

day in the life of a

COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR



Name:

Edward Pereira

Community:

Toronto Shelter
Network

Tell us about yourself

I joined as a Community Ambassador to meet the needs of transitional shelter clients and to try to get an uptake in vaccine. As part of my role, we do health navigation and promotions. We support people by telling them where they can go to access the services that they needed.

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What are you fulfilling in your community?

One of the major hurdles during outreach and health promotion was the misinformation. There was a lot of distrust of medical professionals. But since I've worked with the downtown community for close to 20 years, it was easier to build rapport.

How do you serve your community?

As a person with lived experience, I had a familiarity with the shelter system. I had been homeless in the past, so I understand some of the problems that arise within that system.

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what are your day-to-day activities?

Being there for the community to be able to answer their questions. Also, if I am not able to answer their questions I direct them to the appropriate staff.

How has your role evolved over time?

The role is always changing because it has to meet the needs of the people that we are serving and those needs don't always remain the same.

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What skills are essential to the role?

You need to have empathy. You need to be comfortable speaking to people in different stations. Also, you would need to have an open mind, you can't be judgmental.

How do you see the impact of your work?

My site saw over 140 people and we managed to get just over 85% fully vaccinated. The outbreak certainly went down and we could see the results of the health promotion that we were doing.