



## INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY-CENTERED CARE

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### ARE FAMILIES CONSIDERED VISITORS IN OUR HOSPITAL OR UNIT?

In advancing the practice of family-centered care—changing the concept of families as visitors and recognizing families as partners in the care of patients—it is important to examine staff practices and the infrastructure of a hospital to determine how well family presence and participation is supported. This checklist may be useful in understanding current policies and practices and prioritizing action steps for a plan for change.

	Yes	No	Perceived Priority for Change		
<b>▼ Philosophy of Care</b>					
Does the philosophy of care statement for the hospital or unit acknowledge the importance of families to the care and comfort of patients?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Were patients and families involved in developing the philosophy of care statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Policies</b>					
In written policies, is there acknowledgment of varied family structures and composition, and an acknowledgment of a patient's right to self-define family?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
In written policies, is there a distinction made between <i>families</i> (however family is defined by the patient) and <i>visitors</i> , those friends, colleagues, or distant relatives who may wish to visit the patient or the patient's family?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are policies regarding family presence and participation written as guidelines to foster flexibility and the individualization of staff practices to each patient's priorities and preferences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do hospital or unit guidelines (or policies) welcome families 24 hours a day, even during rounds, shift changes, a code, or emergency situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3

Source: Ahmann, E., Abraham, M.R. & Johnson, B.H. (2003). *Changing the Concept of Families as Visitors: Supporting Family Presence and Participation*. Bethesda, MD: Institute for Family-Centered Care.

This checklist has been adapted from other self-assessment inventories developed by the Institute for Family-Centered Care. Additional checklists are included in each of the Pinwheel Series publications produced by the Institute for Family-Centered Care.

	Yes	No	Perceived Priority for Change		
Do hospital and unit policies reflect a view of patients and families as partners:					
• In decision making for individual patients?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• In the care of individual patients?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• In design of the physical environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• In developing guidelines and policies related to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• In training staff regarding working with families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• In evaluating patient and family perceptions of care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Are staff at all levels, faculty, and trainees involved with families in developing, implementing and evaluating guidelines and policies related to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Environment and Design</b>					
Are first impressions of the hospital and each of its clinical areas welcoming to families?					
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Is the signage in the unit and throughout the hospital:					
• Welcoming to families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Worded positively and respectfully?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Written in languages and at a reading level understandable to families served?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
At the bedside and in inpatient and outpatient treatment areas, is there:					
• Comfortable seating for families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Adequate space for family presence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Adequate space for family members to provide care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Adequate space for staff to work with families present?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
In inpatient settings, do families have access to:					
• Comfortable sleeping arrangements in the patient's room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Secure storage space for personal belongings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Showers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Food storage areas? (refrigerator/cabinet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Food preparation areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Laundry facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Computer/Internet access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3

	Yes	No	Perceived Priority for Change		
Do patients and families have access to:					
• Gardens and outdoor spaces?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Places for spiritual support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Is there space for young children visiting a family member to play safely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Patterns of Care/Collaboration in Caregiving</b>					
Do staff members view families as key participants or partners in care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do staff practices encourage the patient to define their family and how family members will be involved in care and decision-making?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do staff members welcome families 24 hours a day, including during:					
• Admissions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Rounds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Change of shift report?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Treatments and procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Anesthesia induction and post-anesthesia?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Resuscitation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do staff members:					
• Recognize and support the strengths and competencies of all families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Support families as full members of the health care team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Offer family members training and practice in new care skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Respect family choices regarding how they wish to participate in the care of their loved one?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are the concerns, priorities, and needs of families elicited and respected in the care planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do documentation procedures/forms obtain information about the family's strengths, preferences, concerns, and goals for their family member?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do patients and families have the opportunity to participate in discussions relating to care, discharge planning, and transitions to new settings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Information and Decision Making</b>					
Does all written information given to patients and families (including pre-admission packet, patient/family handbook) express the belief that patients and their families are viewed as members of the health care team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do families receive the information they need and want regarding their family member and his or her care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3

	Yes	No	Perceived Priority for Change		
Do patients and family members have the opportunity to share insights, observations, and questions:					
• In the patient's chart?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• During rounds and other discussions regarding care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• With individual care providers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do patients and families collaborate with the nursing staff in the development of the nursing care plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Is there continual open and honest communication between families and professionals about medical, psychosocial, and ethical issues relevant to the patient and family?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Does the hospital provide access to and support families in using:					
• A patient and family resource library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• The medical library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• A skills training lab for learning and practicing care procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• The Internet (in the patient's room and the resource center)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Educational resources in audiovisual and other media formats?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Is information made available to families in the language and formats (verbal, written, other) they can use most comfortably?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Family Support</b>					
Does the staff involve the patient and family in identifying visiting preferences, such as:					
• Other family members and close friends who will support them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Sibling or child visitation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Preferences regarding frequency and timing of visiting by others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are young children offered developmentally appropriate preparation and support for visiting a hospitalized family member?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are financial supports offered to families to increase the amount of time they can spend with their family members, such as:					
• Parking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Meals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Nearby lodging?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Supervised childcare services at the hospital?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3

	Yes	No	Perceived Priority for Change		
Are means provided for family members to keep in touch with staff when they are not on the unit (e.g., beepers, telephones, teleconferences, e-mail, personalized Web sites)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are emotional supports offered to families, such as:					
• Social worker or counselor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Chaplains or other clergy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Family-to-family support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Community support groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Patients and Families as Advisors</b>					
Is there a systematic procedure for gathering information about patient and family satisfaction with policies and practices related to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are patients and their family members involved in:					
• Developing, implementing, and evaluating policies, programs, practices, and facility design relevant to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Responding to and finding solutions for concerns and suggestions about family presence and participation shared by other families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
• Developing, implementing, and evaluating quality improvement initiatives related to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are patients and families involved in hospital/unit committees and workgroups focused on issues related to the experience of care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
<b>▼ Personnel Practices</b>					
Are policies and practices in place that encourage recruiting and hiring individuals who are committed to working collaboratively with families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do position descriptions and performance appraisals for staff clearly articulate the necessity of working in respectful and collaborative ways with patients and families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are orientation and in-service programs offered for staff to develop skills relating to family presence and participation in care, and collaboration with families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Do patients and/or their family members participate as faculty in orientation and continuing education programs for staff, faculty, and trainees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are there systems and supports in place to help staff during the process of change in policies related to family presence and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Are there systems and supports in place to help staff cope with challenges that may arise when working collaboratively with patients and families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3