

Interviewing potential PFAC Members

When building a Patient Advisory Council it is important to carefully select members who will further the mission of the PFAC and be an effective member of the team. One of the ways to do this is to have in person or phone interviews. There are several suggested best practices for these interviews.

Preparing for the Interview

- Have more than one person at the interview. If there is an existing PFAC have one of the members present at the interview, they will be able to provide a different and important perspective. If this is a new PFAC pick another hospital employee to be present or the volunteer coordinator who will have experience with volunteers
- Have specific questions planned but allow the session to go where the candidate may take it. You do not want the interview to be derailed but this can give you valuable insight.
- During the interview you are looking for some specific attributes:
 - Does the candidate appear angry or bitter about their experiences?
 - Does the candidate offer legitimate options for improvement related to their experience?
 - Does the candidate have a “teachable spirit”; do they seem as interested in learning as they do teaching or telling their story.
 - Does the candidate seem open to considering other ideas or opinions?
 - Does the candidate clearly fixate on one specific subject, topic or experience? Does it seem that the candidate only has one agenda or reason for being on the PFAC?
 - Is the candidate able to describe a positive and negative experience in a way that is productive and offers suggestions of what to do more of and/or what needs to change?
 - Does the candidate listen and offer clear answers to the questions being asked?
 - Does the candidate exhibit the values that are important to the organization? Choosing a PFAC member is no different than choosing a staff member, similar criteria should be considered including: professionalism, commitment and passion.

Suggested questions for a PFAC candidate:

- Please tell me/us, briefly, what made you interested in being on our PFAC?
- What past experiences do you have to bring to the PFAC? These can be healthcare related experiences or other professional or personal experiences.
- Have you had a positive experience in our healthcare organization? One where you felt listened to, felt safe and felt as a partner in your care.
 - What did the doctors or staff do to make it a good experience?
- Have you had an experience here that was not so good? One where you did not feel safe, listened to or respected.
 - What could the doctors or staff have done to make it a better experience?
Are you open to working on other areas/topics other than those that are directly related to your experience?
- What do you see as the most important reason for hospitals to listen to the patient voice?
- What unique skill set or perspective do you bring to the council?
- a. Being a PFAC member will, at times, require you to see beyond or set aside your personal experiences and to consider other perspectives and solutions. Can you please give an example of when you have done this before or how you might do this?