



**Monthly Spotlight — Patrice de Peiza, OT Reg. (Ont.), ND, MScCH, CLT**  
**OT in Healthcare Leadership: Beyond the Walls of UHN**

Patrice de Peiza currently provides patient care as a UHN OT in the Outpatient Musculoskeletal Rehab Program at Toronto Rehab, and develops cancer rehabilitation courses in her role as the Clinical Education Lead in the Cancer Rehab and Survivorship Program at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. It is with much admiration that we celebrate Patrice in an additional new role as the Provincial Head of Psychosocial Oncology (PSO) for Ontario Health-Cancer Care Ontario (OH-CCO). This notable achievement recognizes the culmination of Patrice's years of professional leadership, clinical expertise, contributions to teaching and education, and her passion for oncology rehabilitation. In her new position, Patrice sits on the provincial clinical council, serving as the voice of the 8 specialized oncology professional groups she represents including OT, PT, SLP, SW, dietitians, spiritual care providers, psychologists, and psychiatrists. She is also involved in setting standards of care, driving quality improvement, and system capacity planning. As part of the Person-Centred Care portfolio, Patrice and her team provide guidance regarding the implementation of the strategic objectives of Ontario Cancer Plan 5 (OCP 5), particularly as they are relevant to equitable service delivery and timely access to care across the province.

Patrice impressed the OH-CCO team with her recent professional projects, various clinical and leadership roles, and her numerous contributions to cancer rehabilitation. In professional circles, Patrice is known for her passion for cancer rehabilitation, interprofessional education, research, and continual thirst for knowledge. Drawing on her clinical experiences with diverse patient populations spanning ICU to outpatients, she enjoys teaching healthcare professionals how to treat individuals with cancer using the best evidence available. In this regard, Patrice authored an online shoulder rehabilitation course for the [de Souza Institute](#), in collaboration with Cancer Care Ontario (prior to their acquisition by Ontario Health).

Patrice has a wealth of experience at UHN including as past Occupational Therapy Practice Leader for Toronto General Hospital and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and as a Professional Practice Leader at Toronto Rehab. She is a graduate of the Emerging Leaders Program and a past recipient of a UHN Oncology Fellowship through CAP, whereby she developed the RESTORE program to support individuals with breast cancer, addressing the persistent and/or late side effects of their cancer treatments ([RESTORE program](#)).

In pursuing this prestigious role with OH-CCO, Patrice presented her vision for PSO services in Ontario. She highlighted her unique lens as an OT by introducing the interview panel to the concept of occupation and illustrating how it can be used as a framework to execute the strategic objectives of OCP 5. Patrice emphasized that OTs are well-positioned to understand both the physical and mental health needs of individuals with cancer and built a strong case for this holistic perspective being a great fit for the Provincial Head role.

In addition, Patrice successfully demonstrated how her clinical knowledge and skills, collaborative nature, and years of experience working on interprofessional teams have equipped her to represent the variety of specialized PSO providers at provincial tables to effect system-level changes. In the recent past, the previous two Provincial Heads for PSO were a social worker and psychiatrist, respectively. Their work focused on expanding the provision of mental health supports for patients and caregivers, as well as nutrition services across Ontario. However, cancer rehabilitation has been identified as a significant gap in the provision of PSO services in the province, and OH-CCO will benefit greatly from Patrice's extensive experience in this area of practice. Furthermore, Patrice proposed that the expansion of virtual care necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic created a timely opportunity to increase access to cancer rehabilitation services provincially. She is conducting an environmental scan to assess the current state of cancer rehabilitation within the regional cancer programs to inform the needs of Ontarians with cancer while considering current constraints of the healthcare system. (CONT...pg. 2)



**Monthly Spotlight — Patrice de Peiza, OT Reg. (Ont.), ND, MScCH, CLT**  
**OT in Healthcare Leadership: Beyond the Walls of UHN**

**When asked what drives her to push the boundaries in her career and take on new leadership roles, Patrice says that it stems from her passion to serve others.**

*“Years ago, I realized that I was put on this earth to help people feel better. I feel honoured to have the opportunity to help individuals optimize their recovery at some of the most vulnerable moments in their lives. Seeing them get better and knowing that I had a hand in it has been a source of great pride and continuous motivation for me. Despite my own challenges formally transitioning into leadership roles, I find strength in knowing that one person really can make a difference. You cannot be afraid to push the envelope or to challenge the status quo; if you make a request or seek out an opportunity, you may get a yes. Even if you get a no, at least you tried and are no worse off than if you did not ask for what you wanted. Eventually the right doors will open, and what is meant for you will be yours.”*

**Congratulations Patrice!**

---

### **More interesting facts!**

- ⇒ Patrice is also a registered Naturopathic Doctor and a Certified Lymphedema Therapist.
- ⇒ In 2017 Patrice was awarded the honour of ‘OT of the Year’ at UHN and she was nominated for the same award again the next year.
- ⇒ She was recently honoured as one of Canada’s Top 100 Black Women to Watch in 2020.
- ⇒ In November 2020, Patrice partnered with Jane Davis, Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy at the University of Toronto to provide a session entitled, “Race, Privilege and Power” where she discussed racial microaggressions that she has personally experienced. She also engaged the first year OT students to reflect on how they can be anti-racist allies.
- ⇒ Patrice is creating networking and mentorship opportunities to unite Black OTs, since she never had professional role models who looked like her.

Have questions for Patrice? – you can reach her at [Patrice.dePeiza@uhn.ca](mailto:Patrice.dePeiza@uhn.ca)

---