



**Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC)**

**Annual Report**

**FY2021**

**10/1/20 to 9/30/21**

Patient and Family Advisory Council

*Established 2010*

Pediatric (Family & Children) PFAC

*Established 2015*

**September 30, 2021**

Submitted by

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Experience

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**Nantucket Cottage Hospital**

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*Nantucket Cottage Hospital is an affiliate of Massachusetts General Hospital and a member of  
Mass General Brigham*

## General Information about Nantucket Cottage Hospital

Nantucket Cottage Hospital is a community hospital located on an island 30 miles south of Cape Cod and the Massachusetts mainland. NCH delivers a broad range of health care services under unique circumstances: serving a year-round population of approximately 17,000 residents, as well as accommodating a seasonal influx which significantly increases the size of the community. During the 2020-2021 season; due to the desire of many people to begin travel again, it has been estimated that approximately 100,000 people were on the island during the summer months. Founded in 1911, Nantucket Cottage Hospital remains the sole licensed medical facility on the island. In 2019, Nantucket Cottage Hospital opened the doors of the first new hospital building for the island community in more than 60 years. The new 14-bed, 106,000 square foot hospital, made possible entirely by community donations, completely replaced the former facility that was constructed in 1957. The new hospital offers state-of-the-art equipment with expanded outpatient services and increased capacity for inpatient care and surgery. The opening of the new hospital also affords patients a central location for all their health care needs, including primary, emergency, and specialty care, as well as diagnostic testing.

## Purpose of the Councils

The Adult and Pediatric Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs) at Nantucket Cottage Hospital function for the purpose of listening to patient and family member perspectives; providing a forum for sharing information among hospital staff, patients and their family members; sharing information about hospital initiatives; and collaboratively developing programs, policies and services to improve the quality and safety of patient care.

The Councils serve as a sounding board for initiatives the institution deems important in order to achieve and maintain balance among the priorities of caregivers, patients and their family members.

Their involvement includes but is not limited to, patient and provider relationships, quality improvement initiatives, patient education on safety and quality matters, how to navigate in tele-medicine, access to healthcare, and policies that address the handling of confidential patient information to the extent allowed by state and federal law.

## Organization of the Councils

The Patient Family Advisory Councils (PFAC) at Nantucket Cottage Hospital have two major focus areas, Adult/General Health and Pediatric Health. PFAC and Pedi-PFAC combined have a total of 48 members, 32 members are volunteers from the community and 16 members are hospital staff, exceeding the Massachusetts regulation that at least half of the total membership are patients, former patients or family members of patients.

Council membership is comprised of patients, family members, NCH staff, members of hospital leadership and the Board of Trustees, as well as NCH Advisory Council members. Members from both Councils participate on several of Hospital committees including:

- Emergency Preparedness
- Medical Staff
- Board of Trustees
- Advisory Council
- Quality Committee
- The NCH Experience Team
- Information Technology/Information Systems Steering
- NCH Blue Coats Volunteers
- Maternal Child Health Committee
- Community Health Initiative
- Patient Care Advisory Council
- Environment of Care Committee

The Council continues to review publicly reported quality information (Perception of Care and Quality reports) and helps to identify areas in need of improvement, and suggestions on steps for the improvement. This collaboration with PFAC and NCH has helped to drive improvement of patient experience scores.

The Council consists of interested individuals throughout the island community and has representation from year-round as well as seasonal residents. Members are recruited on an ongoing basis using word of mouth, recommendations from existing members, applications attached to the annual reports on the hospital web site, and staff contact with community-based organizations. A priority for our PFAC is assuring the membership has appropriate and diverse representation from the community we serve. Recently, the Mass General Brigham system partnered with National Research Corporation (NRC) as our Patient Experience Survey vendor. The real time surveys of our patients at NCH also allows us to identify patients who express desire to become involved with the hospital. PFAC can screen for their level of interest through our revised PFAC interview guide.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 many adjustments were made to the hospital setting which required our PFAC to creatively modify their involvement and partnership with NCH. The Nantucket community and NCH have continued to collaborate very closely to decrease community spread of the coronavirus. As part of that effort the PFAC groups continued to meet on a regular recurring basis via Zoom to assure community needs were being met and community voices were being heard. Meeting times were determined to maximize PFAC member participation. Although in person conferences have been suspended over this time period, NCH has historically paid for the attendance of our PFAC members at state-wide PFAC conferences and will continue to do so when appropriate. Occasionally, children attend meetings for the Pediatric PFAC meetings to support parent participation.

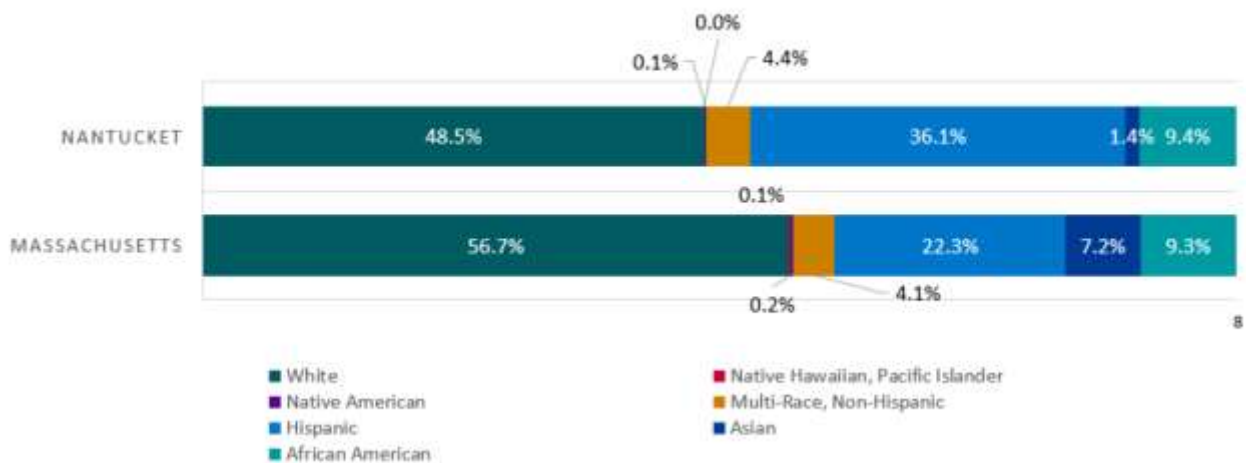
The Adult/General PFAC's co-chair is one of the Vice Chairs of the Hospital Board of Trustees. The chair position for the Pedi PFAC is currently vacant. The Hospital's Quality Committee is responsible for the oversight of the PFACs. This is accomplished by quarterly reports to the NCH Quality committee which then reports out to the PCAC and the Board of Trustees.

The PFACs meet at least six times per year. Sub-committees and ad hoc task forces meet as necessary. PFAC agendas are developed by staff with input from members and are distributed by email prior to each meeting. Input into agenda items is solicited either during the meetings or via email prior to the next meeting. The agenda for future meetings is set at the preceding meeting. Although PFAC tries to be proactive in planning agendas, sometimes topics will be added during the meeting in response to the urgency of the subject matter.

## Community Representation and Diversity

Census data shows Nantucket’s adult population to be predominately white, with white, non-Hispanic/Latino residents making up 85.2% of the recorded adult population. While Nantucket’s residents are predominately white, local experts assert that the true diversity on Nantucket is underrepresented by Census data. Specifically, we believe there is an underreported Hispanic population on Nantucket, which census data shows as 4.2% of the adult population. The demographic data for public school enrollment on Nantucket paints a much more diverse portrait, with 36.1% of students registered as Hispanic/Latino, 9.4% African American, and only 48.5% of the student body identified as white, non-Hispanic/Latino. Additionally, the population identifying as white is also more ethnically diverse than the raw statistics indicate, with a significant population of second-generation Bulgarians and Russians. See below for a comparison of Nantucket public schools versus Massachusetts.

**Figure 2: Public School District Enrollment 2020 - 2021**



Since 2000, according to the census the recorded year-round population for Nantucket has grown 17.3% to 11,168 residents, significantly outpacing growth rates for Massachusetts as a whole, which stands at 7.9% growth in the same recorded period. While significant as is, residents and statisticians on Nantucket have long acknowledged that this census population is not necessarily reflective of the actual population of Nantucket which, when accounting for a growing seasonal influx of residents as well as residents not captured in census data, is likely significantly higher than the recorded population, leading to an even higher growth rate than what census data points to. Meeting the healthcare needs of our increasing population has been a priority for the PFAC as we try to assure timely equitable access for all our year-round residents and seasonal visitors.

During our most recent Community Health Needs Assessment, 7.4% of individuals on Nantucket reported that they did not have reliable access to food during 2019. In addition, Nantucket County has a greater number of residents without health insurance when compared across Massachusetts. Again, PFAC was engaged in these issues and worked with NCH leadership to identify ways NCH could partner with community resources. During the COVID pandemic, the hospital worked with the town to ensure COVID testing and vaccinations were easily accessible and available to all of Nantucket residents.

Population without Insurance	Adults <65	Children <19	White alone	Black alone	Asian alone	Hispanic/Latino, any race
Massachusetts	4.0%	1.0%	2.3%	4.4%	3.1%	5.3%
Nantucket County	5.0%	2.0%	4.8%	1.5%	12.7%	11.4%

### Orientation and Continuing Education

Orientation for new members has been developed specifically for our PFACs and includes a review of Massachusetts law relating to PFACs and PFAC policies, member roles and responsibilities, as well as:

- Concepts of patient and family centered care;
- General hospital orientation;
- History of the PFAC and how it fits within the organization’s structure to include information about the Hospital Board of Trustees and the Advisory Council;
- The role and expectation of members;
- Safety concerns related to patient, family and facility issues;
- Review of: PFAC policy, a Conflict of Interest disclosure: confidentiality policies, corporate compliance information; handling of complaints; Hospital Mission, vision and values; The Patients’ Bill of Rights; harassment prevention policies; Notice of privacy Practice; (which addresses patients ‘privacy rights and our confidentiality commitment) safety, emergency preparedness including fire drills.

## FY21 PFAC Goals and Accomplishments

- **Review Perception of Care data and collaborate and recommend strategies with staff to have a positive impact on that perception:** Data is periodically presented to committee based for discussion and feedback. PFAC feedback about their understanding of the “why” behind the scores and comments has been incredibly insightful and useful for the hospital. NCH has a patient survey response rate lower than the rest of the MGB system. The PFAC has been brainstorming ways to increase our response rate.
- **Collaborate with the Foundation to support the Adult Health Fair that included collaboration with Nantucket Council on Aging, NCH and Nantucket Council of Elder Affairs for the adult/geriatric population:** For FY21, A Health Fair was not held but rather a flu shot clinic where 110 patients were served with the help of volunteers from all three organizations.
- **Coordinate with the Foundation to stage the “Be Well” Health Fair targeting the pediatric population:** No Be Well Health Fair was held in 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The goal is to hold this event in the Spring of 2022.
- **Increase membership that is inclusive of the diverse community that represents Nantucket:** On-going ‘word-of-mouth’ recruitment efforts with interviewing done by the co-chairs.
- **PFAC members maintain knowledge on what services our organization provides:** Current members have been educated on all current services provided by NCH and are provided insights into our future strategic plans. PFAC members provide ongoing feedback related to these services as a voice of the community. Some of the PFAC suggestions have been implemented including starting a pet therapy program, training for patients to access Patient Gateway, and improved communication in the ED about follow up appointments. Some suggestions are still being considered but no action has taken place yet such as starting a cardiac rehabilitation program at NCH.



- **Hospital Website:** PFAC continually makes suggestions for updates to the NCH website. Feedback is provided to the Foundation, who maintains the website, and changes are made accordingly. For example, in FY21; the Pediatric PFAC group added and improved the information on the Labor & Delivery/ Birth Center section of the NCH Website.
- **Promote the Teal Pumpkin Project (FARE) to educate the community on making the Halloween holiday a safe event for all members of the community:** The Teal Pumpkin Project raises awareness of food allergies and promotes inclusion of all trick-or-treaters throughout the Halloween season. Placing a Teal pumpkin on the doorstep means there are non-food treats available, such as glow sticks or small toys. This simple act promotes inclusion for trick-or-treaters with food allergies or other conditions. PFAC works with the Chamber of Commerce and in collaboration with stores on the island to include but not limited to the Stop & Shop, Island Variety, the pharmacies, fundraisers at Cisco Brewers and Health Fairs to bring awareness. The Teal Pumpkin could be placed on the doorstep of households or businesses. <https://www.foodallergy.org/education-awareness/teal-pumpkin-project>
- **Promote Car Seat Safety Day for the Community:** This event has been on hold, but with collaboration with the Nantucket Fire Department; Pedi PFAC intends to hold this event in Spring 2022.
- **Promote education to the community on the Patient Portal:** to be included in the Health Fair events with specific focus on education to the teen and elderly population which are two groups with low Patient Portal usage.
- **Pedi PFAC Task Force on Concussion Protocol:** Members of the committee are working on creating an education program that will include clinicians, coaches, trainers, and physical therapists. The goal is to educate about concussion protocol with an aim to standardize the continuum of care for young people.



## Challenges

### Challenge 1:

Our PFAC continues to be challenged in recruiting diverse members from our community and having those members fully participate in PFAC activities. Diversity is not simply about race and ethnicity. The PFAC is also diverse from an age and experience perspective. There is a blend of young working members as well as retired members. This makes it challenging for those who work all day, try to maintain a family/home balance and then volunteer to serve on this committee. Additionally, this year has been particularly difficult to recruit new members due to COVID-19.

### Challenge 2:

During Fiscal Year 2021, with the COVID-19 pandemic still ongoing; the PFAC groups were not able to hold educational events as in past years. This was a challenge and proved difficult for members to stay engaged and excited about PFAC initiatives.

*This annual report will be posted on the hospital web site [at this link](#)*



Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC)  
APPLICATION FORM

**SAMPLE**

*(Please print)*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (MI)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(On-island) (Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Off-island) (Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

**Preferred Method of Communication:** *(check preferred)*  Phone  Text  Email

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Language(s) you speak:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My care or my family's care provided at Nantucket Cottage Hospital includes:**

*(check all that apply)*

- Inpatient Hospitalization (an example is overnight stay for any reason)
- Physician Practices (examples include walk in care or scheduled appointments)
- Outpatient Services (examples include physical therapy (rehab), infusion, chemotherapy, same day surgeries, dialysis)
- Emergency Department Care
- Other Programs, Departments or Services (Lab, Palliative Care, Imaging)
- New Hospital?
- Old Hospital?



**Why would you like to serve as a Patient and Family advisory council member?**

**I would be interested in helping with:**

*(check all that apply)*

- Reviewing Patient and Family Perception of Care Tools
- Developing/Reviewing/Family Educational Materials
- Evaluating the Perception of Care for the Outpatient Care Experience
- Evaluating the Perception of Care for the Inpatient Care Experience
- Evaluating Patient Safety and the Prevention of Medical Errors
- Educating New Employees and other Staff about the Experience of Care and Effective Communication and Support
- Participating in Facility Design Planning
- Improving the Coordination of Care and the Transition to Home and Community Care
- Patient/Family Advocacy

**Additional areas of interest to you:**

**May we share your contact information with other hospital committee members as appropriate?**  Yes  No

**Please briefly describe your role with other community programs and/or organizations:**

**Will you commit to attending at least 4-6 meetings/year?**  Yes  No

**Please specify times when you can attend meetings:**

Daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to:**

**Hillary D. Reynolds**

508-825-1385

hdreynolds@partners.org