

Annual PFAC Report Southcoast Health



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the why

“

Patients get the best care when they have a true partnership with their care team. I know this from my time as a nurse – patients need to be able to speak up, and we need to listen.

Kathleen Campanirio , Community Co-chair of the Southcoast Health PFAC

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advisors

Community Advisors

Kathleen Campanirio (Co-Chair)
Brian O'Hare
Cathie Markow
Danyelle LeBlanc
Dennis Demarinis
Geovanny G. Sequeira
Janet Gillis
Joan Menard
Karlene Ross
Mary Louise Francis
Melanie Cordeiro
Pam Ellis
Renee Ledbetter
Sarah El Zailah
Susan Quinby
Wendy Looker

Staff Advisors

Tracey Benson
Kimberley Coon
Cheyanne Dill
Jadene Elden
Hannah Feitelberg
Dr. Dani Hackner
Jessica Magalhaes
Traci McNeil
Yinka Oluwole (Co-Chair)
Alicia Pimentel
Chris Snow
Jacqueline Somerville
Melissa Svay
Michele Wakeman
Trish Wollner



Dear Yinka,

Patient and family engagement is one of the five goals of the Betsy Lehman Center's *Roadmap to Health Care Safety for Massachusetts*. Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs) are key to improving care and achieving better health outcomes for patients across the state. The annual PFAC report is one way we measure progress on this goal and identify ways to better support the important work happening across the Commonwealth.

In reviewing Southcoast Hospital's information, there are a few things I wanted to highlight. Your report details significant engagement with and accomplishments/contributions from the PFAC last year. The intentional work and creative approaches the PFAC took on recruiting candidates to serve on the PFAC are exemplary, especially the Open House initiative. The group collaborated with the hospital on several key projects, including redesigning patient materials on reducing inpatient pressure injuries; partnering with primary care to enhance the nurse-led triage process for same day access to appointments; participating in staff recognition efforts and a "ED First Impressions" workgroup; supporting the rollout of MyChart's paperless billing and redesign of patient billing statements; contributing to the redesign of bedside shift report processes; and participating in interviewing for key leadership roles at the hospital. Members also serve on multiple other hospital committees. This is excellent work! Your named challenges (measuring PFAC impact; limited awareness of PFAC benefits; sustaining engagement and utilization) reflect the already high-level performance of the PFAC and an aspiration to spread its influence and impact, and to build for sustainability. The goals you identified for the current year are thoughtful and relevant. I am also grateful to you and your patient co-chair Kathleen for generously contributing to the Betsy Lehman Center's videos about Patient and Family Advisory Councils.

We welcome your thoughts about these new reports, as well as how we can support the PFAC work at your hospital. Please feel free to reach out to us at PFAC@betsylehmancenterma.gov at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Powers".

Jane Powers
Director of Patient and Family Advisory Councils
The Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety

Annual Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) Report: Southcoast Health



AT A GLANCE

*This PFAC provides insight and support to Southcoast Health, a large, community-high public payer hospital in Southcoast. It is a part of the Southcoast Health System.**

THIS PFAC

Composition of the PFAC

- >30 total members
- >30 patient advisors
- 16 to 20 staff advisors

Recruiting methods

- Clinicians' recommendations
- Hospital website
- Grievances
- Word of mouth
- Open House Event

Meeting frequency

Monthly

Meeting format

A mix of both in-person and virtually

Engagement with initiatives

- Sometimes provides approval on already completed initiatives
- Often provides input on initiatives in progress

STATEWIDE

Total size of PFACs



Meeting frequency



Engagement with initiative: How often PFACs are involved from project inception (best practice)



IMPACT AND CONTRIBUTIONS

PFACs help health care organizations better meet the needs of their patients by tapping the expertise of people with lived experience. PFAC members are key contributors to many initiatives, including patient experience, program development, and safety improvement efforts.

Key accomplishments

Revenue Cycle Engagement

Creation of MyChart Paperless Billing Process

- The PFAC played a key role in supporting the rollout of MyChart Paperless Billing. This initiative built upon previous efforts to redesign billing statements, with the goal of making them more patient-friendly and easier to understand.

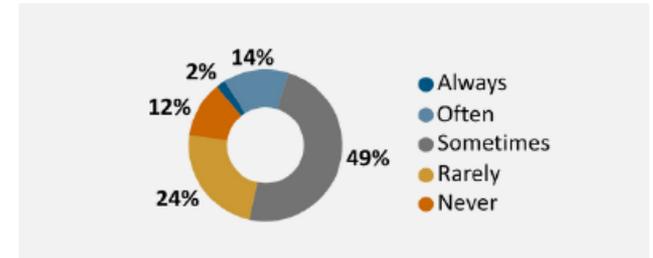
Redesign of Patient Billing Statements

- PFAC members provided valuable input in the redesign of patient bills, ensuring they are clear, accessible, and aligned with patient needs. Their feedback was instrumental in improving the overall billing experience.

Improving Service Center Triage Process for Same-Day Access Slots

- The PFAC partnered with Primary Care to enhance the RN-triage process for same-day access appointments, ensuring that patients with the most urgent needs are prioritized and connected with providers more efficiently. In addition to refining the workflow, PFAC members contributed to the redesign of the survey used to monitor this process, helping to ensure it effectively captures patient feedback and outcomes. This collaboration has led to a more responsive and patient-centered approach to same-day care.

Inpatient Pressure Injury Education Brochure



- The PFAC contributed to the redesign of the educational brochure on inpatient pressure injuries, helping to ensure the content is understandable and relevant to patients and families.

Committee involvement

PFAC members also served on these committees:

- Code of Conduct
- Community Benefits
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Emergency Department Patient/Family Experience Improvement
- Ethics
- Patient Care Assessment
- Patient Education
- Quality and Safety
- MyChart Workgroup
- Disability Accommodations Committee
- Staff Recognition - Daisy Award Committees
- Patient Handbook Committee

Contributions to patient safety efforts

- Advisers were **occasionally** represented at board meetings
- Advisers **occasionally** participated in safety improvement initiatives

Our PFAC continues is committed to expanding the PFAC's role in identifying and addressing safety concerns, providing feedback on safety protocols, and collaborating on initiatives that promote a culture of safety throughout our organization.

One notable contribution is their participation in the creation and roll-out of the Patient and Guest Code of Conduct program. This initiative establishes clear expectations for behavior, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all patients, guests, and staff.

PFAC-led workgroups or projects

Current and previous groups the PFAC leads are:

1. Disability Accommodations Committee
2. Staff Recognition - Daisy Award Committees
3. Patient Handbook Committee
4. Guest & Patient Code of Conduct
5. LGBTQIA+ Knowledgeable and Welcoming Committee



COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

State regulations call for hospital PFAC membership to be reflective of the community it serves. There are many ways to describe the array of perspectives in a community, including age, race, income, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status, career, chronic or rare disease status, religion, etc.

Alignment with community

Our PFAC is composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences, reflecting many dimensions of the communities we serve. Members represent a range of identities, including age, income levels, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, veteran status, career paths, and experiences with chronic or rare health conditions.

We are intentional in our recruitment and interview process, prioritizing voices that broaden our understanding and strengthen our commitment to inclusive, patient-centered care. While some aspects of identity - such as religion or health status - can be sensitive, we approach these conversations with care, respect, and a focus on building a council that truly reflects our community.

Currently, our PFAC includes representation from most of the groups mentioned above, which enriches our dialogue and decision-making. We recognize religious diversity as an area for future growth and are committed to expanding representation in this and other areas to ensure our PFAC continues to evolve alongside the communities we serve.

Efforts in the past year to further align PFAC membership with the representation of the community

Over the past year, we have implemented several intentional strategies to better align PFAC membership with the diversity of the community we serve. Our co-chairs actively looked for opportunities to promote the PFAC, build relationships, and raise awareness about opportunities to join. We also hosted an open house to welcome potential members, providing a space to learn about our mission, engage with current members, and explore how their lived experiences could contribute to our work. This event was designed to be inclusive and accessible, encouraging participation from a broad range of community voices.

Additionally, we partnered with providers across our health system to identify and recommend individuals who bring diverse perspectives—particularly those with unique experiences related to chronic illness, caregiving, disability, and cultural identity. These collaborative efforts have strengthened the inclusivity of our council and helped ensure that our PFAC continues to reflect the voices and needs of the broader community.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding representation in areas such as religious diversity and youth engagement, recognizing these as opportunities for continued growth.



GOALS AND FUTURE PLANNING

Goals provide the PFAC and their hospital with a clear direction, allow for the measurement of impact, and maintain member engagement.

PFAC goals for the current year

1. Expand PFAC patient and family advisors involvement and increase awareness: Enhance the involvement of patient and family advisors and increase awareness of the PFAC across the Southcoast Health System.
2. Continue to expand the committee with more diverse membership: Strive to diversify the PFAC membership to better reflect the community we serve.
3. Collect feedback on current issues: Actively seek feedback from patients and their families to continuously improve the quality of care, patient safety, and overall service at Southcoast Health.
4. Increase involvement in governance and safety initiatives: Strengthen the PFAC's role in governance and patient safety initiatives, ensuring their valuable insights and perspectives are integrated into decision-making processes.

**At a glance description is based on Massachusetts Hospital Profiles Compendium, January 2025. <https://www.chiamass.gov/assets/docs/r/hospital-profiles/2023/FY23-Massachusetts-Hospital-Profiles-Compendium.pdf>*



This report was compiled by the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety, a non-regulatory state agency that supports providers, patients, and policymakers working together to advance the safety and quality of health care. The Center is pleased to support the important work of PFACs in health care settings across Massachusetts.

It is based on answers submitted by the hospital through the annual PFAC report form. If you have any questions or would like to get more involved in PFACs statewide, reach out to PFAC@BetsyLehmanCenterMA.gov.