



Priscilla Ankamah, RN

I want to serve on Council (CNO's board of directors), a board whose only role is to uphold patient safety because: I am passionate about public health and safety and see this opportunity to serve as an honor, challenge, and responsibility protecting the health of Canadians. I can also deliver value to the Council through my technical expertise and operational understanding in several of the key areas required for this role.

As a member of Council, I would bring these skills to the board: My professional experience and master's education in Public Health places me in a favourable position to contribute to evidence-based decision making to the public. I am currently a nurse case manager with a community mental health and addiction program specializing in providing intensive case management to clients with severe mental health and substance addiction issues. As someone who loves gleaning insights from data, I utilize my research and analytical skills to find unique solutions to difficult problems. As part of my agency's response to address the increasing prevalence of metabolic syndrome among our clients, I am leading a multi-disciplinary team to co-design a health promotion curriculum with clients built on the Ottawa Charter framework to improve metabolic challenges faced in mental health. The program will be delivered in person and virtually. Using co-design is important to estimate and understand our clients' needs, experiences and abilities and can lead to interventions that are engaging and useful to potential users. Working alongside my team, I have executed strategies to administer questionnaires to clients to identify metabolic risk factors and effective strategies to improve the program design. As I reflect on my 8+ years of experience in healthcare, cross-cultural experience has been one of the central themes of my career. With a strong desire for helping others through charity work, I volunteer with the Ghana Association of Hamilton, supporting their efforts to distribute sustenance, food and necessities to low-income Ghanaian immigrants' families in Hamilton during COVID-19. In the summer of 2020, the Ghana Association of Hamilton received a grant from the Federal Government of Canada to support community members in need. The association asked me to lead a Committee with the primary role in developing the guidelines and providing oversight to distribute the money, food and essential household supplies to qualified Ghanaians fairly and equitably. This program was well-received by the community based on the feedback we received. I was also invited by Empowerment Squared, a non-profit charity based in Hamilton that offers services and resources to newcomers and marginalized youth and communities in Canada and abroad to speak on the importance of building community as part of their series "Mental Health and Resilience." And so it was that I joined a panel discussion that was broadcast on social media. Most recently, I was a mentor for the Sustainable Healthcare Virtual Challenge presented by Emerging Leaders for Environmental Sustainability in Healthcare (ELESH). I provided expert advice and resources to teams of graduate and professional healthcare students across Canada who presented a proposal to address the challenge of single-use products in Canadian healthcare systems. These humbling yet enriching experiences have taught me to believe that cross-cultural experiences are more important than ever and made me eager to serve on the CNO Council, bringing these diverse experiences to the board.

As a member of Council, I would bring these attributes to the board: I take pride in successfully promoting health interventions to improve patient safety and the broader social needs and safety. Amid the opioid crisis, I initiated discussions to open my agency as a naloxone distribution centre, which we successfully implemented. Thinking critically and broadly is a skill I gained through my years of experience and educational training. With CNO's support, this opportunity would be an incredible way to represent nurses within my district and further serve the public.