

Patient Family Advisory Council: Partners to Improve Healthcare



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BACKGROUND

In December 2024, Uniontown Hospital launched a Patient Family Advisory Council (PFAC) to enhance the patient experience and improve health outcomes.

PFAC serves as a collaborative space where patients and families actively engage with healthcare providers to identify gaps in care and co-develop solutions.

The council includes 5 patients who have received hospital services within the past year.

- 1 – outpatient testing and surgery
- 3 – admitted to hospital for care and services
- 1 – outpatient testing and infusion center services

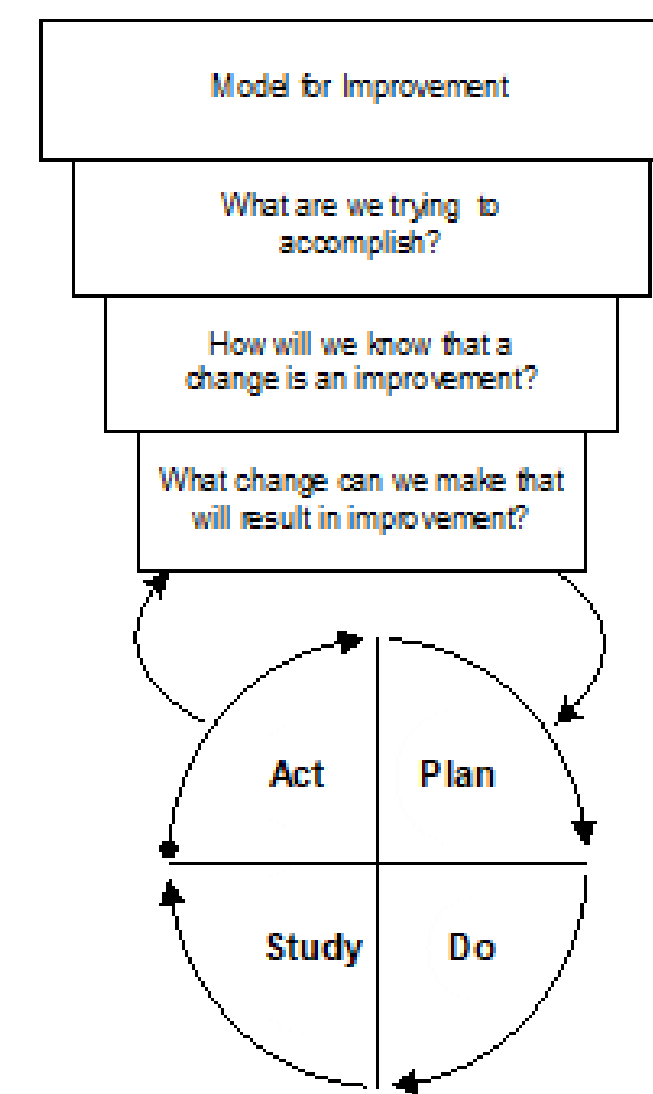
The Executive Leadership Team’s commitment to PFAC is imperative to success. At least one member of leadership is present at each meeting.

Other members of leadership and staff participate in meetings when initiatives are aligned with their scope of work.

IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN WITH ACTIONS TAKEN

The goal for improvements in the PFAC is to identify an issue and apply the Model for Improvement during the quarterly PFAC meeting and have monthly PDSA cycles by the PX team to find a sustainable and effective resolution by the next quarterly meeting.

The Model for Improvement- by Tom Nolan. Endorsed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement



PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) Cycle

Plan: Decide upon changes that are to be tried, state objective of cycle.

Do: Test the changes, collect data, observe and document effects of change

Study: Analyze and determine what was learned from tests tried and data collected

Act: Decide what next steps may be in relation to tests tried and tests planned for the next PDSA cycle

PFAC identified the following opportunities for improvement.

Project	Description
A: Support Group	Closest cancer support groups are in Pittsburgh or Morgantown
B: Scentsitivity	Strong perfume or food odors can cause nausea and breathing problems in patients
C: Communication	Patients need to know what’s going on

SMARTER OBJECTIVE

Work with the PFAC is to:

- Improve patient experience and outcomes.
- Foster Collaboration
- Increase patient loyalty and trust
- Build and strengthen community relationships
- Improve financial performance through increased volumes

The projects were then rated prioritized using

Criteria (1-5)	A	B	C
Will this make a Small Impact (1) on Patient Care, or will this be a Major Improvement (5) ?	3	4	5
Will this be Hard to do (1) or Easy to do (5) ?	3	3	1
Is this Directly In Line (5) with hospital goals or is it Not Aligned (1) ?	5	5	5
Are patients, families, and staff Highly Interested/Involved (5) or Not Interested (1) ?	5	4	3
Is this for a Short-Term Benefit (1) or will it make a Lasting Impact (5) ?	5	5	5
Do we have the Same Old Ideas (1) or New Solutions (5) ?	4	1	2
Total Score	25	22	21

RESULTS

Initial feedback shows improvements in communication, between patients and providers, and feelings of trust and satisfaction.

Patients report feeling more empowered in their care, and the council’s initiatives are contributing to a more supportive and inclusive healthcare environment.

The PFAC has been instrumental in advocating for and planning community-based resources, such as the establishment of cancer support groups.

While long-term outcomes are still evolving, initial indicators are promising.

Patient and Family Advisory Council Progress Report

Project	Progress (How much work have we done?)	Timeline (Are we on schedule?)	Resources (Are enough resources available?)	Engagement (Are patients, families, and staff involved?)	Challenges (Are there any problems or obstacles?)	Next Steps (Are the next actions clear?)
A Support Group	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
B Scentsitivity	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
C Communication	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green

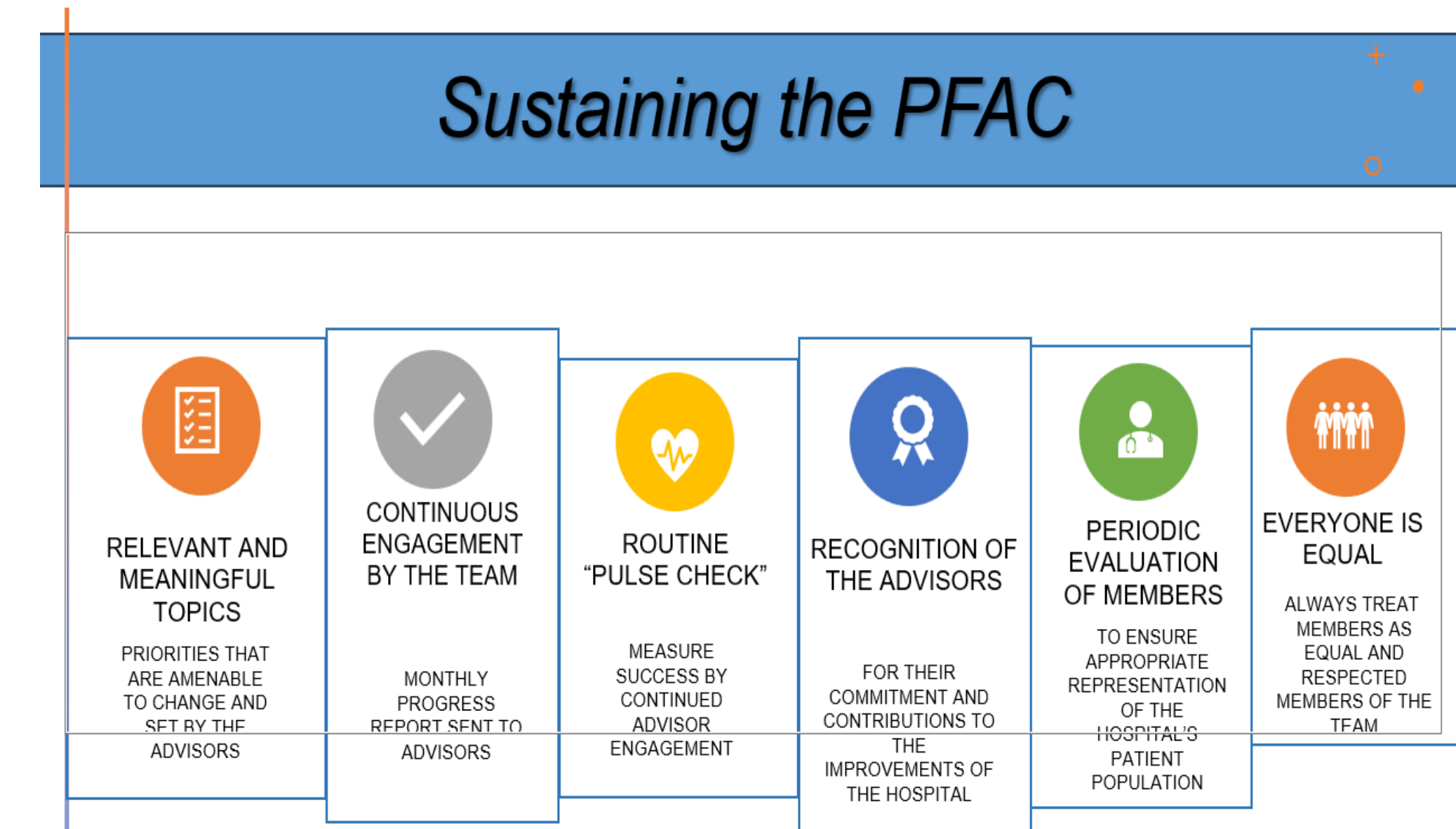
- Green: On track, no problems
- Yellow: Needs attention, there are some issues
- Red: Off track, serious problems

SCALE UP PLAN

To continue the success and positive impact of PFAC, the team plans to:

- Increase the number of community members on the council.
- Expand agenda to address additional patient experience factors
- Incorporating staff feedback and initiative suggestions
- Inviting staff members to present information or education materials to PFAC

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN



LESSONS LEARNED

- Collaboration Enhances Care Quality
- Communication is Key
- Trust and Empathy Build Strong Relationships
- Patient and Family Voice Drives Improvement
- Empowerment Improves Patient Engagement
- Flexibility and Adaptability Are Crucial
- Shared Decision-Making Improves Outcomes

