

# Patient and Family Advisory Council Membership Guidelines



Pen Bay Medical Center  
MaineHealth



Waldo County General Hospital  
MaineHealth

# I. Council Membership

The Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) is composed of patients and family members from the Midcoast Maine community and Pen Bay Medical Center and Waldo County General Hospital staff.

## II. Community PFAC Members

PFAC will have ten to twelve community members, with roughly half from the Pen Bay Medical Center (PBMC) and half from the Waldo County General Hospital (WCGH) communities.

PFAC community members are patients and family members who ideally have had a healthcare experience within the past three years in one or more settings across Pen Bay Medical Center and Waldo County General Hospital. Community members may include patients, parents, spouses, partners, significant others, siblings, grandparents, step-relatives, close friends and other caregivers who are interested in working together to accomplish the mission and support the values embodied in the PFAC Charter.

To assure continuity, community members of PFAC are asked to commit to a two-year term. Community members may commit to additional terms provided they have been actively participating in PFAC meetings and related activities.

Community members will be expected to attend regularly scheduled monthly PFAC meetings. Inability to maintain this commitment will be reviewed by the chairperson(s).

If a member is not able to attend any given meeting, they should notify a chairperson or PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative. After three or more absences, a member may be asked by a chairperson or PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative to step down so that the position can be filled by another.

When a PFAC Community member terminates his or her membership in the Council they will return their hospital photo ID Badge to the PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative. The commitment made to respect patient and hospital confidentiality continues indefinitely.

In January, or as soon as reasonably possible, by simple majority vote, community members will elect two co-chairs to serve for a term of one year. One co-chair will be selected from the PBMC community and one from the WCGH community. If a chairperson must step down during their term, the council will hold an election as soon as reasonably convenient to appoint a new co-chair to complete that person's term.

At least one of the chairpersons should have a minimum of one year of experience on the PFAC or a similar healthcare council. The co-chairs will work in alignment with the PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative to set agendas, review membership applications, provide orientation for new members, and assist with internal and external communications regarding the PFAC and its work. The chairpersons and other PFAC members will also represent the PFAC at appropriate public forums.

## III. PBMC | WCGH PFAC Members

PBMC and WCGH will assign at least one employee from each site to serve on this group. Both sites will also assign a provider lead who will attend, at minimum, on a quarterly basis, ideally attending the same meetings.

One employee will be assigned as the PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative for the council.

As needed, additional staff, support and subject matter experts may be invited to PFAC meetings to provide input, answer questions and inform PFAC community members about specific topics as well as to obtain feedback from the council.

At least on an annual basis, Pen Bay Medical Center and Waldo County General Hospital Executive Administration will be scheduled to meet with the council.

## IV. Responsibilities of PFAC Members

- Encourage and participate in PBMC and WCGH public education outreach initiatives including efforts to let the public know about public health issues and PBMC and WCGH health recommendations and report on results of ongoing quality improvement programs at PBMC and WCGH organizations.
- Be committed to improving quality care and patient experience for all PBMC and WCGH patients and family members.
- Evaluate and offer feedback to PBMC and WCGH staff concerning reports about current quality improvement results, ongoing statistics about ongoing efforts to continuously improve the quality of healthcare practices and outcomes, patient experience and satisfaction issues brought to the council by administration, caregivers, patients and families.
- Serve as advisors and community liaisons and be actively involved in efforts to communicate quality improvement results and statistics to the public.
- Share personal experiences, observations and opinions as a patient or family member. Additionally, reach out broadly and listen to other patients, families, staff and community members as opportunities arise.
- Respect the collaborative process and the PFAC forum to discuss issues, be willing to listen to and consider differing viewpoints, share ideas for improvement and encourage other council members to do the same.
- Share both positive and negative experiences in a constructive way.
- Set annual priorities for council-driven initiatives, and report on their status on a quarterly basis.
- Collaborate in bringing about positive systematic change.
- Respect confidentiality at all times.

## V. Recruiting and Orienting New PFAC Members

Members of the general public and PBMC and WCGH employees are also invited to attend any meeting by invitation and approval of PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative and/or PFAC co-chairs whether or not these individuals are interested in becoming a PFAC Community member.

Potential PFAC members are recruited by word of mouth throughout the Midcoast areas served by Pen

Bay Medical Center and Waldo County General Hospital by providers, employees, current and former council members, and by other means such as press releases, news bulletins on website pages, radio, tv, and newspaper, staff emails, and participation at local government and healthcare events within the community.

Potential members will be invited to attend PFAC meetings as an observer to determine their interest in working on the council.

Potential new community members will fill out the PFAC Application Form\* and return it to the PBMC | WCGH PFAC lead representative who will make it available to the co-chairs for review. The PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative or designee may (optionally) conduct an informal interview by phone, email or in person. The request for membership is then presented to the full council for consideration. Once a decision is made, the PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative will advise the candidate accordingly.

Once approved, the new PFAC community member will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement and obtain a hospital PFAC Volunteer photo ID badge.

A new PFAC community member will receive a new member packet containing a copy of the PFAC Charter, PFAC Membership Guidelines, the most recent agenda and minutes, notice of meeting times and places, PFAC membership contact information, “Patient and Family Guide to Care” booklet, supply of “Feedback Cards,” and any other related documents deemed appropriate. The chairpersons and PBMC and WCGH PFAC lead representative will provide new members with orientation and education regarding membership roles and responsibilities, as needed.

The PFAC meets monthly on the fourth (4th) Monday from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. unless otherwise agreed upon by the membership. Members are expected to arrive at least 5-10 minutes early so that the video-conference can start promptly as scheduled. Lunch can be obtained from the WCGH Café or PBMC room set-up.

PFAC Community members may attend monthly meetings at either the Waldo County General Hospital or Pen Bay Medical Center meeting room. The meetings are generally held via video-conference between the two sites, whenever feasible. Other meeting arrangements may be set by prior notice as needed.

## VI. PFAC Reporting Structure

Patient and Family Advisory Council

Coastal Healthcare Alliance

Pen Bay Medical Center | Pen Bay Physician Associates

Waldo County General Hospital | Waldo County Medical Partners

