decision making. It typically occurs when group members suppress their dissenting opinions or concerns in the interest of maintaining unity, which can result in overlooked alternatives, a failure to identify and mitigate risks, and poor outcomes.

There have been lots of examples of group think. For example, the Challenger space shuttle disaster²⁴ back in the 1980s was traced back to a decision by the launch Committee to force agreement by ignoring the concerns of some members who felt there was a potentially catastrophic problem. Kodak offers another example: key leaders were convinced they were right to remain focused on film photography when digital photography was just taking off. Kodak went bankrupt.

Group think can sometimes be easy to spot. Some characteristics of group think include the following:

- Committee members choose to be silent and not speak up
- There's pressure from the Chair or others to "back the Committee"
- A sense that nothing can or will go wrong
- A tendency to minimize or explain away warning signs
- Susceptibility to stereotyping or questioning the credibility of outsiders
- A sense that the Committee is doing the right thing

Some simple ways that a Committee can prevent slipping into group think are as follows:

- Encourage Committee members to be open to and curious about new ideas and hold off on sharing opinions at the outset
- Break into smaller sub-groups for initial discussions before reconvening.
- Actively seek outside perspectives and expertise
- Set clear evaluation criteria before making decisions
- Establish a culture where disagreement is valued
- Use structured decision-making frameworks that require consideration of multiple alternatives

²³Janis, I. L. (1971). Groupthink. *Psychology Today*, 5(6), 43-76.

²⁴https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Shuttle_Challenger_disaster

Summary

It is said that a Committee is only as good as its members. Intentionally building a high-functioning, collaborative Committee grounded in trust and mutual respect, while still including diverse perspectives, will go a long way toward ensuring a degree of success in your attraction, integration and retention activities. The Committee will also serve model how an inclusive, high-performing Committee functions and is able to accomplish for prospective healthcare professionals and your community at large.

Appendix 3-1

Board Roles & Responsibilities Worksheet

Each community structures their Committee a little bit differently. Use the following worksheet to outline the roles and responsibilities of each position. You may choose to use the “Who Does What - Committee Roles & Responsibilities” chart for suggestions. This work may also be combined with your Vision and Mission Statement document, Terms of Reference, Parliamentary Process Outline, or other resources to compile your personalized Volunteer Orientation Guide.

Committee name: _____

Year Established: _____

Role	Responsibilities	Term length/limits	Most recently held by... (Name/contact info)
Chair			
Vice Chair			
Treasurer			
Secretary			

Appendix 3-2

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is a democratic process that helps to ensure fair, equitable, and inclusive decision-making.

Basic Rules²⁵:

- **Only one topic may be before a group at any time:** Any item for consideration that requires action requires a motion and a seconder before being put to a vote. Agenda items that do not require action may be noted in the minutes as being accepted for information.
- **Motions should be phrased in the positive (i.e., an action the Committee will take rather than one it won't):** If the group does not want to take this action, the motion should be voted down. The exception to this is when the Committee is asked to act but wants it on record that they are choosing not to act for an identified reason.
- **Only one person may speak at a time:** The person making the motion should speak first and last, with debate and discussion happening between.
- **All members have equal rights:** If speaking on a motion, the person should clarify intent by stating whether they are speaking for or against the motion.
- **Full and free discussion of each item presented for consideration is a basic right:** Each person wishing to express their thoughts should speak only once until everyone else has had an opportunity to speak.
- **Protect the rights of the minority while making decisions on the will of the majority:** Those who disagree with the majority should have equal right to speak, but the decision will be made by majority vote.

Motions

- A motion must be made to enable Committee members to act on a decision.
- A motion must be made by a voting member of the Committee and seconded by another.
- All motions and the individuals who made them along with the outcome of the motion must be recorded in the minutes.
- The secretary may choose to record highlights of the discussion if deemed necessary.
- Some decisions, such as those dealing with money spent by the Committee, must have an associated motion.
- Electing an executive must be recorded and have a motion passed

²⁵Information extracted from Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (MRSC). [MRSC - Parliamentary Procedure: A Brief Guide to Robert's Rules of Order](#)

Steps in Making a Motion

- A Committee member begins with “I move that ...” and must state aloud his or her action.
- The Chair recognizing the motion and calls for a seconder to endorse the motion.
- A different person seconds the motion.
- The Chair or Secretary restates the motion for clarity.
- The Chair calls for discussion for/against the motion.
- Any amendments are incorporated following the discussion, and the motion is restated (this can be done as a second motion or incorporated into the original motion).
- A vote is called.
- The Chair states whether the motion was carried or defeated by simple majority and the motion is recorded in the minutes or motions record by the Secretary.
- There are also **subsidiary motions** that may change how a motion on the table is handled. These motions may serve to do the following:
 - *Amend* the motion (fine tune without changing the intent).
 - *Table* the motion (postpone the motion and halt debate without identifying a particular time).
 - *Postpone* the motion until a later time (specifying when discussion will resume).
 - *Refer* the motion to Committee (direct the motion to another body usually to obtain additional information and report back).
 - *Postpone indefinitely* (essentially kills the motion, as discussion is not resumed unless two-thirds of the Committee vote to pick it up again).
 - After a motion is made, another Committee member may also request to *withdraw* a motion, which requires majority approval.
- **Renewal motions** may also be required to continue discussion on a topic. These motions include the following:
 - Reconsider the motion (allow further discussion of a motion already made at the same meeting).
 - *Take back* the motion *from the Table* (renew talks on a topic that has not been postponed to a definite time)
 - *Rescind* the motion (annul it).

It is advisable that the Committee decide in advance how to handle motions and be sure all members are clear on process to avoid confusion.

Decision-making Methods

Majority Vote

- A show of hands is usually sufficient. When the decision may be controversial or involve elections, a secret ballot may be required.
- The Committee should choose whether the Chair has regular voting rights or if they should vote only in the event of a tie. The decision on the role of the Chair in voting may be included in the Committee's Bylaws or Terms of Reference.

Consensus

- In principle, decisions by consensus are made when Committee members all agree to move forward rather than by majority vote. Coming to consensus ensures all interests are represented, there is flexibility in the decision-making process and space for shared control, and all parties are committed to implementation.
- In practice, this process requires a strong and impartial facilitator at the helm (likely the Chair) to ensure ground rules are followed and there is an inclusive and productive culture established during discussion. It also demands a high level of trust among the members, where all members must take a united front on a decision.
- According to The Consensus Council²⁶, the elements of a consensus-based decision include the following:
 - All parties agree with the proposed decision and are willing to carry it out.
 - No one will block or obstruct the decision or its implementation.
 - Everyone will support the decision and implement it.
- While there are varying levels of consensus, from an enthusiastic “yes” to not fully agreeing with the decision but choosing not to block the action and electing to support it, Committee members need to be willing to work together to find a mutually acceptable solution.
- Each Committee needs to decide on their own ground rules prior to any decision-making discussion taking place.²⁷

Adjournment

- To end a meeting, the Chair may choose to call for a motion to adjourn or, alternatively, ask if there is any further business. If none, the chair can call the meeting adjourned.

²⁶Information extracted from [38-National-Partner-Recommendation-Consensus-Decision-Making-Process-incl-Modified-Consensus.pdf](#). More information can be found at www.agree.org.

²⁷There are several good suggestions available on [this document by the Consensus Council](#).

Defining Your Shared Values

Your Committee's values, beliefs and norms will serve as your Committee's guiding principles. You can brainstorm (and define) values, or use online tools like the [Barrett Personal Values Assessment](#) to assess what's important to you individually. Consider ways to share and define your values, look for common ground and then land on three or four key values that will guide your Committee's work.

Our Committee Values

	Value	Definition
1.	<p><i>Example: Trust</i></p> <p><i>(Delete and replace with your own text)</i></p>	<p><i>Committee members will be open, respectful and transparent with each other, will keep their promises and assume positive intent</i></p> <p><i>(Delete and replace with your own text)</i></p>
2.		
3.		
4.		

Step 2: Setting the Foundation for Working Together

Individually or together as a group, identify each Committee member's unique strengths, knowledge, skills, and other abilities that they bring to the Committee.

Name	Strengths/Assets
	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities:
	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities:
	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities:
	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities:

	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities:
	Knowledge:
	Skills:
	Other abilities/attributes:

Add more boxes if needed

Building on your discussions from the previous sections, and your personal knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes above, identify specific actions you will collectively commit to creating a high-performing Committee that supports your shared values and guides you toward your common goals. Use dialogue or tools like [affinity mapping](#) to reach consensus on the top actions that will form the foundation of your Committee work (see Appendix 1 for tools to help facilitate Committee dialogue along with other useful resources).

Specific Actions

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Step 3: Psychological Safety and Supportive Conflict

Consider what your Committee will do to create an environment where interpersonal risk taking is safe and people feel able to speak up with relevant ideas, questions or concerns in a climate of respect and trust. Consider using a whiteboard or sticky notes to brainstorm things your Committee thinks will contribute to effective conflict resolution, feedback, and communication such as a commitment to challenging one another through constructive dialogue, making it safe to explore perspectives and challenge the status quo and holding space for all Committee members to have their voices heard.

Have everyone share their ideas, look for themes and use either affinity mapping or another process to achieve consensus on a list that will form the foundation of your commitment to psychological safety and conflict resolution (see Appendix 1 for Committee dialogue and other resources). Identify your top four potential conflicts or challenges and how you will address them below.

Behaviour	Strategy (E.g. Team meeting, consult with team coach, address concerns individually, speak with instructor)
<p>Example: Participation: Ensuring committee members consistently attend meetings, are accountable and are responsive. (Delete and replace with your own text)</p>	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>
<p>Example: Psychological Safety: Our committee processes will build and sustain trust by ensuring all team members participate in team dialogue. (Delete and replace with your own text)</p>	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>
	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>

	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>
	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>
	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>
	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p>

Resources on Committee Process and Supporting Resources

The following resources may help you with your dialogue and facilitation of Committee consensus and decision making.

[Developing Shared Values and Principles - Tamarack Institute](#)

CoCreative: [4 Agendas in Collaborative Innovation](#)

Affinity Mapping <http://opendesignkit.org/methods/affinity-diagram/>

Liberating Structures <https://www.liberatingstructures.com>

Design Thinking <https://www.ideo.com/pages/design-thinking>

Six Thinking Hats <https://www.debonogroup.com/services/core-programs/six-thinking-hats/>

Brainstorming <https://hbr.org/2018/03/better-brainstorming>

Brainstorming <https://www.ideo.com/pages/brainstorming>

Dialogue, Discussion and Debate <https://www.greatplacetowork.com/resources/blog/the-difference-between-debate-discussion-and-dialogue>

Barrett Personal Values Assessment <https://www.valuescentre.com/tools-assessments/pva/>

Psychological Safety <https://hbr.org/2017/08/high-performing-teams-need-psychological-safety-heres-how-to-create-it>

Psychological Safety <https://psychsafety.co.uk/about-psychological-safety/>

Cultural Safety and Humility <https://bcpsqc.ca/improve-culture/cultural-safety-and-humility/>

Shared Purpose Samples

Our shared purpose is to create and nurture a high-functioning Committee that results in a dynamic and challenging environment that respects our individual and collective values, goals and aspirations.

Our shared purpose is to co-create innovative and sustainable strategies and supports to attract, welcome, integrate and retain healthcare professionals in our communities. And we will make it fun as we go along.

Appendix 3-4

Sample Onboarding Plan for New Committee Members

This detailed template is provided as a guideline. Committees are encouraged to consider what components will work best for them and design an onboarding plan accordingly. Your RHPAP Rural Community Consultant can assist with this work.

Initial Preparation

- Once a new member agrees to join the Committee, send them a welcome packet with the following information:
 - Committee's mission and vision statement, as well as purpose
 - Terms of Reference, Bylaws if applicable, and Committee Agreement
 - Role descriptions and expectations
 - Contact information for Committee members
- If possible, provide background reading materials about the local healthcare landscape such as links to the Town Page, Facebook groups, etc.

Orientation Plan

Welcome and Introduction

- Comprehensive Committee overview
- Discussion of current healthcare challenges in the rural community
- Introduction to Committee structure and governance
- Review of strategic goals and current initiatives

Role-specific Training

- Detailed walkthrough of specific volunteer responsibilities
- Matching volunteers with roles that align with their skills and interests
- Explanation of Committee communication protocols

Mentorship and Support

- PPair each new volunteer with an experienced Committee member
- Establish regular check-in meetings (e.g. first month: weekly, subsequent months: monthly)
- Create a buddy system for collaborative learning
- Explore areas of interest for the new Committee member, and share resources where applicable

Skill Development Workshops

- Community health assessment techniques
- Data collection and analysis
- Stakeholder engagement strategies
- Grant writing and resource mobilization
 - Cultural competency in rural healthcare settings

Community Integration

- Introduce volunteers to local healthcare providers
- Arrange site visits to rural healthcare facilities
- Facilitate meetings with community leaders
- Provide context about local health demographics and challenges

Ongoing Engagement and Recognition

- Consider recognition programs for volunteer contributions
- Create opportunities for expanding roles and responsibilities

Feedback and Continuous Improvement

- Seek regular feedback from your volunteers on their experience
- Create an open communication channel for suggestions