

Insight Innovation Impact

Patient and Family Advisory Councils
Impact Statement 2014

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Thank You

As our health care system strives to become the national leader for health by 2020, the role of the council members continues to be invaluable. The unique perspectives and willingness to get involved and speak up are instrumental to our success in creating an exceptional experience that is centered on those we serve.

The councils' insights help us appreciate the complexities of health care and our organization. With our shared commitment to develop new and better models of care, we are confidently moving forward together to meet the evolving needs of our patients, members and families. Through our combined voices and actions, we will continue to create meaningful connections between our care teams and individuals in our care.

On behalf of all Spectrum Health leadership, we would like to thank all of the Advisory Council members for their time, dedication and partnership.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seth W. Wolk".

Seth Wolk, MD, MHSA
Chief Medical Officer, Spectrum Health
President, Spectrum Health Medical Group



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina M Freese-Decker".

Christina Freese-Decker
President
Spectrum Health Hospital Group



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kurt Knoth".

Kurt Knoth
Vice President, Performance Improvement
Spectrum Health

The Role of Councils



"By working collaboratively to maintain a constructive atmosphere and provide positive feedback toward a patient-centered experience, we've been able to help make Spectrum Health the best system in our community for patients and their families to receive exceptional care."

- Stephenie Young, Chair, Executive Patient and Family Advisory Council

"The elegance of the simple and sometimes obvious input from our community members is so vital for our programs, facilities and services."

- Randy Stasik, President,
Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial Hospital

"So often, it is easy to think that change in a large organization will be a long, complicated process. That is not the case at Spectrum Health."

- David Weinandy, Chair,
Orthopaedic/Neuroscience
Patient and Family
Advisory Council

Patients, families and members of our health plan are central to everything we do at Spectrum Health. They are the people we serve and the reason we are here.

The Patient, Family and Member Advisory Councils help us ensure the experience we provide is based on their needs and expectations.

With the oversight of the Executive Patient and Family Advisory Council, all of the councils work to:

- Promote patient- and family-centered care principles
- Establish priorities related to policies, programs and practices that support patients, families and members
- Assist in developing strategies to strengthen communication and collaboration between health care providers and those we serve
- Promote patient and family access to information, support and educational resources useful to them in making health care decisions
- Contribute to the education of present and future health care providers in the principles of patient- and family-centered care
- Assist in planning new facilities and facility renovations
- Develop creative and cost-effective solutions to problems
- Improve patient, family and member satisfaction
- Serve as a link between the community and our organization
- Integrate themselves into the larger Spectrum Health community by serving on key committees

Process Improvement

“I saw how my health record worked and what my doctors and other health professionals deal with. I feel like I had a real impact on making the information useful for patients.”

– Aimee Sterk, Outpatient Services Patient and Family Advisory Council

Measurement of Impact

For 2014

54

PI events that included PFAC members

38

PFAC members participated in events

11

Council members participated in more than one event

1,296

Hours were given by PFAC members who participated in PI events

The Spectrum Health Process Improvement (PI) approach is based on lean principles that begin with the identification and elimination of waste, as defined by the patient. This ensures that all work adds value and serves the customer’s (the patient’s) needs.

By participating in PI events, council members drive change to improve our processes and the experiences of our patients.

PFAC Members Were Part of the Following PI Events:

- Call Light Response
- Emergency Department
- Supply Chain
- Pharmacy
- Surgery
- Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital (HDVCH) Specialty Clinics
- HDVCH Pediatric Sedation
- Adult Critical Care
- Financial Services
- Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline
- Continuing Care—Kalamazoo Avenue Facility Design
- Primary Care
- Observation Status
- Electronic Health Record
- Breast Care
- HDVCH Discharge Process

“I was asked to talk about the miscues I experienced during admission and registration, and helped brainstorm ideas with staff and administrators. As a result, new procedures and training for staff were implemented.”

– Marybeth Rardin, Continuing Care Patient and Family Advisory Council

Executive Patient and Family Advisory Council



“By working collaboratively to maintain a constructive atmosphere and provide positive feedback toward a patient-centered experience, we’ve helped ensure patients and their families receive exceptional care. I’m so proud of everyone on the councils for living out this passion and for continuously working toward improvement.”

– Stephenie Young, Chair, Executive Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Chronic pain patients in emergency department
- Performance Improvement—managing for daily improvement
- Veterans’ services
- Regional hospitals
- Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline
- System strategy
- MyHealth
- Parking and valet services
- Security—weapon-free zone

Connecting With Telehealth

The Executive PFAC, along with many other councils, learned more about telehealth and new Spectrum Health services that utilize advanced technology to remotely connect patients and providers.

Remote monitoring is being piloted for cardiology services at United and Kelsey hospitals, the Ostomy Clinic, maternal fetal medicine, psychiatry and the Lung Cancer Care Clinic, and for primary care through virtual doctor visits.

The goal is to provide care from the appropriate physician in a timely manner to save patients the inconvenience and cost of traveling to appointments. PFAC provided leadership with insight about how patients would respond to a visit through the use of technology. They discussed how it might enhance the patient’s experience.

PFAC also provided feedback on additional telehealth training for providers. Members supported the idea of utilizing technology and recognized the benefits of improved access to services.



Stephenie Young and Mike Kramer, MD, receiving a demonstration of the telehealth mobile unit from Joseph Brennan.



Officer Fix with his handler, Spectrum Health Security Police Officer Derek Karcher.

Creating a Culture of Safety

Safety impacts many aspects of care, from the environment to medications to processes and procedures.

PFAC offered suggestions for communicating and engaging patients and families in our culture of safety. Members engaged with Norm Chapin, MD, vice president, ambulatory quality and

community health, and Matthew Schreiber, MD, vice president, quality and patient safety. The council shared how patients evaluate the physician's ability to provide safe care.

Brian Uridge, director, security services, engaged the council for multiple security initiatives. PFAC members participated with the security and safety task force to discuss a weapon-free zone for security officers. They also explored ways to ensure families and visitors feel safe in the parking ramps. PFAC members met Spectrum Health's new canine officer, a German shepherd named Fix, and interviewed his handler.

Preparing Residents for the Patient Experience

Spectrum Health leadership and Grand Rapids Medical Education Partners have a vested interest in medical resident education. In fact, more than 75 percent of residents do their rotations at Spectrum Health facilities to develop core competencies that include patient care and medical knowledge, communication, professionalism and systems-based care.

Spectrum Health's physician leader for academic care asked PFAC members for their input on competency. Members voiced their desire for compassionate physicians who listen. After reviewing simulation videos and providing feedback, key council members participated in a panel discussion to talk with third- and fourth-year residents about their expectations of the experience and role of the physician.

"It is remarkable how our PFAC members tirelessly invest in improving Spectrum Health. Their presence on committees and feedback at Rapid Improvement Events substantially improve the result of our work. As leaders, this feedback keeps our judgment real and grounded."

- Mike Kramer, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer, Spectrum Health Delivery System

Meet Steve Christians



Having undergone numerous surgeries and procedures at Spectrum Health as a result of his paralysis, Steve has had extensive patient experiences. “The people at Spectrum Health have been great,” Steve stated. “However, many of the policies and procedures don’t work for my situation.”

Steve offered his comments in a letter, was asked to share his view with system leaders and subsequently joined the council. “It was a great experience talking to leadership—everyone in the room was concerned, and my wife and I didn’t sugarcoat the situation. They asked a lot of questions and made some changes to policies that made our future visits smoother,” said Steve.

“When someone is admitted to the hospital, it’s because things are not going as planned, so to make things easier helps everyone,” he added.

Steve’s role in the PFAC has connected him with opportunities to contribute, including participating in a patient panel with new physicians and making improvements to the handicap parking ramp across from Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital. Membership has put Steve in touch with the right people to impact positive change.

“My time on the PFAC has been interesting and exciting, and I look forward to many years of continuing to serve my community,” said Steve.

Thanks to all of our council members

Executive Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Stephenie Young, Chair • Carolyn “Skeet” Slocum, Vice Chair • Tino Caviggiola • Steve Christians • Andy DeVries • Dan Ford • Anita Jones • Mary Ellen Mika • John Nash • Carmen Villahermosa-de-Cox • Julie Wallace

Service Line Chairs

MK Patterson-Weiden • Carmen Villahermosa-de-Cox • Tony Neifert • Billie Jean Dutmers • Jeff McKnight • Leah Hansen • David Weinandy • Laurie Supinski • Josh Gibbs • Rick Diamond • Walter Gorak • Jan Heerspink

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Tina Freese-Decker, President, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Seth Wolk, MD, President, Spectrum Health Medical Group/Chief Medical Officer, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Kurt Knoth, Vice President, Performance Improvement, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Doug Apple, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Sarah Banks, Vice President, Operations, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- James Bonner, Director, Patient Experience, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Brian Brassler, President, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals
- Marnie Byers, Vice President, Health Management Services, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Marc Chircop, Senior Vice President, Regional Relationships, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Brad Crawford, Vice President, Operations, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Mike Harrison, MD, Department Chief, Critical Care, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Jay LaBine, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Priority Health
- Julie Lepzinski, Vice President, Human Resources, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Mike Kramer, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Carol Nowak, Director, Customer Experience, Priority Health
- Edward Millermaier, MD, Primary Care Department Chief, Spectrum Health Medical Group

- Carole Montgomery, MD, Vice President, Clinical Health Management Services, Spectrum Health Delivery System
- Ralph Rogers, MD, Vice President, Medical Affairs/Chief Medical Officer, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Shari Schwanzl, Vice President, Operations/Nursing, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Erik Stalhandske, Chief Operating Officer, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Randy Stasik, President, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial Hospital
- Kim Suarez, Vice President, Medical Operations, Priority Health
- Shawn Ulreich, Chief Nursing Officer/Vice President, Clinical Operations, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Mary Kay VanDriel, President, Spectrum Health Big Rapids and Reed City Hospitals
- Henry Veenstra, President, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital
- Mark Vipperman, President, Spectrum Health Ludington Hospital

Council Support

- Deb Sprague, Program Manager, Patient and Family Services, Center for Patient Experience
- Lisa White, Administrative Assistant, Patient Experience

Heart & Vascular Patient and Family Advisory Council



“The leaders at Spectrum Health have been very enthusiastic and committed to making all of our experiences the best they can be.”

– M.K. Patterson-Weiden, Chair, Heart & Vascular Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Cardiac rehab
- ICU transitions
- Lung transplant update
- Women’s heart health
- Cardio-oncology
- Anticoagulation clinic
- Advance care planning
- Regional services
- Limb care and preservation clinic
- Vein Center
- Metabolic wellness program
- Abriiz® health tracking application
- Process Improvement



Tracey Burke and Tino Cavaggiola rounding in the Vein Center, a service of Spectrum Health Medical Group.

Managing Pain Through Improved Communications

Many disciplines are represented on the health care team to provide proper pain management. Providers and leadership from various inpatient units engaged the Heart & Vascular PFAC to identify the various ways patients describe pain. Based on their feedback, the process for managing pain was evaluated and areas for improvement were identified. Having the patient’s perspective was vital in helping providers and staff understand how tools, such as the patient whiteboard, can be leveraged to enhance communication. For example, by sharing information such as medication dosing time, patients can engage with staff, feel more empowered to actively participate in the plan and understand what to expect.

Streamlining the Scheduling Process for Heart Patients

With input from PFAC, outpatient cardiology services and cardiac rehabilitation have enhanced communication and way-finding and improved the patient experience. With more than 30 physicians, scheduling can be a complex process for both patients and staff. The Heart & Vascular PFAC worked with leadership and staff to streamline the process, providing patients with improved access and communication. Patients now have a consistent care team, from physician to scheduler, and staff is dedicated to making a great first impression. PFAC members also weighed in on wait times and the checkout process.

Introducing New Services for Vein Care

In the past year, Spectrum Health Medical Group added the Vein Center, dedicated to therapeutic and cosmetic vein care. The council was consulted to help develop messaging to the community about the availability of new services. Members toured the Vein Center to provide leadership with feedback on the look and feel of the lobby, registration area, exam room and procedure rooms. Their goal was to create a warm and welcoming space that supports a calm and healing environment. The council also made recommendations to improve the experience through technology and decor.

“Thank you to our PFAC members for having the biggest hearts of all! We truly could not be successful in meeting our mission or vision without your voices guiding us.”

– Spectrum Health Heart & Vascular Leadership Team

Front row: Ann Holmes, Donna Klungle, Jennifer Veltman. Back Row: Cheryl Wanless, Deb Sprague, Kris Vandenberg, Tino Caviggiola, Mike Kelly, Tracey Burke, Jim Heidenga, James Bonner, Jeffery Decker, MD, Scott Kearney.



Meet Cheryl Wanless



When Cheryl's husband was told he needed to have heart surgery, the distressing news came as a surprise. This was new territory for him and his family—but not for the staff at Fred and Lena Meijer Heart Center.

Despite her initial fear and anxiety, Cheryl was soon comforted by the expertise and involvement of the medical teams that cared for her husband. "The team guided us through each step before, during and after surgery, and made sure to include me in the care plan," said Cheryl. "They showed compassion and willingness to answer our questions, and provided top-notch, individualized care. We never felt like just another case."

After giving the Spectrum Health Medical Group some suggestions on how to improve a standard physical examination form, Cheryl was introduced to PFAC. She learned that the group offered a way to provide ongoing feedback about health care in specific areas of interest.

"An organization that wants suggestions, is not afraid to be challenged and listens is the place I want to go for care," said Cheryl. "It's really fulfilling to work on projects where we help identify and eliminate patient and family anxiety by improving communications."

Cancer Program Patient and Family Advisory Council



"I've seen firsthand the changes made because Spectrum Health listened to our recommendations. Working shoulder to shoulder with employees has created synergies for a better patient experience."

- Carmen Villahermosa-de-Cox, Chair, Cancer Program Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Financial support
- My Health Journal
- Music Therapy Program
- Survivorship Training and Rehab Program
- Resource library
- Parking
- Signage and directions
- Gift shop
- Lobby entrance
- Valet services

Building a Legacy: Adult Blood and Marrow Transplant Program

Over the past few years, the PFAC has actively aided in the development of Spectrum Health's Adult Blood and Marrow Transplant (ABMT) Program, from consulting on the clinic's layout to helping select artwork and furniture. Following the clinic's opening at the Lemmen-Holton Cancer Pavilion, council members rounded to provide input on the look and feel of the space with recommendations to make it healing and calming. They also suggested the addition of financial counseling.

Scott Melby, a new member of the PFAC, appreciates having the services provided at Spectrum Health. "It was a great relief to me and my family to be able to receive services from leaders in health care near home," he said.



Front Row: Carmen Villahermosa-de-Cox, Heather Gluszewski, Rocio Salvador-Santos, Gerri Roobol, Mary Ann McAvoy. Back Row: Wendy Koopman, Mary Dougherty, Scott Melby, Bret Zillmer, Bill Crooks, Don Pleune, Linda Fish, Angie Ditmar.

Enhancing Language Services: Cultural Conversations

Complex medical terms are difficult to understand. Confusion is even more significant for patients with English as their second language. The PFAC and cancer program leadership partnered to increase the health literacy of translators. Edna Bermejo, manager, Spectrum Health Language Services, concurred with the council on the importance of correct translation and for interpreters to advocate for patients, asking for clarification when necessary. Cancer program leadership has also partnered with language services staff on cultural awareness educational opportunities to ensure that all patients receive supportive and healing care throughout the cancer journey.

Knowing Whom to Call

By sharing their personal experiences when first hearing the words “You have cancer,” the PFAC agreed on the development of a regional strategy to create a single point of entry for cancer services. This strategy included a name change to encompass all of Spectrum Health’s cancer programs (Spectrum Health Regional Cancer Center and Regional Network), along with a new direct dial number—855.SHCANCER. Callers can request a consultation, get a second opinion, refer a patient or schedule an appointment. The goal is to provide patients with a single source of truth, and the confidence that they can receive help when they need it.



Erin Wegener, music therapist, plays for Bill Crooks. PFAC supports the music therapy program and its benefits for cancer patients and families.

“We want to thank the patients and caregivers who give their time to help us as we strive to become the very best. This past year, the focus on expanding and diversifying our cancer care support services has helped us reach even more of our friends and neighbors in need.”

– Judy L. Smith, MD, Chief, Spectrum Health Regional Cancer Center

Meet Heather Gluszewski



Everything changed the day Heather learned she had cancer. “My cell phone rang, showing my doctor’s office,” she recalled. “Although I just had some concerning tests done, I had no idea this was going to be one of the most significant calls of my life.”

Heather’s family and friends helped make her feel confident about choosing Spectrum Health for her treatments. Along the way, she ended up being cared for by the same staff that had cared for her husband’s family during his mother’s battle with cancer. “Nurses and doctors remembered them, and shared kind words and memories. I felt understood, comforted and less alone.”

Heather’s journey was emotionally complex. “The daily unknowns were difficult,” she remembers, “but as I was being discharged I felt an unexpected desire to stay at Spectrum Health, where the bed was conducive for healing, meals were cooked for me, and doctors and nurses were within arm’s reach.”

Participating on the PFAC has been an invaluable learning experience for Heather. “Health care is much more complex than I imagined,” she said. “I’ve gotten to know a lot about patient care and customer service. I am now an advocate for promoting the relationship between providers and patients.”

Outpatient Services Patient and Family Advisory Council



“I was given the opportunity to present at the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care Conference, and shared Spectrum Health’s leadership with others from around the country. I am very proud to be part of an organization that truly believes in improving the health care experience for all involved.”

– Billie Jean Dutmers, Chair, Outpatient Services Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Financial adviser services
- Outpatient labs home collection process
- Urgent care patient experience
- Limb and Wound Care Clinic
- Primary care standard work forms
- Radiology Process Improvement update and rounding
- Scheduling radiology patients



Doug Haan, LeMark Payne, Billie Jean Dutmers and Jammie Gorby review the final plans.

Piloting eVisits

Virtual health supports patients and providers where they are—so that in some cases, patients can see their doctor from the comfort of their own home.

The eVisit enables patients to connect with their specialist using a computer or smart device through an Internet connection. Through a pilot program, council members reviewed communication, documentation and follow-up care from the patient’s point of view. Members emphasized the importance of ensuring a personal connection is maintained while taking advantage of technology to save time and travel.

Understanding Primary Versus Emergency Care

Spectrum Health Medical Group and PFAC are working together to ensure patients understand the role of primary care and when to seek emergency care.

Council members discussed the barriers to accessing primary care. Patients may be confused by the physician office automated phone message that states “... go to the emergency department or call 911.” Some patients may find the hours of the Urgent Care Centers inadequate. Patients have expressed not wanting to “inconvenience” the physician, while others need to understand that contacting the on-call doctor could potentially save a trip to the hospital.



Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline.

“Our PFAC team is very passionate about the topics we address. As leaders, we are always amazed at the creativity, enthusiasm and dedication demonstrated by this team of patient advocates.”

– Larry Genzink, Director, Diagnostic Imaging

Creating Healing Environments in New Facilities

The Outpatient PFAC had an active year of providing the patient and family perspective within two Spectrum Health facilities.

The council toured the 588 East Lakewood facility in Holland before it opened in 2013. A year later, members took another walk-through to make recommendations on overall aesthetics, along with the process for registration and checkout. PFAC member Dave Campos voiced his appreciation of the adaptability of the facility, and the addition of more practices and services. Anticipating growth, the facility is designed to meet the needs of the community without incurring the cost of a new building.

PFAC participated in multiple Process Improvement events and ongoing workgroup meetings to get the Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline ready to open. The council was actively engaged and shared the patient perspective on central registration, signage and communication. Prior to opening in July 2014, council members donned hard hats to identify signage placement and served as “mock” patients. Participating in patient scenarios helped the staff prepare prior to opening day.

PFAC rounded after the opening to give input on the patient experience and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Meet Billie Jean Dutmers



Billie Jean felt she received great care from everyone at Spectrum Health during her personal journey with breast cancer. “I always felt that my well-being was the first and most important thing to everyone I was in contact with,” said Billie Jean. “Everyone was always willing to answer questions that I had—and there were a lot.”

Billie Jean had a couple of concerns, so she connected with patient relations, and her issues were resolved. She was then introduced to the Outpatient Services PFAC. With a background in quality for manufacturing, Billie Jean was a natural fit to represent the patient in Process Improvement work.

“My goal is to bring the patient paradigm to the forefront, and to address issues that I and others have lived through,” said Billie Jean.

Billie Jean co-presented with Deb Sprague, program manager, patient and family services, with the Center for Patient Experience and Dave Dool, senior process engineer with Process Improvement, at the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care International Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, and during webinars for Patient- and Family-Centered Care Partners. “It was an honor to be able to share the work that Spectrum Health is doing, being part of the solution and designing care around the patient. We are beyond other organizations in this work,” said Billie Jean.

Thanks to all of our council members

Outpatient Services Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Billie Jean Dutmers, Chair • Doug Haan, Vice Chair • David Campos • Kristen Myers Chatman • Elizabeth Splaine •
Aimee Sterk • Wally Wasilewski • Karyn Wolschleger

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Larry Genzink, Director, Diagnostic Imaging, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Sue (Mamma) Smith, Director, Lab & Pulmonary, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Doug Sterken, Operations Director, Spectrum Health Medical Group

Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Family Advisory Council



"I am so proud to be part of a team where both staff and family members work hard to provide an exceptional patient experience. The staff has created a culture that encourages the voice of the family in its planning as well as its day-to-day activity. The impact of this team has significantly contributed to making HDVCH an industry leader in the patient experience."

- Tony Neifert, Chair, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Family-centered rounding
- Parent badging
- MyHealth adolescent proxy
- Process Improvement
- Sibling immunization
- NICU physician rounding
- Security and safety
- Emergency department Rapid Assessment Zone (RAZ)
- Care coordination
- Welcome packet
- Transition to home discharge process

Communicating With the Family

Communication among the care team, the patient and family is crucial to the care and well-being of everyone.

James Van Beynen, MD, hospitalist, asked for council input on the new "Care Team Photo Guide." Members reviewed a sample of the guide and talked about how to best use the tool for communicating with the patient and family. Parents on the Family Advisory Council (FAC) expressed the value in the ability to connect individual roles and responsibilities to the faces of the care team. Understanding who will be involved in their child's care helps reinforce the team approach and the parent's role.

Transitioning Young Adults to Adult Care

Transitioning young adults from Helen DeVos Children's Hospital (HDVCH) to an adult care facility can be stressful, especially when there is an established relationship among the patient, family and provider.

The goal of the adolescent transition project is to proactively engage the patient, family and care team early in the process to ease anxiety. Based on personal experiences shared by the FAC, pediatric care providers recognized the need to start with the outpatient experience—well before young adults are admitted to the hospital.

FAC members Julie Hauck and Janine Hammond participated in workgroups to design a multidisciplinary team that will develop an educational tool for patients and families, provide support for subspecialists and address resource gaps.



Left to Right: Heidi Prior, Jenni Wittenbach, Joan Rikli, Janine Hammond, Gary Wade, Cathy TerAvest, Tony Neifert, Jennifer Briggs, Mary Jo Pletzke and Shelley Volkert.

Being Heroes for Safety

In 2007, HDVCH made a commitment to become the safest children's hospital in America. The



Heroes
Against
Harm

Patient Safety Culture Transformation was successfully implemented, and the focus is now on sustaining the effort.

Leslie Jurecko, MD, medical director, quality & safety, engaged the council for its perspective. She asked members questions like, "What does safety mean to you as a parent? What level of engagement do you want to have at your child's bedside?"

Parents agreed that partnership and communication are key to safe, quality, patient-centered care. An environment that supports the family's role in safety needs to be clearly and consistently communicated. FAC gave input for Heroes Against Harm, a new reward and recognition program for the care team. Featuring a superhero, the visual cue for safety in action is designed for display in the units to continue the safety conversation while engaging the patient and family.

"FAC has been integral in providing safe, high-quality care in a family-centered environment. I am especially appreciative of their regular and invaluable contributions at Performance Improvement Events over the past year."

- Matthew Denenberg, MD, Chief Medical Director, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

Meet Jenni Wittenbach



After struggling with health care experiences at other hospital systems, Jenni brought her 7-month-old son, Lucas, back to Helen DeVos Children's Hospital to continue his health care journey. Lucas was born with congenital heart disease and later suffered a severe stroke that left him with physical and cognitive limitations.

After struggling through long nights where Lucas was crying and inconsolable, Adam Robinson, DO, referred him to have his gallbladder removed due to frequent gallstones.

Jenni spoke of the profound experience of seeing Lucas "wake up from surgery with a smile on his face ... the first time he had smiled since his stroke." Jenni believes that if not for Dr. Robinson's referral, Lucas would have given up due to his pain.

Jenni and her family continue to utilize many services at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital for Lucas' care, including cardiology, neurodevelopmental pediatrics, ophthalmology, neurology and gastroenterology. Upon hearing about the FAC, Jenni was instantly compelled to contribute. "I feel that Spectrum Health gave Lucas his life back, so I of course jumped at the opportunity to be able to give back to an organization that has given us so much," she said.

Thanks to all of our council members

Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Tony Neifert, Chair • Shelley Volkert, Vice Chair • Jennifer Briggs • Kristin Ferguson • Janine Hammond • Julie Hauck • Anita Jones • Bridget Lassig • Leah Neifert • Mary Jo Pletzke • Heidi Prior • Cathy TerAvest • Gary Wade • Jenni Wittenbach

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Robert Connors, MD, President, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Matthew Denenberg, MD, Chief Medical Director, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Shari Schwanzl, Vice President, Operations/Nursing, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Bridget Menzel, Operations Director, Spectrum Health Medical Group Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Tom Revitte, Operations Director, Spectrum Health Medical Group Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Joan Rikli, Director, NICU and Women's & Infant Services, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
- Jeni Wincek, Director, Pediatric Services, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

Women's Health Patient and Family Advisory Council



"Serving as chair for the Women's Health Patient and Family Advisory Council not only provided me the opportunity to better serve women in our community, it also gave me the chance to sit with the Executive Council and hear more about the big picture at Spectrum Health. I've been grateful to share these experiences with the council members and discuss all the changes and improvements."

- Leah Hansen, Chair, Women's Health Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Fall/drop prevention
- Safe sleep practices
- Marketing and communications
- Skin to skin
- Patient education
- 8 Center floor renovation
- Newborn photography
- Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline
- Call light response
- EMMI Assigned Learning
- Healthier Communities



Supporting Breastfeeding and Bonding

For the past two years, the teams at Butterworth and United hospitals have worked toward certification as a Baby-Friendly Designated birth facility, a prestigious designation achieved by only 10 percent of hospitals in the country. This gold standard of care encourages breastfeeding and as much time as possible for mother and baby to bond after birth.

As leadership sought input from the council, members encouraged the care team to continue to educate mothers and engage the family in their care. From ensuring the new mom receives the appropriate rest while rooming with baby, to decreasing disruptions, the council voiced the need for individualized care and support.

“Our Women’s PFAC has been so instrumental in helping us move forward with initiatives in women’s health. Their honest feedback and questioning attitude have moved us in new directions. This year they’ve helped us prepare, spread the word in the community and celebrated with us as we successfully achieved Baby-Friendly designation.”

- Joan Rikli, MSN, RN, CPNP, NE-BC, Director of Neonatal Intensive Care, Women’s and Infant Services

Centering the Care Team on the Patient

The relationship between the care team and the expectant parents is very important. Considering all of the roles—lead physician, on-call physician, advanced practice providers (APPs) and nursing team—council members reinforced the need for communication and meeting patient expectations.

Physician and nursing leaders heard from members who are moms. They reinforced the need to be mindful of scheduling the delivery, rounding and discharge to support new moms and babies.

Sharing Test Results With Care and Compassion

Council members offered insight on how and when patients would like to receive their test results from Spectrum Health Medical Group.

Specifically, they recommended providers talk with patients about the process. Patients want to know who will call them with test results and when. They value seeing test results online in MyHealth but also want to hear results from their provider, conveyed with compassion.

Changing the Model of Care

Over the past year, the model of care has changed to keep mom and newborn together in the room for the baby’s exam prior to discharge. This has reinforced the council’s desire to allow the family to ask the pediatrician questions, changing how the pediatrician engages with his or her new patient and mom. The council suggested language for both instructional dialogue and a new video for parents to watch before taking baby home.

Left to Right: Joan Rikli, Kristi Pline, Billie Jean Dutmers, Lesley Jeruzal, Stacey Merren, Shari Schwanzl, Julian Schink, MD, Rosalie Glowney, Tommara Richardson, Marin Darr.



Meet Tommara Richardson



Tommara was moved to give back to others following the challenging birth of her third child in 2010. "It was one of the most terrifying times of my life," recalled Tommara, who gave birth to a daughter with a gestational age of 23 weeks and six days. "I had never known anyone to deliver a child that early, let alone deliver a child that early and survive. But the amazing care I received at Spectrum Health saved my daughter's life and my own."

After this experience, Tommara began volunteering with the Neonatal Parent-to-Parent Partnership at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, which has given her the chance to share her story with other families in similar

situations. "I didn't understand why my daughter was born prematurely, but because of my experience, I've been able to help other families through one of the most difficult times in their lives," said Tommara. "Being part of the Spectrum Health volunteer family is one the most rewarding experiences I have ever had."

Participating in PFAC presents another meaningful opportunity for Tommara to make a difference. "This opportunity, although not working directly with families, still allows me to give back and to make an impact in decisions that affect the hospital and patient care," she said.

Thanks to all of our council members

Women's Health Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Leah Hansen, Chair • Katie Canfield • Marin Darr • Billie Jean Dutmers • Arlene Hendricks-Potter • Lesley Jeruzal • Tommara Richardson

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Joan Rikli, Director, NICU/Women & Infant Services, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Stacey Merren, Operations Director, Women's Services, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Julian Schink, MD, Department Chief, Women's Health, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Laurel Jander, Nurse Manager, Women's & Infant Services
- Rosalie Glowney, Nurse Manager, Women's & Infant Services

Orthopaedic/Neuroscience Patient and Family Advisory Council



“Through our active discussions, encouraged creativity and fresh perspectives, Spectrum Health leaders have listened with an open mind, ready to implement innovative and practical systemwide improvements designed to provide the highest-quality patient-centered care possible.”

- David Weinandy, Chair, Orthopaedic/Neuroscience Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Neuro Critical Care Unit
- Call light response
- Telepsychiatry
- Orthopaedics and foot and ankle offices
- Process Improvement—neurosciences billing
- Care journal for Neuro Intensive Care Unit families
- Center for Sports Medicine
- Patient experience data
- Expansion of orthopaedic services
- Lake Drive Orthopaedic expansion

Anticipating Needs Through Education

The PFAC recognizes there is a fine line between preparing patients for surgery and overwhelming them with too much information all at once. Leadership from the outpatient surgical team and the orthopaedic team looked to PFAC for input to update outpatient surgery patient education. Understanding that patients arrive on the day of surgery with a lot on their minds, members listened to instructions to identify missing information and repetition.

The council reviewed the content and timing of sharing educational material with the patient and family. Members suggested offering multiple ways for the patient to access the information. Members also requested that education be personalized and consistent between the surgeon's office and surgery staff, from pre-procedure planning to follow-up.



Council member Craig VerBurg with Brenda Goorhouse, director, neurosciences, planning for the 2015 year.



Left to Right: Brenda Goorhouse, Marlene Nelson, David Weinandy, Steve Rosenberg, Bradley Pienton, James Bonner, Josh Troast, Craig VerBurg, Deb Sprague, Dale Reinke.

“PFAC members are invaluable to Spectrum Health. Their input and patient perspective offer clarity and motivation to our team as we strive toward the goal of being the leader for health care by 2020.”

- Josh Troast, Director, Operations, Orthopaedics, Spectrum Health Medical Group

Managing Expectations and Pain

The council provided feedback on services offered at the Spine & Pain Management Center. From reviewing the patient intake forms to support services, attention was directed to improving the experience for patients who are managing pain. A pilot for cognitive behavioral therapy gave members the opportunity to offer suggestions:

- Provide group therapy for those who have the same type of pain.
- Involve the family and caregivers in the therapy.
- Consider the needs of those who feel uncomfortable in group therapy settings.

Compressing the Time Between Visits

Many neurology diagnoses require several appointments and close evaluation of progress. In 2014, the department of neurosciences brought together several subspecialists at the Integrated Care Campus at East Beltline. The patient care team brings together physicians, rehab services, respiratory services, social workers, nurse navigator and home medical equipment. The council assisted with the development of the multidisciplinary clinics, providing input on the facility location and design, intake forms and the flow of the patient and family during clinic visits.

Meet Dale Reinke



Six years ago, Dale's wife spent time at Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital for treatment of a compression fracture in her back. There were issues related to her experience that prompted Dale to send a letter describing his concerns. Much to his surprise, he received a call with an apology and an invitation to participate in the newly formed Orthopaedic/Neuroscience PFAC.

"I said that I would be willing, if in fact, we would be able to make a difference," said Dale. "I did not want to belong to a council that just met once a month and did not accomplish anything. Other than my family, this is one of the best things that I have ever been involved with—we have made a difference!"

Dale participated in the call light initiative to improve the patient experience. PFAC helped improve the process to eliminate steps and more quickly respond to the patient's bedside call light. After a pilot run, the initiative was implemented across the entire Spectrum Health System. "This made every single meeting for the past five years worth every minute," said Dale. "Obviously, there have been many, many more things that have happened because of PFAC, but this experience has been unbelievable."

Thanks to all of our council members

Orthopaedic/Neuroscience Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

David Weinandy, Chair • Marlene Nelson, Vice Chair • Katie Dietrich • Kurt Dietrich • Michael Jensen • Bradley Pienton • Dale Reinke • Steve Rosenberg • Craig VerBurg

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Jeanne Roode, Vice President, Surgical Services, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Linda Schaltz, Director, Orthopaedic & Neuroscience, Spectrum Health Hospital Group
- Brenda Goorhouse, Director, Operations, Neurosciences, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Josh Troast, Director, Operations, Orthopaedics, Spectrum Health Medical Group

United and Kelsey Hospitals Patient and Family Advisory Council



"I'm proud to be part of a council that has helped guide so much positive transformation in our local hospital. Thanks to our PFAC leaders and members for their open communication with staff and ability to listen to the voices of patients and families."

- Josh Gibbs, Chair, United and Kelsey Hospitals Patient and Family Advisory Council



Front Row: Ione Edison, Brian Brassler, Josh Gibbs, Diana Humm. Back Row: Shirley Hayes, Andrea Leslie, Andrew Hurst, Percy Mahar, Don Burns, Karen Sheppard, Skeet Slocum, Linda VanPortfliet.

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Patient experience scores
- MyHealth
- Family medicine
- Patient access
- Patient communication
- Telehealth
- Patient menu
- Emergency department
Process Improvement
- Financial adviser

Improving the Experience

PFAC members rounded in various departments at United and Kelsey hospitals on a monthly basis. Members observed and interacted with staff, patients and families to identify processes that are working and those that need improvement. Considering patient flow through hospital areas, the PFAC raised safety concerns, made suggestions for facility improvements and offered ways to make the patient waiting experience more comfortable. "Helping the staff see, hear and feel what patients are experiencing has been a key initiative of the PFAC this past year," said Josh Gibbs, PFAC chair. "From talking to patients during their inpatient stay to walking through hospital lobbies, it is the little things that often make the biggest impact."



Brian Brassler leads PFAC members on a tour of the expansion to support our Baby-Friendly Designated birth facility.

“We are so fortunate to have a team that provides valuable insight, advocates tirelessly for the patients we serve and encourages us to be the best health care organization we can be.”

– Brian L. Brassler, MSA, BSN, RN, President, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals

Innovating With Telehealth

Spectrum Health United and Kelsey hospitals are the first locations to pilot telehealth in Spectrum Health’s region. The technology allows specialists to visually interact with patients, families and supporting providers at off-site locations. Patients communicate with physicians in real time, saving time spent traveling to appointments. For example, cardiac patients at Spectrum Health Kelsey Hospital may avoid transfer by having a telehealth consultation, and oncology patients at Spectrum Health United Hospital may see their physician for follow-up visits without a trip to Grand Rapids.

PFAC provided input on the introduction of telehealth to patients and families and community perceptions. Through a communitywide education effort, PFAC members introduced telehealth to many new groups.

Raising the Bar on Laboratory Services

Laboratory staff involved PFAC members to discuss the impact of their service on the patient experience. They identified key components: comfort, friendliness, sensitivity and respect.

Staff received suggestions from the PFAC on ways to improve the efficiency of scheduling, communication and wait times. Laboratory services leadership and PFAC members also engaged in conversation focused on making the experience more patient-centered in an efficient and respectful manner.

Meet Diana Humm



Diana has always believed in the importance of a great health care system for every community. In the past, she has been an active member of the Spectrum Health Kelsey Hospital Guild and the hospital's board of directors.

To Diana, the PFAC represents "how each patient and family member can be involved in the decision making of their care and also continually improve the process." As a new member of PFAC, she is learning that each and every opinion counts and helps to make Spectrum Health the system it is today. She is proud of the council's involvement in many different areas, from reviewing health care procedures to giving feedback on hospital signs.

Diana is excited to continue building on the accomplishments of previous years and striving to make sure that patient and family needs are met on a daily basis. "Rounding is such a good way of communicating to the staff what patients see and experience," she said. "I also feel that creating greater awareness of PFAC in our communities is important for our continued success. I am very proud to be a part of this wonderful group, and hope that in some way, I too can make a difference."

Thanks to all of our council members

United and Kelsey Hospitals Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Josh Gibbs, Chair • Diana Humm, Vice Chair • Don Burns • Pat Caverley • Ione Edison • Andrew Hurst • Alex Kemp • Karen Sheppard • Carolyn “Skeet” Slocum

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Brian Brassler, President, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals
- Percy Mahar, Chief Clinical Officer, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals
- Andrea Leslie, Chief Nursing Officer, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals
- Shirley Hayes, Patient & Family Experience Director, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals
- Laura Dargitz, Administrative Assistant, Spectrum Health United and Kelsey Hospitals (Council Support)

Big Rapids and Reed City Patient and Family Advisory Council



“As a patient and caregiver, it is very satisfying to be able to help express our side of the story. Even more meaningful is seeing the response from Spectrum Health leaders as they listen and make improvements based on our input.”

- Jeff McKnight, Chair, Big Rapids and Reed City Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- MyHealth patient portal
- Susan P. Wheatlake Regional Cancer Center patient experience
- Patient drop-off and pickup area
- Financial counseling
- Patient experience reports
- Big Rapids patient experience
- Emergency department renovation



Council member Bev Wesche rounding in the lobby of Spectrum Health Big Rapids Hospital with Kris Miller.

Simulating the Experience for Patients in Big Rapids

New council members were recruited from the community to represent the areas served by Spectrum Health Big Rapids Hospital.

The council actively rounded throughout the hospital and the Professional Office Building (POB). The council also participated in the renovation of the medical/surgical and critical care units. Patients and families now benefit from larger, private rooms. Council members circled back on the final renovations and gave input regarding the patient experience, focusing on cleanliness and food service menus. The council also rounded within the lobby and physician offices in the POB, simulating different patient scenarios to provide feedback on directional signage and overall first impressions.



Front Row: Mary Kay VanDriel, Lisa Flint, Tom Nash, Betty Pontz. Back Row: Jeff McKnight, Evlyne Sheltrown, Terri Larson, Bev Wesche.

“The PFAC’s feedback is extremely valuable in helping us develop creative solutions for continually improving the patient experience.”

- Mary Kay VanDriel, President, Spectrum Health Big Rapids and Reed City Hospitals

Continuing the Focus on Regional Cancer Care

The Susan P. Wheatlake Regional Cancer Center opened in September 2013 with cancer services consolidated under one roof in Reed City. Since the beginning, the PFAC has been involved in the planning, opening and operations imperative to create a healing environment for area cancer patients and their families. The council’s focus this past year was to ensure all patients benefit from the best possible experience. Through rounding and “secret shopping,” council members provided valuable input around wait times, chemotherapy and radiation therapy; the need for privacy; and the ability to find their way around the facility.

Getting Involved From the Beginning

Emergency department renovations at Spectrum Health Reed City Hospital will be an area of focus over the next three to five years. Starting with a planning and design meeting, council members are involved in every stage of the process. After touring the existing department, council members discussed how to create a warm and private welcome through the front entrance. They talked about the importance of designing processes to reduce the time patients spend from arrival to discharge.

Meet Beverly Wesche



While Beverly is a new member of the PFAC, her journey with Spectrum Health began 30 years ago when her newborn daughter was transferred from Spectrum Health Big Rapids Hospital to the neonatal intensive care unit at Butterworth Hospital (now at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital). "It was a scary time for my family and me, but the prompt attention and frequent updates we received throughout our daughter's stay helped alleviate much of our anxiety," said Beverly.

Since then, Beverly and her family have received hospital and outpatient services at Spectrum Health Big Rapids, Reed City, Butterworth and Blodgett hospitals. "Our experiences have been positive—we have felt supported and well cared for, especially during times of crisis."

Beverly was drawn to serve on the local council after reading a newspaper article describing the role and impact of the group. "I was surprised by the number of councils," she said. "As I learned more about the work being done, I became convinced this was a great opportunity to contribute." The council is currently working to enhance services for patients at the Susan P. Wheatlake Regional Cancer Center.

Beverly is impressed by the sincere connection between PFAC and leadership. She looks forward to working together to make quality patient services even better.

Thanks to all of our council members

Big Rapids and Reed City Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Jeff McKnight, Chair • Evlyne Sheltroun, Vice Chair • Thomas Cook • Jane Esterle • Robert Ford • Carol Ladd • Terri Larson • Tom Nash • Betty Pontz • Loren Stieg • Beverly Wesche • Carole Wood

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Mary Kay VanDriel, President, Spectrum Health Big Rapids and Reed City Hospitals
- Lisa Flint, Director, Patient Experience, Spectrum Health Big Rapids and Reed City Hospitals

Gerber Memorial Patient and Family Advisory Council



“It has been gratifying to have our council’s input make an impact on some of the important initiatives of the hospital.”

– Laurie Supinski, Chair, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Emergency department renovation
- Front lobby renovation
- Medical offices integration
- Transitions within the system
- Patient experience evaluation
- Community needs assessment
- Social media communication



Left to Right: Juan Herrera, Don Potter, Barb Geno, Holly Harmon, Laurie Supinski, Jon Schneider, Todd Blake.

Rounding to Be the Eyes and Ears of Our Patients

The quality and safety team introduced the council to metrics and staff’s efforts to improve the patient experience. Nursing leadership presented the key areas of focus: first impressions, pain management, quietness and cleanliness. To assist leadership with the patient and family perspective, the council rounded on the inpatient floor, laboratory, radiology and Birth Center. Members gave input and suggestions regarding their first impression from the front door to wayfinding signage. PFAC also shared the patient’s and family’s expectations of the care team when using the whiteboard as part of communications in the patient’s room.

Expanding and Renovating for a Better Experience

The PFAC was consulted throughout the entire build-out process for the emergency department that opened in the summer of 2014. Members were involved every month, weighing in on patient flow, access to refreshments for the family, care for pediatric patients, and the process for isolation and decontamination. During construction, the council stayed engaged, providing feedback on the look and feel of the experience to ensure safety and care during emergency visits.

Following the opening of the emergency department, focus turned to the lobby renovation that encompasses the main entrance and registration for outpatient laboratory and radiation services. Touring the existing lobby and comparing it with architectural drawings, the council was excited to see the improvements to support a warm welcome and improved patient flow for everyone who enters our doors.

Transitioning Pine Medical Group

It was a positive year of transition as the Pine Medical Group practice became a part of Spectrum Health Medical Group. Leadership asked members to share community perceptions and their own concerns as patients. Marge Young, director, operations, Spectrum Health Medical Group, joined the PFAC to ensure a positive experience for patients and family members moving forward.

“The importance of the view from our patients and their families cannot be overstated. Our PFAC has refocused the plans and ideas we have brought them with insight we often overlook in our eagerness to provide medical treatments.”

– Randy Stasik, President,
Spectrum Health
Gerber Memorial Hospital

New emergency department welcome area.



Meet Juan Herrera



Juan and his family have received care at Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial. His children were delivered at the hospital and have been patients at some point over many years. Following Gerber Memorial's merger with Spectrum Health in 2010, Juan noticed a higher level of care focused around the patient and a greater connection to a wider range of specialists.

As a local business owner, Juan believes Spectrum Health cares about the communities it serves. "PFAC is the embodiment of the visionary service that Spectrum Health is striving to achieve. I consider it an honor and privilege to represent the families in our area with their concerns and ideas, so that Spectrum Health can make the best decisions for care in our community.

"Joining the council this year, I have already experienced the impact of PFAC on the initiatives implemented at Spectrum Health. Keeping the needs of the community in mind was evident in the building of a new and more welcoming emergency department, and as we plan for positive changes to the lobby, radiation and laboratory space," said Juan.

Thanks to all of our council members

Gerber Memorial Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Laurie Supinski, Chair • Todd Blake, Vice Chair • Barb Geno • Holly Harmon • Juan Herrera • Todd Koopmans • Donald Potter • Jen Roesly • Jon Schneider

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Randy Stasik, President, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial
- Jan Stone, Vice President, Clinical Integration, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial
- Shelly Johnson, Vice President, Community and Integrated Services, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial
- Meleah Mariani, Chief Nursing Officer, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial
- Marge Young, Director, Operations, Spectrum Health Medical Group
- Sandy Siegel, Director, Community and Government Relations, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial
- Lisa Jahr, Executive Assistant, Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial (Council Support)

Zeeland Community Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council



“It is my honor and pleasure to be the chair of this PFAC and serve as the ‘voice’ of our patients and families for both the local community and system. Thanks to administration’s ongoing support, leadership and staff not only welcome our input, they want it! And when they get it, they act upon it!”

– Rick Diamond, Chair, Zeeland Community Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Welcoming experience
- Main lobby
- Staff appearance
- Patient experience performance
- Process Improvement
- Patient registration
- Community awareness
- Facility rounding
- Team Zeeland
- Directional signage
- Emergency department
- Transport bags

Navigating Transitions Through Outpatient Services

During the past year, the PFAC actively partnered with Spectrum Health leadership on Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) within outpatient services and the emergency department. From topics such as billing confusion to facility signage and registration information, PFAC members were instrumental in generating ideas and solutions. The council provided signage improvements and ways to streamline the registration process, including the lab draw area.

Spectrum Health leadership asked the council to share expectations for the laboratory experience. Aligning expectations with processes, the lab team developed communications to anticipate patients’ needs and questions.



Left to Right: Rick Diamond, Lori Bruins, Henry Veenstra.



Left to Right: Jennifer Dougherty, Jane Czerew, Rachelle Berggoetz, Rick Diamond, Karen Klemm, Lori Bruins, Henry Veenstra.

“I look forward to meeting with the PFAC each month so I can learn firsthand how we can make our patient experience even better.”

- Henry Veenstra, President, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital

Making a First Impression

“For the past six months, we have concentrated on solutions that involve people, places and processes related to outpatient services,” said Lori Bruins, patient experience and safety director. “We want to create an environment where all of our staff members view patients as our top priority.”

Through a patient experience effort called “Team Zeeland,” PFAC leaders helped create an outstanding first impression for Zeeland Community Hospital by rounding. “The intent was to help patients accomplish their goals first, whether finding the right department,

scheduling the next procedure or getting physical assistance due to mobility challenges,” said Lori.

Throughout the year, PFAC leaders committed to 30 minutes of rounding each month. A standard rounding process was created to include focus on clutter and appearance, cleanliness, wayfinding and noise. Many Zeeland Community Hospital departments now use the PFAC’s rounding process, including registration and lobby services, laboratory, radiology and respiratory. Department directors have also appreciated the council’s opinions related to signage, parking and valet services.

Meet Jennifer Dougherty



Jennifer has been on the Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council for more than two years. According to Jennifer, Zeeland Community Hospital has provided care for her entire family over the years. It's the location she always chooses because of its high standard of care and dedication to maintaining an excellent experience.

Jennifer decided to join the PFAC after her grandfather was treated for pneumonia and her grandmother had a hip replacement at Zeeland Community Hospital. In both situations, her grandparents were seen immediately after arriving at the emergency department. Because both of Jennifer's grandparents suffered from dementia, communication with hospital staff was difficult. Yet every staff member treated them with respect and compassion, ensuring that all information was relayed to Jennifer's mother, who holds their power of attorney.

During her time with the PFAC, council members have largely focused on navigating transitions, with the goal of making it as easy as possible for patients and families who have to be transferred between Spectrum Health facilities. One idea the PFAC came up with to ease the transition was creating bags filled with a map, toiletries, water and a snack.

"I feel privileged to work side by side with council members and staff to improve comfort during the transfer experience," said Jennifer.

Thanks to all of our council members

Zeeland Community Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Rick Diamond, Chair • Rachelle Berggoetz • Jennifer Dougherty • Jenn Goulouze • Randall Johnson • Karen Klemm

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Henry Veenstra, President, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital
- Jane Czerew, Vice President, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital
- Lori Bruins, Patient Experience/Safety Director, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital
- Kate Emerick, Administrative Assistant, Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital (Council Support)

Continuing Care Patient and Family Advisory Council



“It is clear to each member that system leaders value the voice of the patient. As chair, I have been amazed to learn more about what goes on behind the scenes in the system.”

– Jan Heerspink, Chair, Continuing Care Patient and Family Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- First impressions
- Call lights
- Fuller admission process and lobby renovation
- Kalamazoo facility planning and welcome video
- Home health app
- Community palliative care
- Advance care planning
- Bed hold script
- Center for Acute Rehabilitation
- Rehab services marketing



Left to Right: Council members Jan Heerspink, Mary Allan and Jan Nowicki round with Karen Pakkala, vice president, operations, in the renovated Fuller lobby.

“The passion and commitment of our PFAC members are both humbling and inspiring. I applaud the compassion, honesty and heart that each of these individuals shares with our team.”

– Karen Pakkala, Vice President, Operations, Spectrum Health Continuing Care

Answering the Call of Patients

The Continuing Care Facility at the Fuller Campus was a PFAC focus for a second year. Council feedback helped staff engage in a productive Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) to enhance the process for answering patient call lights.

All staff and leadership are trained to stop whatever they are doing if they see or hear a blinking call light. Everyone shares the responsibility to answer the patient’s bedside call as quickly as possible. This proactive initiative ensures shared accountability for improving the patient’s experience and safety.

Creating a Welcoming Experience

Marybeth Rardin, PFAC member, was a constant presence in the RIE focused on the admissions and welcome experience for new patients. The event resulted in implementation of a consistent process that includes a welcome packet and care team introductions.

PFAC members shared their recommendations for lobby decor with the goal of providing a warm and inviting welcome for family and visitors.

PFAC was part of the workgroup for the Joy O'Neill Inclusion Garden, an outdoor area for residents. The healing garden is designed with the patients' needs at the forefront. The space features raised beds and wheelchair ramps so that patients can more easily access and interact with plant life.

Designing New Spaces for Better Experiences

PFAC participated in planning and development for the new Rehab and Nursing Center at Kalamazoo Avenue. The renovated building

is scheduled to open in the summer of 2016. PFAC members reviewed conceptual drawings and viewed mock rooms.

Members weighed in on the optimal placement of fixtures in patient/resident rooms, family gathering areas and the lobby. PFAC members shared their support for the project by attending city council meetings to keep the community informed.

Making Home Visits More Engaging

New members joined the council to represent patients with firsthand experience receiving services from Spectrum Health Visit Nurse Association (VNA) and Neuro Rehab Services Home Care.

The VNA created a welcome video for patients and families to view during the first home visit. With council insight, modifications were made to clearly define medical language and address the needs of those with visual impairments.

Open house for the Joy O'Neill Inclusion Garden.



Meet Mary Allan



Mary felt compelled to join the PFAC as a way to show her gratitude for the exceptional care that her adult daughter Beth, who has Down syndrome, received through Spectrum Health.

Beth was admitted to Spectrum Health's emergency department and subsequently spent four days in a critical care unit. While Mary stayed with her daughter day and night, she observed and interacted with providers and staff involved in all aspects of her care. "If not for the professionalism of the teams that diagnosed and treated Beth," said Mary, "I feel that week could have ended very differently. In addition to the quality medical attention Beth received, I was impressed and touched by the personal, social and emotional attention given to her."

Participating on the PFAC has allowed Mary to share aspects of Beth's experience that were most meaningful to her and her family, and to help improve services her daughter is likely to receive in the future. She has also found involvement in a Rapid Improvement Event and with planning the Joy O'Neill Inclusion Garden to be particularly rewarding. "I've loved getting to know and work with people that are so dedicated to making quality patient care a priority with specific, measurable goals," said Mary.

Thanks to all of our council members

Continuing Care Patient and Family Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Jan Heerspink, Chair • Janice Nowicki, Vice Chair • Mary Allan • Lynn Beatty • Faye Miles • Tom Moe • Marybeth Rardin

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Michael Breon, Director, Process Improvement
- Deb Cress, Chief Nursing Officer, Spectrum Health Continuing Care
- Karen Pakkala, Vice President, Operations, Spectrum Health Continuing Care
- Kim Smith, Director, Patient Care Transitions, Spectrum Health Continuing Care
- Heather Dyke, Executive Assistant, Spectrum Health Continuing Care (Council Support)

Priority Health Member Advisory Council



“As MAC members, we review processes, procedures, communications and resources offered to Priority Health members. There is a sense of satisfaction and purpose knowing we have helped thousands of people with their health care needs.”

- Walt Gorak, Chair, Priority Health Member Advisory Council

Areas of Focus in 2014

- Health Journal
- Member letters
- Social media education and awareness
- Explanation of Benefits
- Electronic delivery communication
- Mobile member center
- Digital magazine
- Post-call survey—first-call resolution
- Health coach

Communicating Through Technology

Striving for a balance between high-tech and high-touch engagement with health plan members, leadership engaged the council to shape communications through technology. The goal: position Priority Health as a trusted health partner for the member's lifetime. The Member Advisory Council (MAC) shared its own expectations, as well as community perceptions of Priority Health's online magazine, Member app and social media platforms.

Virtual Visits

MAC members talked about the convenience of seeing a doctor anytime from the comforts of home as an important benefit of virtual visits. Through a partnership with MDLIVE™, Priority Health members can see a doctor online or over the phone, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

After reviewing the Priority Health website, council members recommended content to answer common questions. What's covered? What's a non-emergency condition? How much is the co-pay? How is the visit communicated to the primary care physician? Members also recommended including a clear explanation of the cost for each type of plan.

“Having a council is relatively new for Priority Health. There is no way I could have anticipated the impact the council members have had, and will continue to have, in so many big and small ways. I am extremely proud of the work we accomplish together on behalf of the 600,000 people we serve.”

- Kim Suarez, Vice President, Medical Operations and Customer Experience, Priority Health



Left to Right: Cheryl Osentoski, Nancy Wier, Kim Suarez, Art Felix, Terry Moore, Chris Poterack, Walt Gorak, Pastor Dennis McMurray, Deb Sprague.

Analyzing and Evaluating: How Are We Doing?

Leadership is committed to better understanding how the organization is doing through third-party analysis and proactive participation in a study.



Walt Gorak leading the council through the Grand Analysis conversation.

The Grand Analysis compiles member feedback from multiple sources (surveys, complaints, grievances, etc.) to identify member concerns and opportunities for improvement. The J.D. Power & Associates study compares Priority Health with other health plans in Michigan and nationally. Factors that drive member satisfaction include: coverage and benefits, cost, provider choice, customer service, information and communication, and claims processing.

By sharing the results and receiving council input, leadership gained a deeper understanding around member expectations for paying claims quickly, removing access barriers, navigating the health care system and managing health care costs.

Meet Knicki Karsies



As a single parent and survivor of domestic violence, Knicki has often felt the struggles of raising three young children by herself. “I once expressed concern over my son’s failure to gain weight, and was told he was getting worse because I was a single mother who didn’t administer the proper medications,” said Knicki.

During times like this, Knicki found solace in the compassion and actions of her Priority Health field representative. After Knicki discussed her experience with Priority Health, her son received the care he needed. “My son’s blood work revealed that he needed booster shots, and afterwards he grew three sizes and gained eight pounds in six weeks! I was overjoyed,” expressed Knicki.

Knicki chose to join the Priority Health Member Advisory Council because she strives to live by example. “I refuse to complain about something unless I am willing to put in the time and energy to change it,” she said. Because Knicki understands misconceptions surrounding Medicaid, single parenting, domestic violence and dealing with multiple health needs, she is able to make a real difference through the MAC. “If just one family’s experience is easier because of what we went through, then I have done my job,” said Knicki.

Thanks to all of our council members

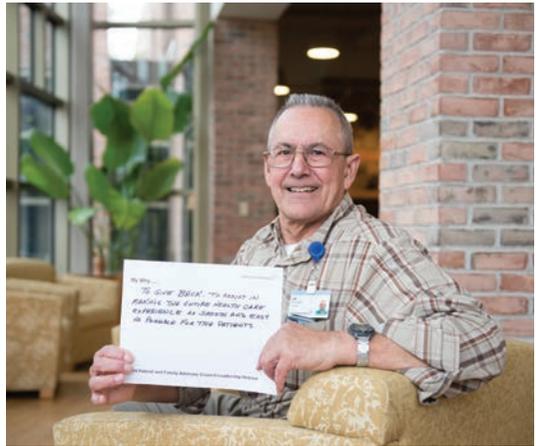
Priority Health Member Advisory Council Members

Patient and Family Advisors

Walter Gorak, Chair • Pastor Dennis McMurray, Vice Chair • Nicole “Knicki” Karsies • Art Felix • Danielle Meeuwsen • Terry Moore • Chris Poterack • Zayde Ruiz • Elizabeth Splaine • Nancy Wier

Spectrum Health Leadership Partners

- Kim Suarez, Vice President, Medical Operations, Priority Health
- Carol Nowak, Director, Customer Experience, Priority Health
- Cheryl Osentoski, Consumer Experience Architect, Priority Health
- Kristie Burns, Marketing Consultant



Top: Council members participate in the annual leadership retreat.
Middle Left: Patrice Villemure, Scott Kearney and Colleen Tacoma. Middle Right: Jeff McKnight.
Bottom Left: Pastor Dennis McMurray. Bottom Right: Jan Heerspink and Jan Nowicki.



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