



PeaceHealth Medical Group

Frequently Asked Questions about Being a Patient or Family Advisor

1. **What is a Patient and Family Advisor?** An advisor is someone who volunteers to work with a healthcare organization to share your insights, thoughts, opinions about what works and doesn't work for people receiving services. Advisors provide fresh insights on what it's like to receive services from the healthcare delivery system. They can bring not only their ideas and thoughts but they can also talk with the network of others they know and bring their thoughts as well. They represent the patient and/or family voice at places where the perspectives of doctors, administrators and others come together to improve care.
2. **What do they do?** Advisors bring diverse ideas and experiences to conversations about ways to improve healthcare programs, policies, services, communication and tools you might use. By working in partnership with providers, policy makers and program planners, you provide information about the priorities of consumers and what can meet the needs of patients and families.
3. **How can I participate?** There are a variety of ways to participate. Some examples are listed below:
 - **Phone Interview:** Share your opinion and respond to survey questions over the telephone.
 - **Focus Group:** Provide feedback in a group format with other patients/family members. Usually a one time only or intermittent commitment with a changing group of other advisors
 - **On-line Advisor:** Be available by email to respond to questions that ask about what might be important to you on a particular topic.
 - **Participate on Committees:** Bring the patient/family perspective to committee meetings.
 - **Story Sharing:** Share your health care experiences with care providers and other patients.
 - **Short Term Projects:** Be a partner in making improvements to specific physician and specialist services
 - **Ongoing Patient or Family Council member.** Often Councils have regular members who attend monthly meetings with healthcare professionals to review overall program/services of an organization.
4. **What qualifications or qualities does an advisor need?** An advisor is someone who can:
 - Share insights and experiences in productive ways
 - Sees beyond his/her own personal experience
 - Respects diversity and differing opinions
 - Listens well
 - Likes to work together with others on solutions

If you are interested in learning more, please contact smiller3@peacehealth.org