

Introduction

At Franciscan Children's we promote the integrity and wellbeing of children and their caregivers through our quality of care. This allows each child the opportunity to achieve the maximum potential in an atmosphere of respect, compassion and dignity. Through our family-centered programs; our physicians, nurses, clinicians and educators are committed to helping children reach their full potential.

The core concepts of family-centered care, as outlined by the Institute for Patient and Family Centered Care, at Franciscan Children's are:

- **Dignity and Respect.** Health care practitioners listen to and honor child and family perspectives and choices. Child and family knowledge, values, beliefs and cultural backgrounds are incorporated into the planning and delivery of care.
- **Information Sharing.** Health care practitioners communicate and share complete and unbiased information with the children and families in ways that are affirming, useful and developmentally appropriate. Children and families receive timely, complete and accurate information in order to effectively participate in care and decision-making.
- **Participation.** Children and families are encouraged and supported in participating in care and decision-making at the level they choose.
- **Collaboration.** Children, families, health care practitioners, and hospital leaders collaborate in policy and program development, implementation and evaluation of health care facility design as well as in the delivery of care.

It is with the help of the Patient Family Advisory Council that we are able to fully incorporate these core concepts into the culture.

Who We Are

Franciscan Children's, located in the Brighton neighborhood of Boston, is the only facility of its type in the Northeast. We take pride in offering care to children who require medical, behavioral and educational services unmatched elsewhere. Licensed as a 112 bed pediatric hospital, we are often the facility to which children are transferred when they're too stable for acute care but not yet well enough to go home. While we are best known as a center of excellence in pediatric rehabilitation, we offer a full range of services to children from the community, around New England and internationally. We offer the widest range of mental health services for children of all hospitals in Massachusetts. All of our programs are family centric and designed to help each child reach his or her fullest potential.

Medical Services include physical and pulmonary rehabilitation; therapeutic outpatient services such as audiology, physical therapy, and speech language pathology; pediatric dentistry, surgical services, and variety of specialty clinics.

Behavioral Services include a community based treatment program; child and adolescent inpatient mental health; multidisciplinary Evaluation Program; and a variety of outpatient services including telehealth appointments.

Educational Services are provided by the Kennedy Day School.

Patient Family Advisory Council at Franciscan Children's

Overview

Franciscan Children's recognizes that parent and/or family members are at the center of the care continuum. Family-centered care is founded on the belief that the needs of a child can best be met with family and health care staff working together as a team. Further, it acknowledges that families, defined as persons who are related in any way - biologically, legally, or emotionally, are essential to the child's health and well-being and are allies for quality and safety within the health care system.

The Franciscan Children's PFAC promotes a family-centered culture that seeks input from children, families, and staff regarding all aspects of care to be an effective resource and advocate for improved healthcare, education, and safety.

Structure

Recognizing that there are many commonalities in the provision of care at Franciscan Children's, there is one comprehensive and overreaching PFAC supported by diverse patient/parent experiences. The PFAC is supported by Senior Leadership and coordinated through the Patient Advocacy Department. The Council maintains and follows the bylaws established and is self-determining in setting objectives, goals, priorities, and agendas.

In 2021-2022, the activities of the PFAC were curtailed by the pandemic Covid 19. Beginning in October 2022 the PFAC was able to be restored to a dedicated Council meeting virtually. Franciscan Children's provided the following for PFAC members to encourage their participation in meetings:

- Meetings outside 9am-5pm office hours
- Availability of childcare, offered by our Child Life staff, during on-site meetings
- Virtual and telephonic opportunities to attend meetings.
- Translator or interpreter services if needed

Recruitment for PFAC members was through the following methods:

- Survey responses
- Departmental and Provider recommendations



Membership

Membership of the PFAC during this period was comprised of 4 staff (two of whom also use the hospital services for their children) and 5 family partners from medical units, behavior health service, and outpatient therapy treatment departments.

Patient Family Advisory Council Mission

We represent the patient and family voice to Franciscan Children's with a spirit of compassion, excellence and positivity. We advocate for patient and family centered care... so that every child can reach their fullest potential and live their best life".

Accomplishments

Using the virtual options, the Council met quarterly through 2022-2023. The PFAC agreed to focus on the following patient and family centered care components:

- Communication and patient/family education
- Ease of transition from referring facilities to Franciscan Children's.
- On-going voice and involvement in the proposed affiliation with Boston Children's.
- Meeting with the Associate Chief Medical Officer, the Council shared concerns regarding communication prior to admission regarding the services that are provided at Franciscan Children's. These concerns included educational expectations of parents prior to discharge from Franciscan Children's, current infection control guidelines, nurse to patient ratios and expectations of therapy frequency. These concerns were acknowledged and information regarding these topics have been incorporated into the initial tour upon patient referral and Patient Advocate pre-admission calls to parents.
- In real time, review of informational and educational material being given to parents to assure understanding, appropriate guidance, and safety education.
- Added 4 new members to the Council.
- Two meetings were held with the Vice President of Strategy and Government Relations. Information was shared with the Council regarding the affiliation with Boston Children's. Council provided public opinion statement regarding the affiliation.
- Parents continue to present to pediatric medical residents the importance of listening to parents and communication. Through a proposed grant, will participate in development of a video presentation to medical residents communicating the parent's perspective of admission to a long term acute care pediatric rehabilitation facility.



2024 Goals

- Recruit 1 new parent partner from the medical units and 1 new parent partner from the inpatient child and adolescent psychiatry unit.
- Active participation in Performance Improvement and Quality and Safety Committees adding one parent to the Quality and Safety Committee.
- Parent participation in the development of the new patient portal, MyChart, to be installed in October of 2024, including format, access parameters and ease of connectivity.
- Continued active participation in bringing the parent perspective to building renovations and new building construction scheduled to occur over the next 2 years.

Respectfully Submitted,

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