Sault Area Hospital Patient and Family Advisor: Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose:

The Patient or Family Advisors (PFA) is a person who has had a recent experience (generally within 2 years) of being a patient or the family member[1] of a patient and is partnering with senior leadership, board members, staff and physicians to provide direct input into policies, programs and practices which effect patient care and services.

The primary purpose of the Patient and Family Advisor is to provide reasonable, valuable, insight, suggestions and recommendations to the Sault Area Hospital as requested. This input is intended to ensure the voice of the patient and family is brought into the decision making process with the goal of improving health care service delivery and ultimately, the patient's experience with their care.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The key roles and responsibilities of Patient and Family Advisors are:

- Contribute ideas and suggestions that will enhance patient and public involvement in health service planning and decision-making so that the patient has a voice in the delivery of health care services
- Participate as an active member of the committee or working group to which they have been invited. Attend meetings regularly
- Tell their story and share their point of view, but be able to objectively listen to and appreciate the views of others
- Provide input into patient care and organizational processes, and to advocate for patient and family needs from a broad perspective
- Show commitment to improving care for all patients and family members at Sault Area Hospital by ensuring that the patient is the focal point of all discussions
- Promote improved collaboration and relationships between patients, families and staff
- Review recommendations referred to the council by staff
- Participate in the development of new programs, services and facilities

Expectations in the Role of Patient and Family Advisor:

The Patient and Family Advisors can expect to:

- Have internal processes and terminology explained to them as needed for clarification and understanding

[1] family members may be defined as significant in the life of the patient including immediate family, extended family, community members and close friends

- Be listened to and respected for their insight and suggestions
- Be assigned a staff coordinator to address any question or concerns related to the involvement on the Patient and Family Advisory Council
- Attend an orientation session with Volunteer Resources in conjunction with an orientation to their role as advisor

The Sault Area Hospital expects Patient and Family Advisors to:

- Respect the collaborative process and understand that the final decision-making related to care delivery and process improvements is the responsibility of the administration of Sault Area Hospital
- Maintain confidentiality of patient and organizational sensitive material
- Be positive and supportive of the Sault Area Hospital's mission which *Is Exceptional People Working Together to Provide Outstanding Care in Algoma*

Characteristics of a Successful Advisor

- Respectful of others and their perspectives
- Comfortable speaking in a group and interacting with others
- Good listener
- Able to use their personal experience constructively
- Able to see beyond their own experience
- Able to see the big picture
- Demonstrates a non-judgmental and positive attitude
- Ability to work collaboratively with other families and healthcare providers
- Desire to expand their knowledge and skills
- Desire to participate in bringing about meaningful change
- Able to maintain confidentiality of patient and organizational information