Simple Strategies for Establishing a PFAC

Think About It!

Patient and family advisors are essential in the implementation of successful hospital projects.

These advisors provide critical guidance and direct input on what is most important to them about their care and can ensure that projects meet the hospitals desired objectives and quality standards.

Take Action!

Review the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) **Working with Patient and Family Advisor on Short-Term Projects** for more examples of how advisors can participate in projects.

Strategy 5: Engaging Advisors and Implementing Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) Projects

For the first project, it can be helpful to identify a "quick-win" project to improve morale and build initial momentum.

- Some potential quick-win projects could include:
  - ° PFAC review and input on existing patient education materials. Is the material easy to read? Is it easily accessible? Does it motivate you to take action? Are the graphics appropriate for the message? These questions can be asked to ensure the material provided is understood by patients and families.
  - ° Advisor input on hospital process from a patient perspective. (e.g., pre-admission process, triage in the clinic)
  - ° Feedback on their experiences in the hospital as a patient (wait times, staff communication, etc.)
  - ° Review and input on patient satisfaction surveys.

Providers can work with advisors to identify and focus on specific projects that would benefit from PFAC input.

- One way to identify these projects is to look at the results of Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) surveys.
  - ° HCAHPS surveys measure patients' experiences and overall satisfaction with their care. Providers can better understand the areas of patient care and communication that may need improvement. For example, if a hospital consistently receives low ratings for their hospital services, such as discharge instructions or hospital cleanliness, the PFAC could focus on projects related to those areas.
  - ° Providers may also consider using the result of the HCAHPS surveys to create a selection process for PFAC-suggested projects based on patient preferences. Such a selection process would involve analyzing the survey score for each service, department, or unit and determining which areas of improvement need PFAC input. The PFAC could then focus its efforts on the service department or unit that received the lowest scores on the HCAHPS surveys.

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- Another way to involve the PFAC in the process is by evaluating the organization's patient-reported experience measures. This evaluation would include measurements such as length of stay, waiting times, communication between health care staff, the accuracy of medication administration, and patient satisfaction with the overall care they received. Taking a comprehensive look at the organization's patient-reported experience measures can help providers identify areas of improvement that need further examination and feedback from the PFAC.
- Additionally, providers can involve the PFAC in developing policies and procedures related to patient care. PFAC members can provide invaluable insight regarding policy and procedure development, as they can give feedback on how policy or procedure might impact a patient's care.

Use SMART goals to provide structure and determine the success of the project.

- **S**pecific: create clear, well-defined goals and objectives that help you plan the steps to achieving an outcome.
- **M**easurable: track and measure a goal that will allow you to set milestones to evaluate your current progress.
- **A**chievable: is the goal realistic? Dividing long-term goals into smaller goals or objectives can make them more achievable.
- **R**elevant: Does it relate to your overall values, ambitions and long-term outcomes?
- **T**ime-based: create deadlines for specific milestones. Setting deadlines will help with measuring progress.

Tips for preparing and conducting effective meetings.

- Include an agenda, have time for feedback from the previous meeting and review the action plan set during the orientation, project progress, and any new projects on the horizon.
- Respect the time dedicated to talking points and use good time management to ensure efficient and effective meetings.

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