



Patient and Family Advisory Councils Help Improve Clinical Care in Anesthesia, Periop, and More

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Issue cover photo: Peter Dunn, MD, executive medical director, perioperative administration, gives all General Patient and Family Advisory Council members a tour of a procedure room.

Patients play an important role alongside clinicians and administrators working to make MGH care better. The MGH has several Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFAC) that meet regularly and provide perspectives to help shape hospital services, programs, and initiatives. Members also participate on committees across the organization to help improve patient care.

PFAC and Anesthesia Improve Patient Materials

General PFAC member Hilary Deignan is the first patient member of the interdisciplinary Anesthesia Quality and Safety Committee. "Hilary's perspective helped address issues the *patients* are wondering about, not what we think patients are wondering about," said Jeremi Mountjoy, MD, anesthesiologist and physician lead for the committee.

Deignan worked with the committee to develop information to better prepare patients undergoing anesthesia. "I attended meetings, brainstormed, and worked with the committee, and had equal participation and access," Deignan said. "I took the final content to the PFAC, which reviewed it as an end user would, and got additional feedback, much of which was incorporated." Having Deignan on the interdisciplinary committee was very helpful in connecting with PFAC, added Allison Doney, Anesthesia administrative manager and co-chair of the Quality and Safety Committee.


Anesthesia is piloting the web-based patient information portal to get baseline and follow-up information from a select patient population.

PFAC and Perioperative Care Make Consent Forms Clearer

The interdisciplinary Patient Perspective on Perioperative Care Task Force (P3C) facilitates patient input on care quality policies and the consent process. "I have learned that having patients' and families' perspectives on decisions that we believe are right from the clinical and hospital perspective is helpful to guide and validate whether we're moving in the right direction," said Peter Dunn, MD, executive medical director, perioperative administration.

"We looked at consent forms for anesthesia, blood transfusion, and HIV screening from a patient and family point of view, and recommended changes to make the forms clearer," said Bill Kieffer, PFAC and P3C member. "We urged that wherever possible, the conversations between anesthesiologists, surgeons, and the patient and family members take place in advance of the procedure, leaving time for questions."

MGH has several PFACs representing a large proportion of specialty care we provide, including the MassGeneral Hospital for Children, the Cancer Center, Heart and Vascular, Pediatric Oncology, Ambulatory Practice of the Future, and Cystic Fibrosis. Last November, the PFACs jointly held an event to highlight patient and family member contributions that enhance the MGH care experience across the organization, and the importance of the patient and family voice.

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