

# Patient and Family Advisory Council Bylaws

## **Article 1. Overview**

The WMC Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) will provide a formal communication vehicle for patients and families to take an active role in improving the patient experience at WMC. The council will focus on discovering what programs and practices represent the most successful patient and family experience within WMC and will help replicate and share those best practices across the community.

## **Article 2. Mission Statement**

Guided by WMC's vision, mission and values, the PFAC is dedicated to ensuring that our patients and families have a safe, quality, compassionate and supported healthcare experience.

## **Article 3. Goals**

**Section 1. Advise:** Work in an advisory role to enhance patient-family centered care initiatives at WMC.

**Section 2. Support:** Support staff and WMC leadership in their patient-family centered activities and initiatives. Act as a sounding board for implementation of new programs and existing programs across WMC.

**Section 3. Participate:** Provide patient and family member representation to committees and work groups including, but not limited to patient safety, quality improvement, facility design, service excellence, ethics and education.

**Section 4. Identify:** Identify existing best practices in patient-family centered care and explore ways to share and replicate those across the organization.

**Section 5. Represent:** Represent patient and family perspectives about the healthcare experience at WMC and make recommendations for improvement.

**Section 6. Educate:** Collaborate with WMC staff to facilitate patient and family access to information. Influence and participate in WMC staff orientation, patient and family education and discharge/transition planning.

**Section 7. Evaluate:** Evaluate the role of the PFAC in improving outcomes for patients and families.

## **Article 4. Structure and Membership**

The PFAC will consist of approximately six members representing the diversity of the WMC community. In addition, up to six WMC staff members may also serve on the PFAC. The structure of the council may change over time.

### **Article 5. Nomination and Application Process**

Recruitment of PFAC members is initiated by referral from all disciplines including WMC physicians, nurses, other healthcare providers and professional staff.

**Section 1. Membership Criteria:** Members are selected based upon the following criteria:

- Recent experience as a patient or family member at WMC
- Ability to represent patient care experience
- Willingness to work collaboratively and in an advisory role
- Good listening skills
- Ability to interact well with differing groups of people and differing opinions
- Respect of others' perspectives
- Positive, constructive attitude
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Ability to participate in a consistent and agreed-upon schedule of meetings and potential subcommittee efforts
- Commitment to serve for a two-year term with potential to renew or step down at the end of the term

**Section 2. Membership Selection:** Application forms are sent to prospective members, who are interviewed. Once selected, the applicant receives an acknowledgement letter from staff of the PFAC and a thank you letter is sent to the referring individual.

**Section 3. Terms of Appointment:**

- Council members are granted two-year terms
- Council members may request to be re-appointed
- Resignation will be submitted in writing or via email to the WMC PFAC
- Vacancies may be filled during the year as needed
- Council members may be removed from their positions due to their inability to participate as needed or comply with the membership criteria

### **Article 6. Roles and Responsibilities**

**Section 1. Roles and Responsibilities for Patient/Family Members:**

- Encourage greater understanding of the healthcare experience through the eyes of the patient and family
- Actively participate in establishing a strong partnership between WMC and staff, patients and families
- Honestly share perceptions and expectations concerning health care at inpatient and outpatient areas
- Evaluate practices, programs and services and provide recommendations that respond to the unique needs of the patient and family based on patient-family centered care principles

- Channel needs, concerns and recommendations to the WMC leadership team for review and direction
- Contribute to the education of present and future healthcare providers
- Provide a vital link between WMC and the community
- Maintain confidentiality at the council meetings and outside the meetings
- Respect the collaborative process and the council as the forum to discuss issues
- Give input based on your own experience but be able to step out of your individual perspective.
- Collaboratively work on projects identified by the council that will improve patient-family centered care at WMC
- Participate on other WMC committees and work groups as appropriate
- Attend all PFAC meeting or notify a staff member in advance if unable to attend

**Section 2. Roles and Responsibilities for Staff/Employee Members:**

- Attend each PFAC meeting
- Prepare meeting agendas
- Identify, invite, vet and orient potential PFAC members
- Facilitate discussions and engage all members
- Provide a report back to the PFAC of progress on ongoing projects and any hospital changes of interest to the group
- Assist with operations behind the scenes to facilitate meetings and PFAC efforts
- Minimize potential barriers to achieving established goals
- Be an advocate for the utilization of PFAC efforts and members

**Section 3. Roles and Responsibilities of Chair/Co-Chair:**

- Attend each PFAC meeting
- Communicate activities of the PFAC to WMC leadership
- Facilitate all meetings
- Communicate with PFAC members outside of meetings
- Co-chair will support duties of chair in his/her absence

**Article 7. Orientation and Training**

All selected patient and family applicants will receive volunteer orientation and training on applicable hospital regulatory and privacy issues.

**Article 8. Confidentiality**

PFAC members must not discuss any personal or confidential information revealed during a council meeting outside of those sessions. Council members must adhere to all applicable HIPAA standards and guidelines. If a member violates these guidelines, a staff member will remind them of the guidelines. Repeated violations may result in re-evaluation of membership status.

### **Article 9. PFAC Meetings**

Meetings will be held monthly on a day and time that best meets the schedules of members. Each meeting will be 1.5-2 hours in length.

- **Section 1. Agenda:** Meeting agenda will be set by the designated staff/employee member and distributed to the membership prior to each session.
- **Section 2. Meeting Minutes:** The designated staff/employee will distribute the minutes in a timely manner to all PFAC staff and patient/family members. Council minutes will be retained for a minimum of five years.
- **Section 3. Attendance:** It is expected that the members of the council will make every attempt to attend every session during their term. Participation will provide the most effective meeting and make the most impact on the patient experience at WMC. Attempts can be made to accommodate teleconference call arrangements if necessary. If a member is not able to make one or more sessions, notification to a staff member as soon as possible is expected in order to make any needed adjustments prior to the group meeting.
- **Section 4. Inclement Weather:** Business meetings will be canceled if traveling in Casper becomes unsafe.

### **Article 10. Termination**

The chair and co-chair of the PFAC reserve the right to dismiss any member who is not compliant with the bylaws and guidelines of the PFAC.