

**New England  
Rehabilitation Hospital  
Patient and Family  
Advisory Council**

*October 2009-May 2010*

# 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. The purpose of the Council is to advise the hospital on matters pertaining to the development of policies, programs and practices to improve safety and quality.
- The inclusion of patients and families in an advisory role promotes a practice of PATIENT and FAMILY-CENTERED CARE.

# Core Concepts of “Patient/Family-Centered Care”

- The patients’ and families’ perspectives are encouraged, prioritized and integrated in a relationship characterized by:
  - Dignity and mutual respect
  - Information sharing
  - Participation in care
  - Shared decision making
  - Collaboration
  - Partnership

# Why is Family-Centered Care Important?

- Feedback from patients and families shows that inclusion of this perspective improves the hospital experience.
- It is the “right thing to do.”
- Hospitals across the United States are moving toward 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

# What are we doing at NERH?

New England Rehabilitation Hospital (NERH) is committed to the inclusion of the patient and family perspective into the care that is provided. A Steering Committee has been convened to develop the PFAC.

- The Steering Committee members are:
  - Colette McKenna, RN, Nurse Manager
  - Linda Thayer-Nason, OTR, CPHQ, Director of Quality
  - Howard Phillips, Patient Relations Specialist
  - Rosanna Woodmansee, MS, CRC/LRC, CCM

# What are we doing at NERH?

- The Steering Committee has been meeting weekly to establish policies for formation and implementation of the PFAC with the goal of having the first meeting in May 2010
- The NERH website now includes the development plan for the PFAC

# Highlights of the NERH PFAC

- The PFAC will consist of 8-10 voting members who will represent the community at large, including Woburn, Danvers and Lowell:
  - 5-6 will be patients/family members
    - At least 2 of the 6 will be patients
    - One of the 6 will serve as a Co-Chair of the PFAC
  - 3-4 will be employees of NERH, one of whom is a front line nurse
    - One of the 3 will serve as a Co-Chair of the PFAC

# Highlights, Continued

- PFAC members will serve a minimum of a one year term with 50% holding a 2 year term
- PFAC co-chairs will serve a 2 year term
- Meetings will be held quarterly at the Woburn Campus
- PFAC will have direct communication with NERH Senior Leadership via an Administrative Liaison appointed by the CEO

# Example of PFAC Projects

- Family initiated rapid response team
- Expanded visitor hours
- Feedback on a patient/family education video
- Redesign of a discharge medication form
- Input on a Case Management discharge planning education brochure
- Facility renovation project
- New menu design
- Noise reduction

# How Will PFAC Members be Recruited and Selected?

- 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
- Recruitment and application process to begin in January 2010

# Member Qualifications

- Able to listen to differing opinions and share different points of view
- Positive and supportive of the mission of NERH
- 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 PFAC

# PFAC 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 with and within the organization
- Able to articulate to the larger group, i.e., Senior Management
- Willingness to serve a 2 year term
- Willingness to participate in the recruitment and selection of future PFAC Members

# Application Process

- We need your continuous ideas for potential members
- Contact Howard Phillips if you have a patient or family member you think may be qualified
- A member of the Steering Committee will call the person to confirm their interest and availability
- Applications will be mailed to interested candidates and finalists identified
- Final candidates will be interviewed and selected

# Summary

- The purpose of a PFAC is to promote patient and family centered care by creating a forum that enables patients and family members to have direct input into the development of policies, programs and practices at New England Rehabilitation Hospital.
- New England Rehabilitation Hospital is committed to the development and implementation of a PFAC. The first meeting is scheduled for May 2010.
- Over the next 3 months, members will be recruited, interviewed and selected through a formal process.

# Resources

- The Institute for Family-Centered Care in Bethesda MD; [www.familycenteredcare.org](http://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