



PFAC Annual Report Form

Health Care For All (HCFA) advocates for health justice in Massachusetts by working to promote health equity and ensure coverage and access for all. HCFA uses direct service, policy development, coalition building, community organizing, public education and outreach to achieve its mission. HCFA envisions a day when everyone in Massachusetts has the equitable, affordable, and comprehensive care they need to be healthy.

Why complete an annual report for my PFAC?

Under Massachusetts law, hospital-wide PFACs are required to write annual reports by October 1st each year. These reports must be made available to members of the public upon request. As in past years, HCFA is requesting a copy of each report which will be posted on HCFA's website, <https://hcfama.org/pfac/>. HCFA recommends using this template to assist with information collection, as well as the reporting of key activities and milestones.

What will happen with my report and how will HCFA use it?

We recognize the importance of sharing of information across PFACs. Each year, we:

- make individual reports available online
- share the data so that PFACs can learn about what other groups are doing

Who can I contact with questions?

Please contact us at atappan@hcfama.org or call us at 617-275-2982.

Please email completed forms to PFAC@hcfama.org.

Reports should be completed by October 1, 2021.

2021 Patient and Family Advisory Council Annual Report Form

The survey questions concern PFAC activities in fiscal year 2021 only: (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021).

Section 1: General Information

1. Hospital Name: Lowell General Hospital

NOTE: Massachusetts law requires every hospital to make a report about its PFAC publicly available. HCFA strongly encourages the completion of an individual report for each hospitals-wide PFAC.

1a. Which best describes your PFAC?

- We are the only PFAC at a single hospital – skip to #3 below
- We are a PFAC for a system with several hospitals – skip to #1C below
- We are one of multiple PFACs at a single hospital
- We are one of several PFACs for a system with several hospitals – skip to #1C below
- Other (Please describe):

1b. Will another PFAC at your hospital also submit a report?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

1c. Will another hospital within your system also submit a report?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

3. Staff PFAC Co-Chair Contact:

2a. Name and Title: Cecelia Lynch, VP Patient Care Services/CNE

2b. Email: Cecelia.lynch@lowellgeneral.org

2c. Phone: 978-937-6411

Not applicable

4. Patient/Family PFAC Co-Chair Contact:

3a. Name and Title: Ann Marie Crafts

3b. Email: Annmariecrafts@comcast.net

3c. Phone: 978-761-3024

Not applicable

5. Is the Staff PFAC Co-Chair also the Staff PFAC Liaison/Coordinator?

- Yes – skip to #7 (Section 1) below
- No – describe below in #6

6. Staff PFAC Liaison/Coordinator Contact:

6a. Name and Title: Christine Wagner, Executive Assistant

6b. Email: Christine.wagner@lowellgeneral.org

6c. Phone: 978-937-6125

Not applicable

6a. Name and Title: Diane Regan, Director of Professional Practice & Magnet Program Director

6b. Email: Diane.regan@lowellgeneral.org

6c. Phone: 978-937-6530

Not applicable

Section 2: PFAC Organization

7. This year, the PFAC recruited new members through the following approaches (check all that apply):

- Case managers/care coordinators
- Community based organizations
- Community events
- Facebook, Twitter, and other social media
- Hospital banners and posters
- Hospital publications
- Houses of worship/religious organizations
- Patient satisfaction surveys
- Promotional efforts within institution to patients or families
- Promotional efforts within institution to providers or staff
- Recruitment brochures
- Word of mouth/through existing members
- Other (Please describe):
- N/A – we did not recruit new members in FY 2021

8. Total number of staff members on the PFAC: As of 9/30/21, there are three staff members on PFAC

9. Total number of patient or family member advisors on the PFAC: As of 9/30/21, there are eight patient of family members on PFAC. This number does not include the staff members noted in question #8.

10. The name of the hospital department supporting the PFAC is: Patient Care Services

11. The hospital position of the PFAC Staff Liaison/Coordinator is: Christine Wagner is the executive assistant to the executive VP/COO and Diane Regan is the Director professional practice, magnet and informatics

12. The hospital provides the following for PFAC members to encourage their participation in meetings (check all that apply):

- Annual gifts of appreciation
- Assistive services for those with disabilities
- Conference call phone numbers or “virtual meeting” options
- Meetings outside 9am-5pm office hours
- Parking, mileage, or meals
- Payment for attendance at annual PFAC conference
- Payment for attendance at other conferences or trainings

- Provision/reimbursement for child care or elder care
- Stipends
- Translator or interpreter services
- Other (Please describe):
- N/A

Section 3: Community Representation

The PFAC regulations require that patient and family members in your PFAC be “representative of the community served by the hospital.” If you are not sure how to answer the following questions, contact your community relations office or check “don’t know.”

13. Our hospital’s catchment area is geographically defined as: Lowell, Merrimack Valley

Don’t know

14. The racial and ethnic groups in these areas include (please provide percentages; if you are unsure of the percentages check “don’t know”):

	RACE						ETHNICITY	
	% American Indian or Alaska Native	% Asian	% Black or African American	% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	% White	% Other	% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	
14a. Our defined catchment area		6.81	1.67		87.81			<input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know
14b. Patients the hospital provided care to in FY 2021		9.27	3.48		71.0			<input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know
14c. The PFAC patient and family advisors in FY 2021			11.0		89.0			<input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know

15. The languages spoken in these areas include (please provide percentages; if you are unsure of the percentages select “don’t know”):

	Limited English Proficiency (LEP) %
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15a. Patients the hospital provided care to in FY 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't know
15b. PFAC patient and family advisors in FY 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't know

15c. What percentage of patients that the hospital provided care to in FY 2021 spoke the following as their primary language?

	%
Spanish	
Portuguese	
Chinese	
Haitian Creole	
Vietnamese	
Russian	
French	
Mon-Khmer/Cambodian	
Italian	
Arabic	
Albanian	
Cape Verdean	

Don't know

15d. In FY 2021, what percentage of PFAC patient and family advisors spoke the following as their primary language?

	%
Spanish	0%
Portuguese	0%
Chinese	0%
Haitian Creole	0%
Vietnamese	0%
Russian	0%
French	0%
Mon-Khmer/Cambodian	0%
Italian	0%
Arabic	0%
Albanian	0%

Don't know

16. The PFAC is undertaking the following activities to ensure appropriate representation of our membership in comparison to our patient population or catchment area: Our PFAC has expanded recruitment efforts primarily through social media to engage and attract individuals from our patient population and catchment area. A posting is completed after every meeting.

Section 4: PFAC Operations

17. Our process for developing and distributing agendas for the PFAC meetings (choose):

- Staff develops the agenda and sends it out prior to the meeting
- Staff develops the agenda and distributes it at the meeting
- PFAC members develop the agenda and send it out prior to the meeting
- PFAC members develop the agenda and distribute it at the meeting
- PFAC members and staff develop agenda together and send it out prior to the meeting. (Please describe below in #17a)
- PFAC members and staff develop agenda together and distribute it at the meeting. (Please describe below in #17a)
- Other process (Please describe below in #17b)
- N/A – the PFAC does not use agendas

17a. If staff and PFAC members develop the agenda together, please describe the process: PFAC members make recommendations for the upcoming agendas. A general list of agenda topics and education topics is maintained by the PFAC coordinator and co-chairs and these tie into the goal areas for the year. Prior to each meeting an agenda is drafted by the co-chairs and coordinators and distributed ahead of the meeting. During 2021, we incorporated quarterly Wellforce meetings into our PFAC. Agenda items focused on alignment of goals at the system level.

17b. If other process, please describe:

18. The PFAC goals and objectives for 2021 were: (check the best choice):

- Developed by staff alone
- Developed by staff and reviewed by PFAC members
- Developed by PFAC members and staff
- N/A – we did not have goals for FY 2020– **Skip to #20**

19. The PFAC had the following goals and objectives for 2021:

1. Ongoing recruitment efforts.
2. Provide/align input to Community Health improvement plan for efforts to decrease substance use disorders.
3. Enhance collaboration with Wellforce partners' PFACs.
4. Provide input for Lowell General Hospital journey to become a High Reliability Organization.
5. Further support implementation of Alzheimer standards for patient care.

20. Please list any subcommittees that your PFAC has established:

A subcommittee of the PFAC has been established for women’s health particularly for pregnant and post-partum community members who have used Lowell General Hospital in the past or may be interested in services in the future. This group, the Maternal Child Health Community Advisory Board, has met several times and discussed topics such as education and patient experience. This group has also developed a social media page for support and feedback for women.

21. How does the PFAC interact with the hospital Board of Directors (check all that apply):

- PFAC submits annual report to Board
- PFAC submits meeting minutes to Board
- Action items or concerns are part of an ongoing “Feedback Loop” to the Board
- PFAC member(s) attend(s) Board meetings
- Board member(s) attend(s) PFAC meetings
- PFAC member(s) are on board-level committee(s)
- Other (Please describe): PFAC submits bimonthly report at Patient Care assessment committee of the board (quality committee)
- N/A – the PFAC does not interact with the Hospital Board of Directors

22. Describe the PFAC’s use of email, listservs, or social media for communication:

PFAC communication is primarily via email and during 2021 pandemic utilized zoom meetings. The group also has a social media page on Facebook via the hospital based page and will update a posting after each meeting. The PFAC members will decide which topic to post and a member is also highlighted at the same time. This is used as a vehicle for recruitment efforts.

- N/A – We don’t communicate through these approaches

Section 5: Orientation and Continuing Education

23. Number of new PFAC members this year: 0

24. Orientation content included (check all that apply):

- “Buddy program” with experienced members
- Check-in or follow-up after the orientation
- Concepts of patient- and family-centered care (PFCC)
- General hospital orientation
- Health care quality and safety
- History of the PFAC
- Hospital performance information
- Immediate “assignments” to participate in PFAC work
- Information on how PFAC fits within the organization’s structure
- In-person training

- Massachusetts law and PFACs
- Meeting with hospital staff
- Patient engagement in research
- PFAC policies, member roles and responsibilities
- Skills training on communication, technology, and meeting preparation
- Other (Please describe below in #24a)
- N/A – the PFAC members do not go through a formal orientation process

24a. If other, describe:

25. The PFAC received training on the following topics:

- Concepts of patient- and family-centered care (PFCC)
- Health care quality and safety measurement
- Health literacy
- A high-profile quality issue in the news in relation to the hospital (e.g. simultaneous surgeries, treatment of VIP patients, mental/behavioral health patient discharge, etc.)
- Hospital performance information
- Patient engagement in research
- Types of research conducted in the hospital
- Other (Please describe below in #25a) Training and input regarding Epic EMR build (target go live date April, 2022)
- N/A – the PFAC did not receive training

25a. If other, describe:

Section 6: FY 2021 PFAC Impact and Accomplishments

The following information concerns PFAC activities in the fiscal year 2021.

26. Please share the following information on the PFACs accomplishments and impacts:

26a. What were the three greatest accomplishments/impacts of the PFAC related to providing feedback or perspective?

Accomplishment/Impact	Idea came from (choose one)
Accomplishment/Impact 1: Achieved education on and offered input on Covid response related to testing, overall communication, visitor changes, surge capacity planning and resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input
Accomplishment/Impact 2: Ongoing input and education around Covid response relative to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input

patient experience, opening and operation of alternative care site, deferment of elective surgical cases, community effort to plan and execute vaccine clinic for greater Lowell

Accomplishment/Impact 3:

Wellforce PFAC meetings occurred at quarterly intervals-focus on digital transformation and patient experience relative to this, as well as well as threats to community care structure.

- Patient/family advisors of the PFAC
- Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input

26b. What were the three greatest accomplishments/impacts of the PFAC related to influencing the institution's financial and programmatic decisions?

Accomplishment/Impact	Idea came from (choose one)
Accomplishment/Impact 1: Input into ongoing changes to visitor guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input
Accomplishment/Impact 2: Communication with patients around use of Alternative Care Site and support within community	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input
Accomplishment/Impact 3: Impact of members in awareness of communication around vaccine distribution tiering and rollout to community	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input

26c. What were the three greatest accomplishments/impacts of the PFAC related leading/co-leading programs and initiatives?

Accomplishment/Impact	Idea came from (choose one)
Accomplishment/Impact 1: Subcommittee of MCH Community Advisory Board recruitment of members via post cards and social media (on hold as of spring 2021)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input
Accomplishment/Impact 2: Provided input into overall	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient/family advisors of the PFAC <input type="checkbox"/> Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input

**pandemic response and
community information sharing**

Accomplishment/Impact 3:

**Incorporation of the patient and
family experience in the Wellforce
strategic vision for PFAC**

Patient/family advisors of the PFAC

Department, committee, or unit that requested PFAC input

27. The five greatest challenges the PFAC had in FY 2021:

Challenge 1: New member recruitment

Challenge 2: Participation given COVID pandemic

Challenge 3: Progression of goals due to focus on pandemic efforts

Challenge 4: Relationship building due to virtual forums

Challenge 5: Return to in person forums

N/A – we did not encounter any challenges in FY 2021

28. The PFAC members serve on the following hospital-wide committees, projects, task forces, work groups, or Board committees:

- Behavioral Health/Substance Use
- Bereavement
- Board of Directors
- Care Transitions
- Code of Conduct
- Community Benefits
- Critical Care
- Culturally Competent Care
- Discharge Delays
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Drug Shortage
- Eliminating Preventable Harm
- Emergency Department Patient/Family Experience Improvement
- Ethics
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) – Sensitive Care
- Patient Care Assessment
- Patient Education
- Patient and Family Experience Improvement
- Pharmacy Discharge Script Program
- Quality and Safety
- Quality/Performance Improvement
- Surgical Home

- Other (Please describe): Strategic Planning
- N/A – the PFAC members do not serve on these – **Skip to #30**

29. How do members on these hospital-wide committees or projects report back to the PFAC about their work? Feedback is incorporated into bi-monthly meeting agendas

30. The PFAC provided advice or recommendations to the hospital on the following areas mentioned in the Massachusetts law (check all that apply):

- Institutional Review Boards
- Patient and provider relationships
- Patient education on safety and quality matters
- Quality improvement initiatives
- N/A – the PFAC did not provide advice or recommendations to the hospital on these areas in FY 2021

31. PFAC members participated in the following activities mentioned in the Massachusetts law (check all that apply):

- Advisory boards/groups or panels
- Award committees
- Co-trainers for clinical and nonclinical staff, in-service programs, and health professional trainees
- Search committees and in the hiring of new staff
- Selection of reward and recognition programs
- Standing hospital committees that address quality
- Task forces
- N/A – the PFAC members did not participate in any of these activities

32. The hospital shared the following public hospital performance information with the PFAC (check all that apply):

32a. Complaints and serious events

- Complaints and investigations reported to Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Healthcare-Associated Infections (National Healthcare Safety Network)
- Patient complaints to hospital
- Serious Reportable Events reported to Department of Public Health (DPH)

32b. Quality of care

- High-risk surgeries (such as aortic valve replacement, pancreatic resection)
- Joint Commission Accreditation Quality Report (such as asthma care, immunization, stroke care)
- Medicare Hospital Compare (such as complications, readmissions, medical imaging)
- Maternity care (such as C-sections, high risk deliveries)

32c. Resource use, patient satisfaction, and other

- Inpatient care management (such as electronically ordering medicine, specially trained doctors for ICU patients)
- Patient experience/satisfaction scores (eg. HCAHPS - Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems)
- Resource use (such as length of stay, readmissions)
- Other (Please describe):

N/A – the hospital did not share performance information with the PFAC – **Skip to #35**

33. Please explain why the hospital shared only the data you checked in Q 32 above: Nearly all the agenda topics in 2020 focused on pandemic response and organizational status

34. Please describe how the PFAC was engaged in discussions around these data in #32 above and any resulting quality improvement initiatives: Nearly all the agenda topics in 2020 focused on pandemic response and organizational status. Education around new EMR rollout with focus on patient portal and enhancing user interface to promote use

35. The PFAC participated in activities related to the following state or national quality of care initiatives (check all that apply):

35a. National Patient Safety Hospital Goals

- Identifying patient safety risks
- Identifying patients correctly
- Preventing infection
- Preventing mistakes in surgery
- Using medicines safely
- Using alarms safely

35b. Prevention and errors

- Care transitions (e.g., discharge planning, passports, care coordination, and follow up between care settings)
- Checklists
- Electronic Health Records –related errors
- Hand-washing initiatives
- Human Factors Engineering
- Fall prevention
- Team training
- Safety

35c. Decision-making and advanced planning

- End of life planning (e.g., hospice, palliative, advanced directives)
- Health care proxies
- Improving information for patients and families
- Informed decision making/informed consent

35d. Other quality initiatives

- Disclosure of harm and apology
- Integration of behavioral health care
- Rapid response teams
- Other (Please describe):
- N/A – the PFAC did not work in quality of care initiatives

36. Were any members of your PFAC engaged in advising on research studies?

- Yes
- No – Skip to #40 (Section 6)

37. In what ways are members of your PFAC engaged in advising on research studies? Are they:

- Educated about the types of research being conducted
- Involved in study planning and design
- Involved in conducting and implementing studies
- Involved in advising on plans to disseminate study findings and to ensure that findings are communicated in understandable, usable ways
- Involved in policy decisions about how hospital researchers engage with the PFAC (e.g. they work on a policy that says researchers have to include the PFAC in planning and design for every study)

38. How are members of your PFAC approached about advising on research studies?

- Researchers contact the PFAC
- Researchers contact individual members, who report back to the PFAC
- Other (Please describe below in #38a)
- None of our members are involved in research studies

38a. If other, describe:

39. About how many studies have your PFAC members advised on?

- 1 or 2
- 3-5
- More than 5
- None of our members are involved in research studies

Section 7: PFAC Annual Report

We strongly suggest that all PFAC members approve reports prior to submission.

40. The following individuals approved this report prior to submission (list name and indicate whether staff or patient/family advisor): Staff: Cecelia Lynch (executive sponsor), Diane Regan and Christine Wagner (coordinators), Ann Marie Crafts (co-chair)

41. Describe the process by which this PFAC report was completed and approved at your institution (choose the best option).

- Collaborative process: staff and PFAC members both wrote and/or edited the report
- Staff wrote report and PFAC members reviewed it
- Staff wrote report
- Other (Please describe):

Massachusetts law requires that each hospital's annual PFAC report be made available to the public upon request. Answer the following questions about the report:

42. We post the report online.

- Yes, link: <https://www.lowellgeneral.org/PFAC>
- No

43. We provide a phone number or e-mail address on our website to use for requesting the report.

- Yes, phone number/e-mail address: Christine.wagner@lowellgeneral.org
- No

44. Our hospital has a link on its website to a PFAC page.

- Yes, link: <https://www.lowellgeneral.org/PFAC>
- No, we don't have such a section on our website