

Simple Strategies for Establishing a PFAC

Think About It!

One of the best ways to ensure successful partnerships with patients and families is to recruit individuals that represent your population.

Choosing advisors who received care at your hospital can offer insights and input to help you deliver care and services based on patient-and-family-identified needs rather than going with the assumptions of clinicians or other hospital staff.

Take Action!

- Review [AHRQ's Handout](#) that outlines the role of patient and family advisors and opportunities for working with them.
- Review [AHRQ's Working with Patients & Families as Advisors Implementation Handbook](#), specifically the roles and responsibilities of advisory council members on p. 39, creating a mission statement on p. 40, and advisory council goals and activities on p. 41.
- Utilize CHA's [Recruitment Plan Worksheet](#).

Strategy 3: Recruiting and Selecting Advisors for a Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC)

Build a recruitment strategy that will incorporate the following:

- Specify eligibility criteria for membership.
- Outline general roles, responsibilities and any term limit or time commitment involved.
- Draft a general mission statement.
- Highlight opportunities for PFAC involvement to include in recruitment materials.
- Prepare hospital leadership, clinicians, and staff to work with advisors.

Develop a communication plan to include:

- A packet of information used for recruitment purposes that builds upon the elements in your recruitment strategy. Remember to define the role of a PFAC and include logistics (i.e., the application process, time commitment, training).
- Information sessions for interested patients and family members.

Launching a recruitment campaign

- Enlist the support of clinicians and staff to extend personal invitations.
- Place recruitment brochures/flyers in easily accessible locations on units for staff to distribute.
 - Consider providing talking points to staff so they can verbally describe as they distribute the brochure/flyer what a patient and family advisor is and how they can get involved.
- Other areas to distribute materials would include patient education meetings and support groups conducted within the hospital.
- Advertise opportunities on the hospital website and social media channels.

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Additional Resources:

- [Become a Patient and Family Advisor Brochure Template](#)
- [CHA PFAC Toolkit](#)
- [AHRQ's Working with Patients & Families as Advisors Implementation Handbook](#)

Structure a formal selection process

- Request candidates to complete an [application](#).
- Interview the candidates in a standardized manner either in person or by telephone.
- During the interview:
 - Explore candidates' responses to the open-ended questions included in their application form, including the reasons for wanting to become an advisor.
 - Ask candidates what they would like to do and explore upcoming opportunities to assess their interest.
- While there are no special qualifications or expertise necessary to be an advisor, there are some qualities you want to look for, such as:
 - Ability to share insights and information about their experiences in ways others can learn.
 - Have diverse health care experiences and reflect the diversity of your patient and community population.
- Can see beyond their personal experiences.
- Show concern for more than one issue or agenda.
- Demonstrate good listening skills.
- Respect the perspective of others.
- Cope well with their hospital experiences.
- Demonstrate a passion for improving healthcare.
- Represent a broad cross-section of your hospital's population.
- Inform patients and family members about selection promptly
 - Send a [letter of invitation](#) inviting them to join the PFAC.
 - If the candidate is not a match send a [letter of regret](#) (located on page 2 of document) and offer an invitation to explore future options for serving as an advisor.