

Effective Goal Setting for PFACs

Foundations, tips and tricks for creating connections that drive progress

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Boston Children's Hospital



First, a thank you

This is the work of the Boston Children's Hospital-Wide Family Advisory Council. Together with our advisors, we identified a need for goal-setting done as a group, took a chance and tried it out, and then committed to iterating and evolving as we go. Today, I'll share parts of our journey and learnings-to-date, recognizing that many more are yet to come.

We cannot do this work without our advisors. We are not perfect, yet we don't seek perfection. We continue to strive for improvement, both as a working council and in our partnership outcomes. We do this work together and share responsibility for our successes and shortcomings.

***Thank you to all the Boston Children's Hospital-Wide FAC members, past and present.
We appreciate you!***

Introduction

01

A little bit about me

- Patient parent
- Family Advisor since 2009
- BCH staff member since 2016
 - Program Manager for Family Partnerships | Office of Experience



Our agenda

Build and maintain member driven PFACs

Align PFAC goals with organizational values and strategic priorities

Level-set every year to create a shared understanding of your PFAC purview, goals, accountability

Active listening ensures member-driven goals: Consider soliciting annual feedback from PFAs

Implement practices that create and support **accountability**

Impact reporting is part of your goal-setting cycle

Who are we?

Founded in 1869 as a 20-bed hospital for children, Boston Children's today is a 485-bed comprehensive center for pediatric and adolescent health care across 269 specialty programs. Boston Children's is also the primary pediatric teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School.



Hospital-Wide Family Advisory Council

Founded early
1980s

Volunteer
membership

Co-led by hospital
senior leader and
elected parent

Driven by culture
of progress
through
partnership

Boston Children's provides care for patients hailing from local, regional, national and international locations.

1. Build and maintain member-driven PFACs

Creates shared responsibility and accountability



Build partnership starting with expectation setting



Building your membership

Just start!

Prioritize candidates who can:

- Attend meetings
- Think on behalf of many
- Use brief personal stories to make points that will impact many
- Be quiet and listen to the other voices in the room

Avoid:

- Personal agendas
- Need to be heard above all

Already established?

Assess perspectives, lenses and experiences of your existing members

Ask existing members what other perspectives, lenses and experiences would bring value to your conversations?

Recruit to fill gaps

Consider saying 'yes' to a voice that doesn't fill identified gaps but does bring value.

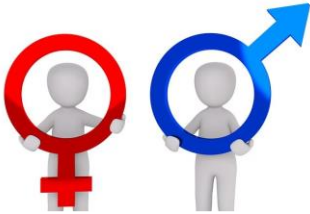
PFAC Members bring unique personal experiences, lenses, perspective

Don't be afraid to ask your members about themselves while:

- Assuring PFAs that their voices bring value to the work.
- Making all responses anonymous, all questions optional, provide a 'prefer not to say' option
- Commit to sharing any data in an aggregated, anonymized way



Age



Gender identity



Race/ethnicity



Country of origin



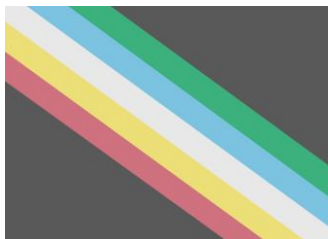
Sexual orientation



Religion



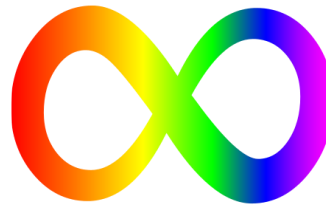
Preferred language



Disabilities



Chronic conditions



Neurodiversity



Behavioral/
mental health



Housing type



Domicile (urban,
suburban, rural)



Advisors...Don't and Do

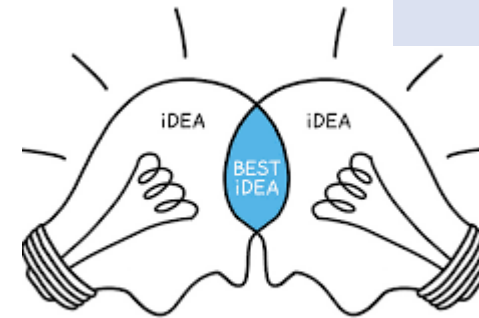
“When advisors and health care professionals are guided by mutual respect and a thirst to understand each other’s perspective, priorities, and hopes, true collaboration begins. The gift...is a profound sense of true engagement for positive change.”

Juliette Schluter

Excerpted from *Words of Advice: A Guide for Patient, Resident, and Family Advisors*



Advisors DON'T direct



Advisors DO collaborate and partner

2. Align PFAC efforts with organizational values and strategic priorities

Show your organization that your PFAC(s) are “on the team”



Alignment with organizational goals/values/priorities



Align FAC guiding principles & goals with Boston Children's:

FY22 BCH Enterprise Strategy Framework



Respect
Inclusivity
Teamwork
Kindness

**It's the
Boston
Children's
Way**

3. Level-setting

Create a single, shared understanding for moving forward

An important part of accountability and shared responsibility for action and success

Annual exercise as part of assessment survey response / pre-cursor to goal setting



Opportunities: Member Connections/Social Activities

During FAC meetings

January	Get to know me exercise
February	
March	
April	EDI bite size check in
May	
June	
July	FAC EDI workshop
September	FAC Assessment review and response
October	EDI bite size check in
November	Appreciation event/social activity
December	Dr. Churchwell/FAC Impact report (hybrid)

Between FAC meetings

WhatsApp

- Casual, easy communication access to FAC members to connect as a group or individually.
- FAC members may opt in / leave at any time.
- **Driven by FAC membership**

FAC member ‘informal meet ups’

- Casual, optional
- Virtual or in-person
- **Logistics managed by FAC membership**

2023 FAC Impact Sharing

Here are some ways that your efforts have been shared with FAC members, Hospital leadership/staff, and beyond

SPRING

- FAC Newsletter
- FAC Annual Report
 - Internal/external website
 - Email to Hospital executives, leadership and key stakeholders
- Beryl Institute “Elevate PX” conference (strategic planning)
- Beryl Institute Case Study: Care Bundles
- FAC meeting updates

FALL

- Highlights in the Patient Care Operations Biennial Report
 - Partnership with Transforming Tomorrow team
 - FAC strategic ED&I efforts
- Patient Care Operations Fall Congress
 - FY23 FAC highlights (10/1/2022-9/30/2023)
- PFAC-tor Award submission (For leadership, creativity and innovation by PFACs)
- MA state PFAC Annual report (posted to Health Care for All website)
- FAC Newsletter
- Dr. Churchwell annual visit to FAC meeting
- FAC meeting updates

4. Goal Setting

Align goals with organizational values and goals

Review and tweak yearly as needed

Impact reporting is an important part of goal setting



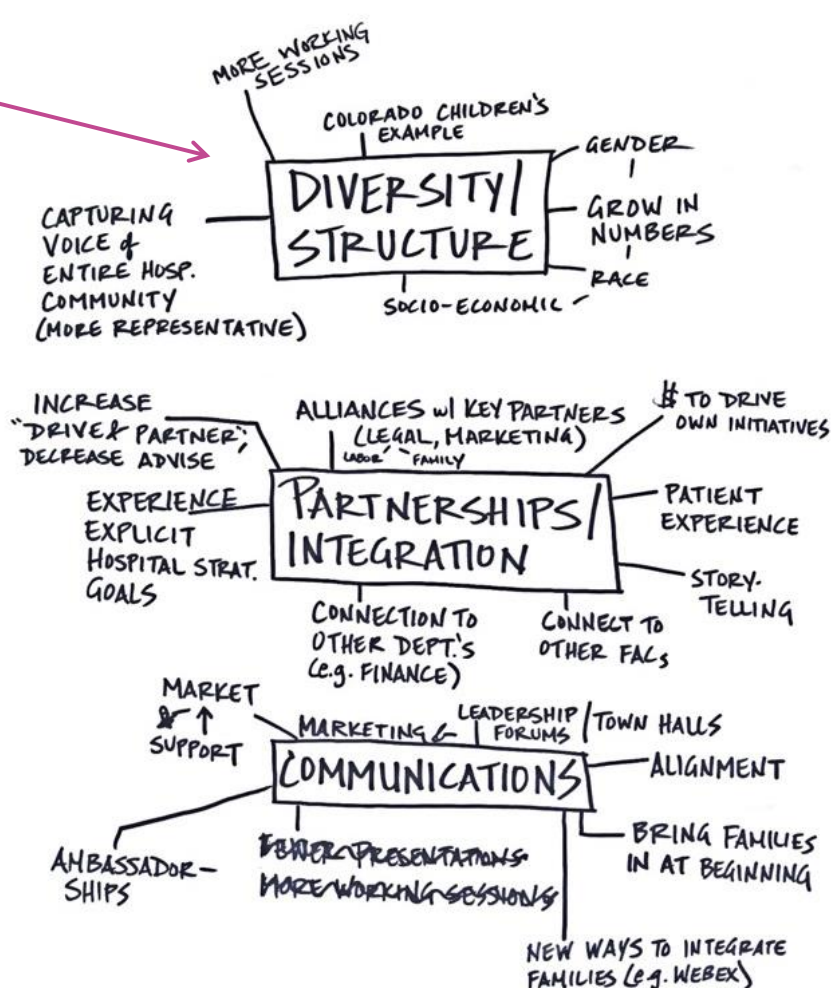
Strategic Planning: Where we started and why

In 2016, we committed to a formal FAC strategic plan and set our first set of 100% MEMBER-DRIVEN GOALS:

- To validate our Family Advisory Council as a formal working group and key partner within the organization
- Because we wanted to be able to see progress over the short- and long-term and feel like we really accomplished things
- Because we wanted a way to measure both our efforts and our impact
- To make ourselves proud and garner additional support from key stakeholders within our organization

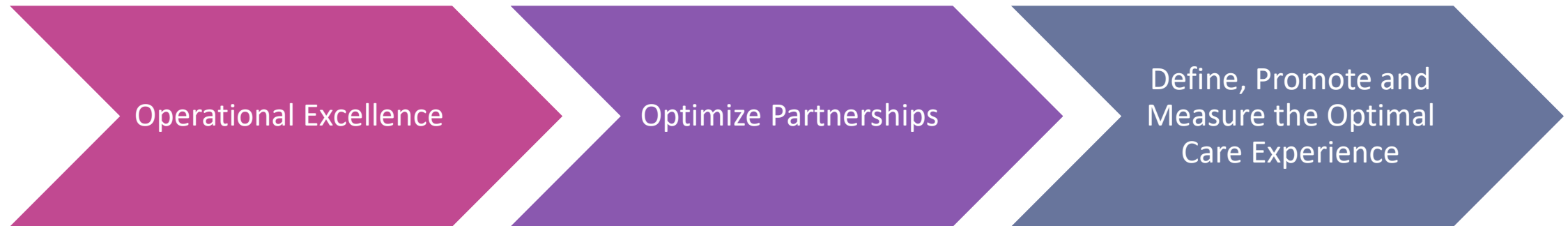


Our first goal setting brainstorm session (October 2016)



FAC Strategic Goals (2017-2019)

Three Goals



Initiative Name: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Initiative Goals: We will sustain practices and policies that currently support the efforts of the FAC. We will develop and implement new practices and policies identified as quick wins / high priorities in order to increase the FAC's efficiency/transparency/productivity and impact.

Prioritized Sub-Goals	Specific Actions	Complete By	Responsible Parties	Timing and Metrics
Yammer	1. Connect 1-1 with all members NOT using Yammer to ensure ability to participate 2. Explore alternative communication options	1. 12/31/2016 2. TBD	1. Katie Litterer / FAC parent co-chair 2. TBD	
FAC Goals	1. Clearly define and adopt FAC goals	1. 12/31/2016	1. FAC Group / Fleishman, O'Donnell	
FAC Mission	1. Clearly define and adopt unified FAC mission	1. 12/31/2016	1. FAC Group / Fleishman, Williamson	
Member Development	1. Support new members during first year term (Leverage FPC, Co-Chairs, time after meetings) 2. Advanced development for existing members	1.12/31/2016 2. TBD (2017)	1. Katie Litterer, Co-Chairs 2. TBD	
Video Meeting Access	1.Leverage video conferencing to increase family voices in the room	1. 12/31/2016	1. Shaw, TBD	

Resource Requirements: Time (FPC's are part time employees, FAC members are volunteers); May need funding to consider a new secure online forum and/or member development opportunities.

Operational Excellence 2017 Priorities

- 1. Expand FAC Steering Committee to include parents beyond co-chair**
2. Solicit Yammer feedback for improvements and better usage
3. Successfully on-board and integrate new FAC members
4. Identify FAC member training and development needs and plan to deliver
- 5. Create and implement FAC annual member survey to measure progress, impact and areas for improvement**
- 6. Explore video conferencing for FAC meetings**

5. Create and Sustain Accountability

Formal, planned actions with concrete due-dates

Shared accountability for progress/failure



Annual FAC Assessment Survey

Created to assess FAC member satisfaction

- Meeting agendas, logistics, etc.
- Perceived role of FAC within hospital
- Communication
- Personal engagement satisfaction

Accountability ensures progress

- **Review** member feedback
- **Measure** progress
- **Share** with membership
- **Accept** shared ownership
- **Be realistic** about time and resources needed to complete tasks/goals



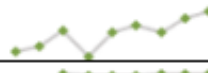





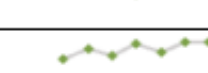

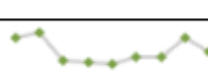
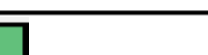
The following questions were answered by members of Boston Children's Family Advisory Council (FAC) on a scale of 1, "I strongly disagree," to 5, "I strongly agree." The below graphs represent an aggregate of those who answered with either a 4 (Good) or 5 (Very Good). Number denoted in parentheses (n) is the total number of responses for each question.



2025 FAC Assessment Results (100% response rate)

*No increases or declines greater than 10%

Trends: % of Strongly Agree & Agree by Year

FAC, Boston Children's Hospital, and Me												
Question	2017 (n=19)	2018 (n=18)	2019 (n=20)	2020 (n=19)	2021 (n=18)	2022 (n=18)	2023 (n=21)	2024 (n=19)	2025 (n=21)	Yearly Trends		
	% Strongly Agree & Agree											
As a FAC member, I clearly understand the council's mission and priorities.	94.7%	100.0%	100.0%	84.2%	100.0%	94.4%	100.0%	94.7%	95.2%			
FAC actions/member engagement in committees and work groups influences strategic decisions within Boston Children's.			75.0%	66.7%	72.2%	83.3%	81.0%	89.5%	95.2%			
FAC members receive adequate guidance/training in preparation for serving on new committees.	55.0%	58.8%	73.7%	50.0%	72.2%	77.8%	71.4%	84.2%	90.5%			
Family member perspectives are welcomed (and well-received) in the committees/workgroups that I have engaged with.			94.7%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	95.2%	94.7%	95.2%			
I am satisfied with the communication and materials I receive from FAC leadership			95.0%	88.9%	94.4%	88.9%	90.5%	94.7%	95.2%			
My opinions are listened to by others during FAC meetings.	94.7%	100.0%	95.0%	78.9%	94.4%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			
Overall, Boston Children's incorporates family voices into work throughout the organization			94.7%	73.7%	77.8%	88.9%	90.5%	94.7%	90.5%			
Overall, I am satisfied in my role as a FAC member.	78.9%	94.4%	90.0%	63.2%	94.4%	83.3%	90.5%	100.0%	90.5%			
Overall, my opinions are valued by others during FAC meetings.			95.0%	78.9%	88.9%	77.8%	90.0%	94.7%	100.0%			
The FAC and its priorities get the support they need from Boston Children's leadership			78.9%	88.9%	83.3%	94.4%	85.7%	94.7%	95.2%			
The FAC demonstrates commitment to diversity and inclusion. (Added 2020)				73.7%	94.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			
The FAC is a well-known and well-respected organization within Boston Children's.	88.9%	93.8%	68.4%	66.7%	64.7%	72.2%	71.4%	89.5%	76.2%			
	Color Scale	0-50	50-55	55-60	60-65	65-70	70-75	75-80	80-85	85-90	90-95	95-100

100%

100%

100%

Color Scale 0-50 50-55 55-60 60-65 65-70 70-75 75-80 80-85 85-90 90-95 95-100



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2025 FAC Assessment

100%

FAC Meeting Logistics										
Question	2017 (n=19)	2018 (n=18)	2019 (n=20)	2020 (n=19)	2021 (n=18)	2022 (n=18)	2023 (n=21)	2024 (n=19)	2025 (n=21)	Yearly Trends
	% Strongly Agree & Agree									
FAC presenters incorporate FAC perspectives into their work.			80.0%	93.8%	88.9%	100.0%	85.7%	88.9%	95.2%	
FAC presenters know their audience and come prepared to engage family voices.			85.0%	68.4%	94.4%	94.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
I am comfortable asking questions and sharing my opinion during FAC meetings.	89.5%	100.0%	90.0%	63.2%	83.3%	77.8%	95.2%	84.2%	95.2%	
In general, FAC meeting content is interesting to me.			95.0%	73.7%	88.9%	83.3%	81.0%	89.5%	95.2%	
Overall, FAC meetings are a valuable use of my time.			95.0%	68.4%	88.9%	83.3%	90.5%	94.7%	95.2%	

100%

FAC Culture & Diversity										
Question	2017 (n=19)	2018 (n=18)	2019 (n=20)	2020 (n=19)	2021 (n=18)	2022 (n=18)	2023 (n=21)	2024 (n=19)	2025 (n=21)	Yearly Trends
	% Strongly Agree & Agree									
The FAC membership includes a range of patient experiences, personal knowledge and diversity.	73.7%	72.2%	85.0%	78.9%	88.9%	88.9%	95.2%	100.0%	95.2%	
The FAC provides an inclusive and welcoming environment. (Added 2020)				73.7%	100.0%	94.4%	100.0%	94.7%	100.0%	



Where do you see opportunities for improvement?

1. Membership

- I would like to see us add some more diversity to the FAC with the next recruiting cycle. It's never going to be perfect but we need the FAC to better reflect and be more representative of the patient population at BCH.

2. Strategic Planning

- The FAC committee work is really a struggle for me. I'm not convinced we are accomplishing much or if there is a clear purpose. As a result, I'd ask if each FAC member really needs to be on a committee.
- Re-examine the FAC goals and taking on a FAC driven project.
- It would be good to take time this fall to expand our strategic goals and give us something new to achieve and strive for.
- How to get enterprise goals more integrated with family centered values.
- Personal experience & group wide projects, i.e. family rounds, etc.

3. FAC Brand/Reach/Impact:

- At times it can be frustrating to hear the front line staff do not follow hospital initiatives especially when they impact the patients and families.
- The "employees and departments" seem to value and directly implement our views and insights. Based on the marketing meeting, I'm not sure how valuable our input is to the "higher ups" - in theory I know it is but I also witnessed the CMO dismissing our ideas when it came to important messaging targeting families. It leaves me wondering the hospital-wide value placed (at all echelons) on our insights and feedback not only in theory but in practice. (Yes, that meeting really affected me.)

4. Committees/Engagement/Feedback:

- I would like to see us using Yammer even more than we do (but realize this is an ongoing challenge).
- There are still some committees better suited to have families than others. And we should continue to work toward even greater diversity of the FAC by more traditional measures.
- I am still somewhat confused about the committee process and how to contribute outside of the standing meetings.
- I wish we got more opportunities like the one I received to visit the SIM Lab and see how that works after we gave input to the mArk app. That was an amazing experience that opened my eyes to the level that BCH goes to be the best. I also wish, in general, that I was better able to share and use the things that I'm particularly an expert at in my professional life to the benefit of the FAC and BCH but I don't think I've been able to be as useful in those specific capacities because there haven't been a ton of opportunities but also because I'm not sure if it is a focus in terms of what people feel their strengths are and aligning that to where they contribute on specific efforts in a micro way.
- I think the new recruits are able now to join committees and we should find opportunities for them.
- I'd like to see more preparation for committees, more tracking of our accomplishments so that we can see the outcomes of our efforts in various ways - from the virtual forum, to committee work to FAC presenters...I want to know what happens after the come to see us at FAC meetings.
- Personally, I'm hoping to find more time to participate in more groups/experiences.
- More thought needs to be given to the timing of meeting of committees FAC members are asked to serve on.
- If we could have almost a running list of contact info for people who have come in to present to us. I have often had an experience I want to share with a previous presenter
- that I know would benefit from the feedback but have a hard time looking through past agendas in yammer for the name of the person.

PFAs shape goals

- Demonstrate to PFAs that you 'hear' them.
- Use themes in comments to identify opportunities.



PFAC member comments: Points of pride (2025)

“It has been wonderful to see some of our work come to be visible over the years. Several hospital groups have returned to continue work that was started years before and I can see the changes slowly making their way into the hospital experience—from the environment to the website experience to messaging and appointment making.”

“One of the things I’m most proud of is how authentic this group is. There’s a genuine care for one another and for the work itself. As a group, we really take pride in how effective our voice can be across the organization, and we actively look for ways to be involved and to create positive change. That kind of authenticity makes it feel good to be part of the FAC because it’s not just a meeting to attend, it’s a space where our voices truly matter.”



Opportunities: Fostering FAC member connection/socialization (2025)

Suggestions

Use more breakout groups for personal connection

A newsletter about what FAC members are working on between monthly meetings

More hybrid or on-site opportunities

More socialization opportunities

We can do this!

Would love to resurrect our FAC newsletter. It was run by FAC members...Volunteers welcome!

Based on attendance, we will maintain 2-3 opportunities per year.

We welcome you to connect with fellow FAC members outside of FAC meetings These opportunities rely on FAC members connecting directly with one another.

Responses



Shared responsibility: What PFAC members can do to help

Join the Internal Culture team:

All are welcome!

Join the Care Bundles team:

All are welcome!

Enter Your FAC Activities

All our self-recorded activities add up to show our FAC impact

Complete our surveys:
Your voices guide us

Share topics that you would like to see in the newsletter.

Volunteer Opportunities:
If you become aware of an opportunity (like the radio-a-thon), please let us know.

5. Spreading the word about your PFAC work

Annual impact report

Take every opportunity along the way for informal impact reporting opportunities

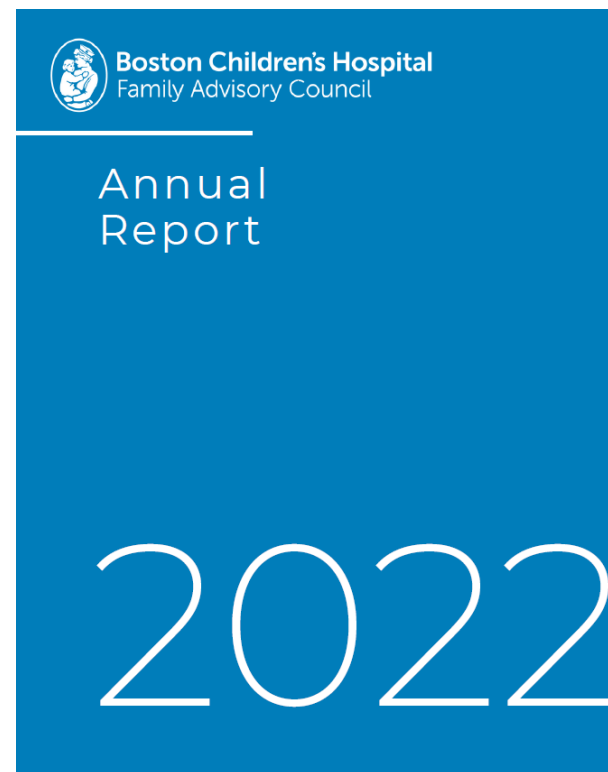


Communication with Hospital Executives & Key Stakeholders

We stay in touch regularly with Hospital leadership, key stakeholders and our workforce



Annual card sent directly to Hospital Executives, leaders and key stakeholders with encouragement to share with their teams



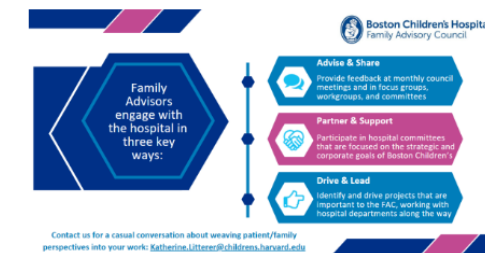
Annual report sent directly to Hospital Executives, leaders and key stakeholders. Posted to internal and external webpages

Family Advisory Council (FAC) Annual Report with a Special Thank You and Invitation

*From the Boston Children's Family Advisory Council:
A special THANK YOU and invitation to partner with us*

On behalf of the Boston Children's Hospital **Family Advisory Council (FAC)**, we would like thank you for all that you do for the patients and families seeking care here. Regardless of your role, you are a part of the patient and family experience and we appreciate you.

The Family Advisory Council (FAC) represents the voices of patients and caregivers of Boston Children's Hospital. Membership includes parents and caregivers, one adult patient, and staff members. If you're not familiar with us, here are a few quick facts about the Boston Children's Family Advisory Council.



We invite you to connect with us! There are many different ways to weave patient and family perspectives into your work. It's often easier than you think. Please consider a casual conversation to learn more about opportunities that fit your needs and your work.

Internal webpage post accessible by all members

Key Areas of FAC Impact Aligned with FY22 Enterprise Strategy Framework



2022 Top Challenges

Integration of Membership with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

We welcomed our first FAC member with Limited English Proficiency to the council in January 2022. We have learned from our mistakes and solicit feedback from members regularly as we work to make meetings the best they can be for all of our members.

Driving FAC Strategic Initiatives

Two strategic initiatives: Online Support for Patients and Families and Education Experience are highly dependent on BCH stakeholder partnerships. Attrition, redirection of resources for Covid-related work and increased patient/family needs resulted in BCH partners being unable to assist us in executing these initiatives.

Maintaining/Enhancing Internal FAC Culture Virtually

Though we remain committed to finding creative ways to build and sustain connections amongst our membership, operating in a 100% virtual environment is an every day challenge that we face.

Leadership Transitions / FAC Staffing Capacity

We have experienced a number of shifts and transitions within FAC leadership and FAC staff. Since 2020, FAC staff support has been reduced by 50%. In 2021, we had three different senior leadership co-chairs in the role.

Reengaging Hospital Partners to Revive Historically In-person Engagements 'Post Pandemic'

From 2016-February 2020, FAC members directly impacted BCH employees through speaking engagements. With a shift to virtual learning, many opportunities were eliminated. Speaking engagement opportunities have been much missed by FAC members.



Celebrate internal partners & create accountability for future

Impact story

Phlebotomy Visit Time Improvement Project

Average visit time
REDUCED by



Project overview

In early 2024, the main Phlebotomy clinic observed that **only 41% of patients** were completing lab appointments in under 20 minutes. Recognizing an opportunity for improvement, Laboratory medicine leadership partnered with the Boston Children's Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) to address this.



Partnership

The project team partnered with staff, patients and families. Their feedback validated the need to improve wait times and highlighted areas where communication and clinic processes could be improved. Patient/family insights were gathered through an E-Advisors survey, a live conversation with the Family Advisory Council and collaborating directly with a family advisor.



Results

As of September 2024, **77% of patients** are completing their visit in under 20 minutes. Key changes include a more efficient registration process, clear/concise staff roles and a new room management process. A new patient registration form was introduced based on family feedback, giving families the opportunity to share their child's individual needs.

"Partnering with FAC members made a huge impact on this project. Their honest feedback gave us a deeper understanding of patient needs and helped us make meaningful changes that directly improved the clinic experience." – Enterprise Project Management Office

Partnership spotlight



Virtual Care

The Family Advisory Council provided feedback on recent Digital Health Project Mosaic changes and workflows during a June 2024 listening session, helping guide the Virtual Care team's priorities for improving patient and family experiences with the new Epic-based platform (e.g., eCheck-in).

Key insights from FAC members included:

- Confusion around the consent forms required before each visit
- Unclear communication regarding the visit modality
- Concerns that the eCheck-in process is too lengthy overall
- Concerns that the eCheck-in process includes questionnaires that are not relevant to virtual visits.

Thanks to feedback received from Family Advisory Council members, the team addressed eCheck-in as a top priority for post go-live optimization and has worked to improve each of the above insights in an effort to streamline the patient and family experience and make it as straightforward as possible.

Virtual Visits Team

"Family voices are essential to driving **meaningful change** at Boston Children's and should always be considered as we work to improve the patient and family experience. Our product team has gained a **deeper understanding** of how our technology and workflows affect patient and family experience by listening to those experiences, and we have also been able to work towards improvements that are truly **patient and family centered**."



Christina Brown
Director, Patient Virtual Care

Katie Finn
Product Manager

Sara Canoy
Product Associate

Next steps

The FAC is currently half way through our 2023-25 strategic plan. We continue to focus on action items that have been identified as priorities by our volunteer membership. Some of those efforts, guided by member feedback collected during the summer of 2024, include:



FAC Member Experience

- Enhanced member connection opportunities: during FAC meetings, in-between FAC meetings, digital, in-person, etc.
- ED&I education for members (ongoing)
- Expanded engagement opportunities: Disability Competent Care, ED&I, Education & Training for staff



Patient & Family Experience

- Welcome information for patients and families
- Care Bundles Program
- Committee, workgroup and project engagements



Workforce Experience

- Increase educational touchpoints for staff
- Provide patient/family-perspective education to medical learners
- Best in Care Award celebration
- Partnership Seal recognition program



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Key takeaways

Build and maintain member driven PFACs

Align PFAC goals with organizational values and strategic priorities

Level-set every year to create a shared understanding of your PFAC purview, goals, accountability

Active listening ensures member-driven goals: Consider soliciting annual feedback from PFAs

Implement practices that create and support **accountability**

Impact reporting is part of your goal-setting cycle

Questions?

OfficeofExperience@childrens.harvard.edu



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Appendix



BCH FAC Members engage with the organization in three key ways:

Advise & Share

- Provide feedback at monthly council meetings and in focus groups, workgroups, and committees.

Partner & Support

- Participate in hospital committees that are focused on the strategic and corporate goals of Boston Children's.

Drive & Lead*****

- Identify and drive projects that are important to the FAC, working with hospital departments along the way.

*With organizational support

FAC member points of pride & how we earned these comments

“The FAC is filled with incredible, hard-working, resilient voices. Everyone is invested and very committed to the mission.”

“It feels like our feedback is taken very seriously by presenters and makes a real impact.”

“Seeing our feedback incorporated into the BCH experience. Lately it’s been neat to see all the aspects of the MyChildren’s Portal and secure messaging come alive.”

- Set expectations for new member BEFORE they join the council.
- Hold the line.

- Prep all presenters before FAC meetings.
- Audience, content, questions.

- Advocate for PFAC engagement
- Show stakeholders the benefit
- Foster long-term relationships and create allies.



Put your work out there

Impact reporting can be a great recruitment tool:

[BCH FAC FY2024 Annual Report](#)

[E-Advisors Impact Report 2023-2024](#)



FY 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024

Boston Children's Hospital-Wide Family
Advisory Council
