



# PFAC

## Patient and Family Advisory Committee Guide

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## 1. Welcome & Our Organization

### 1.1 Welcome Message & Commitment

On behalf of the leadership team, thank you for accepting the vital role of a **Patient and Family Advisor**. Your perspective, experience, and insights are crucial in our continuous journey to improve care quality, safety, and equity.

The existence of the Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) demonstrates Renfrew Victoria Hospital's (RVH) commitment to continuously improving the patient experience<sup>1</sup>. RVH is dedicated to enhancing care providers' understanding of the needs of patients and family members who use their services with the goal of helping provide an **exemplary patient experience**<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.2 Our Vision

The Vision of Renfrew Victoria Hospital is: **"To be a leader in health services that are patient centred, integrated and responsive to community health needs"**.

### 1.3 Understanding Patient and Family-Centred Care (PFCC)

PFCC is a foundational philosophy that guides how we interact with and care for patients and their families.

- **Definition:** Patient and Family Centred Care focuses on the **"whole person"** as a unique individual, not just on their illness or disease<sup>4</sup>. In viewing the individual through this lens, health care providers come to know and understand the person's life story and experiences.
- **Our Mission Support:** This collaboration supports our mission **"to provide the best possible health care experience for our patients and their families"**.
- **The Four Core Concepts (General Best Practice):**
  1. **Dignity and Respect:** Honoring patient and family choices.
  2. **Information Sharing:** Communicating complete and unbiased information effectively.
  3. **Participation:** Encouraging patients and families to participate in their care.
  4. **Collaboration:** Working with patients and families at the organizational level.

## 2. The Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC)

### 2.1 What is a PFAC and Its Mandate?

The PFAC is a formal committee at RVH that engages patients, family members, and caregivers to provide opportunities to voice their unique experiences, perspectives, and concerns<sup>7</sup>. RVH will use this input to improve the care we deliver.

- **Mandate:** As experts in patient and family experiences, members are in the best position to provide recommendations on improving the planning, delivery, and evaluation of care services within the framework of Patient and Family Centred Care.
- **Background:** The RVH PFAC was formed in 2015 and convened its first meeting on January 5, 2016.
- **Scope of Review:** PFAC meeting content includes procedure review, improvement project status, anonymous patient feedback, performance score cards, and more<sup>11</sup>.

### 2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of an Advisor

Advisory Council members will be consulted and involved in matters where the input of patients and their families is valued<sup>12</sup>.

- **Key Duties:**
  - **Share your story.** Advisors share both their stories and the stories of others to create a safe, acceptable solution to help deliver exceptional patient care at RVH.
  - **Partner with staff** to help improve hospital care for others.
  - **Contribute to the understanding and improvement** of the patient and family experience<sup>16</sup>.
  - Review or help create **educational or informational materials** (like websites, forms, health information handouts, and discharge instructions).
  - Serve on a hospital committee and bring your perspective to the **decision-making table**.
  - Collaborate with management of all departments to ensure that **quality and safe services** are offered.

## 2.3 Characteristics of a Successful Advisor

Being a Patient & Family Advisor may be a good match for you if you possess these qualities:

- You will **partner with staff** to help improve hospital care for others<sup>20</sup>.
  - You are willing to talk about your experiences as a patient or family member—but also **think beyond your own personal experiences**<sup>21</sup>.
  - You have the ability to work with a diverse committee—listen to and **collaborate ideas** with other committee members<sup>22</sup>.
  - You will **listen to and think about what others say**, even when you disagree<sup>23</sup>.
  - You will bring a **positive attitude** to discussions<sup>24</sup>.
- 

## 3. Logistics and Engagement

### 3.1 Membership Details & Qualifications

- **Qualifications:** There is no training required<sup>25</sup>. What's most important is your experience as a patient or family member and your **willingness to share your story and ideas**<sup>26</sup>.
- **Application Process:** All applications will be reviewed and a **short meeting** will be scheduled<sup>27</sup>.

### 3.2 Time Commitment

- **Term of Service:** By becoming an Advisor, you are agreeing to a minimum commitment of **two years**<sup>28</sup>.
- **Meeting Frequency:** **4-5 meetings** are held per year, between September and June<sup>29</sup>.
- **Meeting Length:** Meetings are scheduled to last for **1.5 hours**<sup>30</sup>.

### 3.3 Council Operations and Guidelines

- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** Advisors must **keep any information** they may hear as an advisor **private and confidential**<sup>31</sup>.

- **Compensation/Reimbursement: Parking tokens** will be provided when meetings are attended in person<sup>32</sup>.

### 3.4 The Power of Storytelling (General Guidance)

Sharing your personal journey is a powerful tool for promoting positive change at RVH.

- **Guidance:** Focus your story on the specific project or decision being discussed, rather than individual grievances.
- **Purpose:** Describe the system or process that needs attention and what change you believe should result from your experience.

### 3.5 Giving and Receiving Feedback (General Guidance)

- **Constructive Advice:** When offering feedback, use "I" statements and focus on the system or process, not on individual staff members.
- **Handling Debate:** Healthy debate is welcome. Always maintain respect for others' perspectives, even if they differ from yours.

## 4. Resources and Contacts

### 4.1 Key Organizational Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Information
Primary Contact	Mary-Ellen Harris <sup>33</sup>	Phone: 613-432-4851 x225 <sup>34</sup>
Title	Chief Nursing Executive, VP Patient Care, Quality and Clinical Services <sup>35</sup>	Email: <a href="mailto:harrism@renfrewhosp.com">harrism@renfrewhosp.com</a> <sup>36</sup>
Website Information	Visit the RVH Website <sup>37</sup>	Look for "Patient and Family Advisory Committee" under the " <b>About RVH</b> " tab <sup>38</sup>
Address	Renfrew Victoria Hospital <sup>39</sup>	499 Raglan Street North, Renfrew, Ontario K7V 1P6 <sup>40</sup>

#### **4.2 Glossary of Health Care Terms and Acronyms (General Guidance)**

- **HCAHPS:** Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (A standard survey used to measure patient experience).
- **EHR:** Electronic Health Record (The digital patient chart system).
- **QI:** Quality Improvement (The formal process used to analyze and improve care systems).

#### **4.3 Reference Materials (Appendices)**

- Appendix A: Full PFAC Terms of Reference/Bylaws
- Appendix B: Signed Confidentiality Agreement
- Appendix C: RVH Map and Parking Information.
- Appendix D: RVH PFAC Brochure
- Appendix E: Recent Set of PFAC Meeting Minutes
- Appendix D: Meeting Cadence

## **Renfrew Victoria Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council (RVHPFAC) Terms of Reference**

### **Mandate**

As experts in Patient and Family experiences, patients are in the position to provide recommendations on improving the planning, delivery and evaluation of care services within the framework of Patient and Family Centred Care. The RVH Patient and Family Advisory Council (RVHPFAC) is dedicated to enhancing care providers' understanding of the needs of patients and family members who use their services with the goal of helping provide an exemplary patient experience.

### **Responsibilities**

Advisory Council Members will be consulted and involved in matters where the input of patients and their families is valued. The range of matters will include, but is not limited to the following topics:

- A. Provide the perspective of patients and their supporters on the planning, delivery and evaluation of care at RVH.
- B. Contribute to the understanding and improvement of the Patient and Family experience.
- C. Assist in reviewing and providing feedback on patient satisfaction.
- D. Promote improved partnerships between patients, families, staff and physicians.
- E. Provide input on policy and program development which impact service delivery for patients and families.
- F. Provide recommendations on the identification of health care needs and gaps.
- G. Participate in education regarding Patient and Family Centred Care.
- H. Provide an opportunity for care providers to recommend changes that improve Patient and Family Centred Care.

### **Patient and Family Advisory Member Role Description**

RVH and the Patient and Family Advisory Council uphold the values of quality, dignity and respect, patient focus, patient safety, leadership, and responsiveness and adaptability. It is committed to Patient and Family Centred Care that respects the role of patients and families. Patient and Family Members are a critical part of our health care team, being experts on the experience of disease, just as health care professionals are experts on diagnosis and treatment of disease. It is imperative that patients and families are treated with respect and dignity, are informed, are partners with the health care team and are empowered by staff to care for themselves. As experts in Patient and Family experience within health care, RVHPFAC Members advise, advocate, educate, and empower staff, patients, and families.

### **Role**

- Advise on behalf of all families, not just their own experience.
- Represent the RVHPFAC on committees, Councils and projects for which patient or family presence is requested.
- Promote and support improvements of Patient and Family Centred Care at RVH.
- Work in partnership with staff and other patients and families to achieve excellence in Patient and Family Centred Care.
- Respect the diversity of other perspectives, values and beliefs.

### **Responsibilities**

- Attend meetings (minimum 80%).
- Respond to queries between meetings as appropriate.
- Participate on sub-committees and task groups as necessary.
- Advocate the concepts of Patient and Family Centred Care.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding all matters handled by RVHPFAC Members.
- Follow all Terms of Reference as outlined by the Renal Patient and Family Advisory Council.

### **Membership Term**

- PFAC Members are required to sit on the committee for no less than 2 years.
- If after their 2 years, the committee member would to continue to their membership they are encouraged to sit on the committee as long as they still find value in it.

## Is being a Volunteer Patient Family Advisor right for you?

**Being a Patient & Family Advisor may be a good match for you if you will:**

- Partner with staff to help improve hospital care for others.
- Talk about your experiences as a patient or family member – but also think beyond your own personal experiences.
- Talk about your care experiences and share your thoughts on what went well and how things could have been done differently.
- The ability to work with a diverse committee—listen to and collaborate ideas with other committee members to create a positive experience for all patients and their families.
- Listen to and think about what others say, even when you disagree.
- Bring a positive attitude to discussions.
- Keep any information you may hear as an advisor private and confidential.

## For More Information:

Visit our Website:

[www.renfrewhosp.com](http://www.renfrewhosp.com)

Look for “Patient and Family Advisory Committee” under the “About RVH” tab

Contact:

**Mary-Ellen Harris**

Chief Nursing Executive, VP Patient Care, Quality and Clinical Services

Email: [harrism@renfrewhosp.com](mailto:harrism@renfrewhosp.com)

Phone: 613-432-4851 x225

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### [Testimonial PFAC Member](#)

“The existence of the Patient Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) demonstrates Renfrew Victoria Hospital’s (RVH) commitment to continuously improving the patient experience. PFAC meeting content includes procedure review, improvement project status, anonymous patient feedback, performance score cards and more. As a patient representative on the PFAC team my, and all patient and family representative feedback are valued, considered and integrated into RVH improvement activities.”



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499 Raglan Street North  
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# Become A Volunteer Patient & Family Advisor



**High Quality, Patient Centred Care!**

## What do Patient & Family Advisors Do?

If you are an advisor for our hospital, you can help us in the following ways:

- Share your story. Advisors share both their stories and the stories of others with other committee members to create a safe, acceptable solution to help deliver exceptional patient care at RVH.
- Participate in committee work. Advisors bring their perspective to the decision-making table.
- Review or help create educational or informational materials.
- Advisors help review or create materials like websites, forms, health information handouts, and discharge instructions.
- Advisors help us make these materials meaningful for all patients and family members to understand and use.
- Work on short-term projects. We sometimes ask advisors to partner with us in making improvements – for example, helping to plan and redesign a patient bathtub room.
- Serve on a hospital committee. Members of those committees may include patients, family members of patients, hospital staff and physicians.

## What Qualifications are Required?

- There is no training required
- If you are interested in bringing your ideas forward in a constructive way, we would like to meet with you.
- What's most important is your experience as a patient or family member and your willingness to share your story and ideas.
- All applications will be reviewed and a short meeting will be scheduled.
- Parking tokens will be provided when meetings are attended in person.

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## What is the Time Commitment?

- By becoming a Patient and Family Advisor you are agreeing to a minimum commitment of two years.
- Meetings are scheduled to last for 1.5 hours.
- 4-5 meetings are held per year, between September and June.

### Testimonial PFAC Member

*"The PFAC committee has enabled patients, family members, caregivers, community members and associated Medical Professionals to collaborate ideas and adopt changes. Positive changes are made to enhance RVH clientele with safe and satisfying RVH experiences. RVH is a facility where you are "Important" and we strive to offer accessible, compassionate, Professional Care. Please consider joining our PFAC team. Your input is important."*

## Why are Patient & Family Advisors Important?

The Vision of the Renfrew Victoria Hospital is: "To be a leader in health services that are patient centred, integrated and responsive to community health needs." As experts in Patient and Family experiences, patients and their families are in the best position to provide recommendations on improving the planning, delivery and evaluation of care services within the framework of Patient and Family Centred Care.

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## Why Should you become a Patient and Family Advisor?

- When at RVH, did you think there were things we could have done better?
- Do you have ideas about how to make sure other patients and families get the best care possible?
- Patient and Family Advisors collaborate with management of all department to ensure that quality and safe services are offered. It is every ones goal that a positive experience at RVH is obtained through safe practices.

## **PFAC Meeting Schedule**

- 4 times per year
- No meetings over the summer months, all meetings held between September and June
- Meetings take place 2:30-4:00pm
- Meetings can be attended in person or virtually through Microsoft

Teams