

New England Rehabilitation Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council

An Overview

Updated 4.25.11

What is a Patient and Family Advisory Council?

- A Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) consists of a group of (former) patients, family members and hospital employees whose purpose is to advise the hospital on matters pertaining to the development of policies, programs and practices to improve safety, quality and patient satisfaction.
- The inclusion of patients and families in an advisory role promotes a practice of PATIENT and FAMILY CENTERED CARE.
- New England Rehabilitation Hospital has had a Patient and Family Advisory Council since June 2010 and is committed to the inclusion of the patient and family perspective in its care.

What is “Patient and Family Centered Care”

Patient and Family Centered Care is care that promotes, encourages, prioritizes and integrates patient and family perspectives into the hospital’s practices by way of a relationship that is characterized by:

- Dignity and mutual respect
- Information sharing
- Collaboration
- Partnership

Why is Patient and Family Centered Care Important?

- Feedback from patients and families shows that inclusion of this perspective improves the hospital experience for patients.
- It is the “right thing to do.”
- Hospitals across the United States are moving toward patient and family centered care as a best-practice concept.
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations requires the development of a PFAC.

Massachusetts Regulations for PFAC

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations 105CMR .130.1800 requires all hospitals in Massachusetts to develop a hospital-wide Patient and Family Advisory Council by October 2010.

To the extent allowed by state and federal law, a PFAC shall advise on:

- Patient and Provider Relationships
- Hospital Research Projects
- Quality Improvement Initiatives
- Patient Education on Safety and Quality Concerns

Our Patient and Family Advisory Council

New England Rehabilitation Hospital (NERH) is committed to the inclusion of the patient and family perspective into the care that is provided.

The first Patient and Family Advisory Council meeting was held in June 2010. The Council has been meeting quarterly since that time and has been an active participant in several hospital initiatives.

Examples of PFAC Accomplishments at NERH

- Redesign of a discharge medication form for easier use by patients.
- Helping in the creation of a new Admission Packet for the hospital which explains hospital services in a more organized manner.
- Promoting greater patient involvement in the discharge planning process by reviewing the communication process from admission to discharge.

Characteristics of our PFAC

The PFAC consists of 8-10 voting members who represent the NERH community at large, including Woburn, Danvers and Lowell:

- 5-6 PFAC Members are (former) patients/family members
 - At least 2 of the 6 are former patients
 - One of these 6 serves as a Co-Chair of the PFAC
- 3-4 PFAC Members are employees of NERH, one of whom is a front line nurse
 - One of these 3 serves as a Co-Chair of the PFAC
- PFAC members will serve a minimum of a one year term. It is hoped that members remain for a period of 2-3 years in order that there be an established core group at all times
- PFAC co-chairs will serve a 2 year term
- Meetings are held quarterly on the Woburn Campus, 2 Rehabilitation Way, Woburn, MA
- Recruitment for new members is ongoing so that, as Members leave the PFAC, vacant positions are filled
- Potential members will be recruited through self referral and staff recommendations
- Criteria for membership will emphasize enthusiasm for the mission of including patient and family input into the development of policies, practices and programs at NERH
- PFAC has direct communication with NERH Senior Leadership via an Administrative Liaison appointed by the CEO

PFAC Member Qualifications

- Able to listen to differing opinions and share different points of view
- Positive and supportive of the mission of New England Rehabilitation Hospital
- Able to show concern for more than one agenda
- Able to speak comfortably in a group with candor
- Able to work in partnership with others
- Truly understanding of the importance of patient and family centered care
- Committed to the mission of a Patient and Family Advisory Council

- Co-Chair Qualifications:
 - Comfortable leading/guiding others
 - Skilled at facilitation (ensuring that all have an opportunity to speak, keeping time, able to address inappropriate comments)
 - Committed to the PFAC's partnership within the organization
 - Able to articulate issues to the larger group, such as Senior Management
 - Willingness to serve a 2 year term
 - Willingness to participate in the recruitment and selection of future PFAC Members

PFAC Application Process

- We need your ongoing referrals for potential members.
- Contact Howard Phillips, 781 939-1907, if you have a patient or family member you think may be qualified.
- Applications will be mailed to interested candidates and a follow-up phone call will be made to each. Finalists will be identified, interviewed and selected.

For more information

For more information about PFAC or if you are interested in serving on PFAC, please contact Howard Phillips in the Quality Department at New England Rehabilitation Hospital, 781 939-1907 or call the main number: 781 935-5050.

Resources

- The Institute for Family-Centered Care in Bethesda MD; www.familycenteredcare.org
For further information, contact 301 652-0281.
- Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors
- Google: Patient Advisory Councils or Family Advisory Councils