Number of Patient/Family Advisors
UVMMC: 130 advisors
UVMCH: 65 advisors
Total advisors: 190!
Increase of 9% since last year despite moving to remote participation only as of March 2020

Patient/Family Advisors are participating in over 175 committees and projects

Advisors were an integral part of developing solutions in times of crisis regarding telehealth, the cyber attack, the visitation policy during Covid-19 and the future of the Fanny Allen OR

Advisor engagement in our hiring processes continues to increase, advisors participated in 5 recruitment efforts over the past year

Patient/Family Advisors are supporting the medical center’s medical education mission by being a part of the medical student and resident interview process and by participating in resident education projects

All Advisor Team meetings, created so that advisors can stay informed and connected, are now being held 6 times throughout the year

April is typically when we would hold our Patient/Family Advisor Appreciation Event in order to honor and celebrate all of you and the incredible work that you do. Since we are unable to gather this year, we’d like to dedicate this special edition of The Advisor to showing our gratitude and to recognizing the commitment, collaboration and the invaluable contributions of our Patient/Family Advisors at the University of Vermont Medical Center.

While we can’t celebrate in person this year as we usually do, please know how much we appreciate your service, dedication, and commitment to our patients, and families. Your advocacy is essential to improving the patient care experience across the organization, and has made a huge impact these past few years. Thank you for all you do!

President & Chief Operating Officer

UVMMC and its patients are incredibly lucky to have strong and respected advocates for patient needs. From making sure we understood better the impact of changes to our welcoming policy during the COVID-19 pandemic to helping us respect our transgender patients in the way their names are listed in Epic, this group is essential to high quality care. My previous medical center didn’t have that kind of patient-centric influence, and the difference was palpable. Thank you!!

Director Medical Ethics
Thanks to all of you for your ongoing dedication to continuing your dedication and advocacy for high-quality, equitable, child-friendly, family-centered care even in these challenging times. What you do for the patients and families served by our children's hospital inspires all of us!

Chief of Pediatrics

Thank you so much for being willing to put yourself out there- to be vulnerable and open for the purpose of making health care better for others in our region. Your time and insights are noticed and appreciated.

Telehealth Senior Program Strategist

The NICU is currently working on facilitating the process of discharge for NICU families. Much of the work is related to what families may need most and this is a difficult question to ask the professionals who work in the unit but are not going home with a NICU baby. Having a patient/family advisor on the iNICQ Committee allowed us to run so many family related questions by her and have her insight and input from someone who has walked in the shoes of a NICU parent. It was invaluable. Thank you advisors!

Assistant Nurse Manager

Has the presence and participation of Patient/Family Advisors positively impacted your work or the work of your group?

“They considerations they propose have been helpful and appreciated. For example, taking into account how certain information is presented in a meeting invitation has helped us be able to make changes.”

“Patient/Family Advisors have had a positive impact on our work - it is very grounding to have someone present who has experienced the care we provide, and to provide a realistic perspective on how we might improve this experience.”

“Sometimes, even in a non-COVID world, it is hard to help IT staff members feel connected to patients in the beds, clinics, and any visitor walking through our hallways. Having the voice of a patient in a conversation about the impact of technology is so powerful.”

“Patient/Family Advisors have provided insight into how our decisions affect not only their hospital experience but also their transitions out of the hospital.”

“Their impact has directly had impact on decision making, how to best communicate, and identifying areas of potential risk in the work we do.”

“Patient/Family Advisors have made our groups more focused and their input is so enlightening and so important to our work.”

“Patient/Family Advisor participation allows us to see processes, procedures, care provider/patient and family interactions through the eyes of patients/families.”
We are expanding our family input as a part of our food security work to move toward a place where advisors co-design our systems. Having a patient/family advisor on the team has moved us to think deeper about how to engage families in our work. I so appreciate all that she brings to our team.

Senior Pediatric Outreach Coordinator

Patient/Family Advisors bring new perspectives that sometimes we may not see because of their experiences. I really appreciate having advisors involved in our improvement efforts.

Director Nursing Ops and Resources

Thank you for sharing your valuable time with us and sharing your insights into our organization and our system. By sharing your perspectives, you help guide decision-making to better serve our patients and families. Your involvement profoundly impacts how we deliver care, and you truly make a difference.

Thank you again for your time and your dedication!

Network Regional Director of Radiology

The patient/family advisors I have worked with bring real life experience to the table. They have seen what we do through the lens of a parent and of their child. They are the experts when it comes to the care of their child. By their sharing their experiences and offering suggestions/insights on how we can be even better is so valuable!

Advisors, you are so important and your insight has helped us be better and to continue to improve. Thank you!!

Senior Administrative Coordinator

We are expanding our family input as a part of our food security work to move toward a place where advisors co-design our systems. Having a patient/family advisor on the team has moved us to think deeper about how to engage families in our work. I so appreciate all that she brings to our team.

Senior Pediatric Outreach Coordinator

We all bring a filter/perspective to the table and it is most often guided by our *own* experiences. When it comes to the use of technology, especially, in the process of delivering healthcare and empowering patients in that care - the voice of a variety of patient/family advisors can have an incredible grounding effect. In San Diego, we debriefed a high-tech visit and talked about all the entertainment options on the TV and one of our patient/family advisors said, "I mean, I just want to be able to watch the Red Sox." The concepts of Netflix, Hulu, Facebook, etc. were of zero interest to him and that was so funny - it was a nice reminder that we don't always need to give patients a thousand technical options. They can be confusing! [And get in the way of what the patient wants/needs.]

Network VP Health Informatics

Patient/family advisors make us pause and consider a different perspective on identifying quality improvement opportunities.

Senior Quality Improvement Partner
To all of our Patient/Family Advisors,

Our Patient/Family Advisor Appreciation Event is something that we cherish and look forward to, and is definitely something we’ve missed both this year and last year. Not only does the event give us the opportunity to recognize this incredible group but it gives us all the chance to connect and catch up and boy, do we miss seeing (and sometimes hugging!) all of you! But the absence of an event like that is just another reminder of the challenging times we’ve all been navigating over the past year. The Covid-19 pandemic and cyber attack against the UVM Health Network flipped our worlds upside down, almost overnight. Despite these times of crisis and uncertainty though, our Patient/Family Advisors have demonstrated their commitment to our work and have stepped up and have shown up in every way. There are not enough words to describe how amazed and how grateful our team has been for the dedication and the compassion Advisors have shown as they quickly transitioned to remote participation and continued their work to help ensure that our patients and families have a positive experience and that they get the best health care possible. We could not do the work that we do without all of you so we would also like to thank you for not only your partnership, but for the positive energy, the smiles, the laughs and the camaraderie that you bring to our lives.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts,

Amy Cohen, Director of Patient and Family Experience
Lisa LeBlanc, Patient and Family Centered Care Coordinator
Charlotte Safran, Patient and Family Centered Care Coordinator