Kicking off 2021

By Lisa LeBlanc, PFCC Coordinator

As we kick off a new year, I can’t help but reflect on the past year with so much gratitude and appreciation for our Patient/Family Advisors. The past 10 months or so have been challenging on so many levels and yet, the advisor work at the medical center has continued on. When so many at the hospital shifted their work to focus on fighting COVID-19, advisors asked how they could help and transitioned to virtual participation in order to stay involved. When the cyber attack took down our systems and made it difficult to communicate and connect, advisors stayed in touch, offered support and were ready to jump back in as soon as the systems were back up and running. The fight against the coronavirus is far from over but with the numbers of those who have gotten the vaccination on the rise, there is this feeling that there might be a light at the end of the tunnel. With everything that we’ve been through in the past year, incorporating the patient and family voice and perspective in the work that we do at the medical center is more important than ever. Patient/Family Advisors are an integral part of the team in everything we do at the hospital, and their dedication and passion for this work never ceases to amaze me. A huge thank you to all of our advisors, for sharing their stories and for their commitment to making the patient and family experience at the medical center the best that it can be... and cheers to continuing that great work in 2021!
Advisors get involved in Pediatric Residency Program
By Charlotte Safran, PFCC Coordinator

Cultivating a culture of Patient- and Family-Centered Care is a core practice here at the University of Vermont Children’s Hospital, even during times of crisis such as a world-wide pandemic or a technological security breach! We were thrilled to work with Patient/Family Advisors to help us share this commitment with applicants to our Pediatric Residency program, by way of including advisors in the formal applicant interview process. The goals of the project were to provide an opportunity for interviewees to discuss patient- and family-centered care through a patient and family lens, and to communicate to interviewees the diverse, unique, and dynamic community in which we live, work, and receive healthcare.

The project team outlined an onboarding process for the Patient/Family Advisors who were interested in participating in this project, including signing up for interview slots through an online scheduling platform, attending a kick-off meeting with Dr. Jill Rinehart, Kenzi Nelson, and myself to discuss and prepare for the interview process and finally, participating in the interviews and providing feedback via a rubric.

Each Advisor signed up for an interview ‘block’ that included 20 minute, 1:1 interviews with three different applicants. Each applicant was asked the following questions by their advisor interviewer:

1. Tell me a little bit about what patient- and family- centered care means to you.
2. Give an example of an interaction that you have had with a patient and/or family member that taught you something about health care or changed the way you think about your work.
3. What approaches do you use to help you better understand the patients’ and families ‘perspective?’
4. What excites you about working and learning in a setting that practices patient- and family- centered care at all levels?

Between 11/02/20 and 01/06/2021, Patient/Family Advisors completed approximately 120 interviews with applicants to our Pediatric Residency Program. The feedback from interviewees was glowing, as is highlighted by this reflection from one of the applicants: "I am thrilled to have the chance to speak with you during my interview and am so appreciative of the experiences and perspectives you shared with me....hearing from you made it clear that UVM is something special."

Thank you to the UVMCH Advisors for so graciously offering their time and wisdom with this project.

First UVMMMC Advisory Council Term Transition
By Lisa LeBlanc, PFCC Coordinator

Prior to February 2020, the UVMMC Patient/Family Advisory Council held monthly meetings that were open to all advisors who wished to attend. And though there were many advantages of having an open invitation to the group of over 100 advisors, it became clear that a more structured council with set members and defined bylaws was needed in order to continue to move the work of the council forward. In December, a number of advisors who participated on the council for many years wrapped up their advisory council terms. We are so thankful for the dedication of those long-term council members, and recognize that the advisory council would not be where it is today without their contributions. The outgoing council members will continue their advisor work and will have the opportunity to bring their voice and commitment to change in new and exciting advisor work. We look forward to orienting our new members to the council later this month, as they prepare for the first meeting of their terms in early February.

RESOURCES

Links
- Click here to get up to date information on the Coronavirus from the UVM Health Network
- Click here for updates on the COVID-19 vaccine for both Vermont and New York residents

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