

## 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 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.

For more information on our services please visit our website at [www.franciscanchildrens.org](http://www.franciscanchildrens.org).

## **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 FAC promotes a family-centered culture that seeks input from children, families, and staff regarding all aspects of care in order 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 FAC supported by diverse patient/parent experiences. The FAC 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.

This year the activities of the FAC have been curtailed by the pandemic Covid 19. The parents who participated regularly in the Council were not available due to their children not going to traditional out of the home school and the added burden of caring for their medically complex children all day in their home. The hospital however adapted the FAC to include participation of parents with children currently being treated in the Hospital. Parents participated in patient experience focus groups, surveys and process improvement projects. During this time period Franciscan Children's provided the following for FAC members to encourage their participation in meetings:

- Meetings outside 9am-5pm office hours
- Availability of child care, offered by our Child Life staff, during meetings
- Conference call phone numbers for meeting attendance
- Translator or interpreter services if needed

Recruitment for FAC members was through the following methods:

- Survey responses
- Departmental and Provider recommendations

## Membership

Membership of the FAC during this period was comprised of staff, current patients and families from medical units, behavior health both inpatient and outpatient service areas, Kennedy Day School and all outpatient treatment areas.

## 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

Due to the complexities of the pandemic and parent partners with medically fragile and complex children at home and limited access to time and technology, a plan was developed to meet with focus groups of current inpatient and outpatient parents reporting to Council Co-Chairs for action and response with the following focus for improvement:

- Continuation of 3 year plan to focus on patient and family centered care components:
  1. Information, communication and patient/family education
  2. Physical comfort of patient and families
  3. Emotional Support
  4. Involvement of family and friends as care team members
- Developed further educational tools and tracking to assist families in learning the complex care of their children for eventual discharge to home.
- Continued to recognize the impact of separation from family and friends due to pandemic limitations on visiting, assisted in development of virtual visitation tools for increased contact and interaction with family and friends.
- Continued review of informational and educational material being given to parents to assure understanding, appropriate guidance and safety education regarding the pandemic.
- Development of specialized educational virtual tools to engage Kennedy Day School in off-site learning as well as extra-curricular activities.



- Assisted in creating informational communication to parents prior to admission to the medical units.
- Participation in developing a weekly newsletter to Kennedy Day School parents seeking.
- Parental speakers group presenting to pediatric medical residents the importance of listening to parents and communication

## 2021 Goals

- Revitalization of FAC by developing virtual meeting format for all Family Advisory Council Meetings.
- Recruit 3 new Parent Partners to the Council
- Continue to formalize specific focus group participation and reporting to the Family Advisory Council.
- Active participation in Performance Improvement and Quality and Safety Committees adding 1 new parent partner to Patient Care Assessment Committee and 1 new parent partner to Leadership Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

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