

Collaborative Governance Guidelines
Institute for Patient Care
Patient Care Services
Massachusetts General Hospital

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to describe the Collaborative Governance program located within the Institute for Patient Care, Patient Care Services (PCS) at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Vision

Collaborative Governance is a critical element within the professional practice model that describes communication and decision-making processes and places the authority, responsibility, and accountability for patient care with practicing clinicians.

Mission

Collaborative Governance integrates multidisciplinary clinical staff into the formal decision-making structure of Patient Care Services to stimulate, facilitate, generate and disseminate knowledge that will improve patient care and enhance the environment in which clinicians shape their practice.

Collaborative Governance Committees

The PCS services strategic plan guides the work of the Collaborative Governance and the creation of the eleven committees:

- Diversity
- Ethics In Clinical Practice
- Informatics
- Interdisciplinary Staff Advisory
- Patient Education
- Patient Experience
- Policy, Procedure and Products
- Quality and Safety
- Research and Evidence-based Practice
- Staff Nurse Advisory

Application Process

Applications for appointment/reappointment to Collaborative Governance committees are accepted annually from August 1st to October 1st.

1. Interested staff should speak to their director about their interest in joining a committee and seek their support to attend the meetings.
2. Download the application/reapplication form from the web site.
3. Complete the form and save to your H drive.
4. Send the form as an email attachment to your director for their approval.
5. Once approved, your director will send the application to PCSCOLLABORATIVEGOVERNANCE@PARTNERS.ORG

6. The committee leadership will review your application and make recommendations to the Senior Vice President for Patient Care and Chief Nurse.
7. You and your director will receive an email confirming your appointment.

Terms of Appointment

The appointment is for a two-year term. After two years, the committee champion may apply for re-appointment for an additional two year term.

Roles and Responsibilities

There are four roles on every committee. In this section, the roles are described along with their responsibilities.

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1. *Committee Champion*

The role of Collaborative Governance champions is to:

Influence- Bring ideas, thoughts and questions to the meetings and influence the work on the unit/department and organization.

Communicate- Don't keep your membership a secret- before meetings ask your colleagues for their ideas, thoughts and concerns and then tell them what happened at the meetings. Close the loop.

Educate- Yourself, your colleagues the organization and community.

Ways you can fulfill your role as a Collaborative Governance Champions include:

- **Attending** meetings and if you cannot notify the committee recorder.
- **Collaborating** with other committee champions
- **Participating** in the formation of the agenda
- **Obtaining and reviewing** the agenda and meeting prior meeting minutes so that you come to the meeting prepared
- **Participate** actively in committee discussions
- **Take** a risk and challenge yourself
- **Communicate** with peers before the meeting to gain their perspective on issues
- **Formulate** strategies to represent information from peers' perspectives
- **Help** move the agenda forward
- **Share** the work of the committee with your colleagues through staff meetings, emails and communications boards
- **Complete** tasks assigned by the chairperson
- **Articulate** the professional nursing/health professions perspective (as appropriate) to other committee champions

- **Contribute** to the annual report
- **Integrate** resources to prepare for committee's work
- **Help** determine additional resources to facilitate the committee's work
- **Evaluate and reflect** on your contributions to success of the committee

2. *Co-chairs*

Each committee is led by two chairpersons (co-chairs) who are responsible for planning and executing the meetings and directing the work of the committee. The committee co-chairs provide leadership to the committee champions, represent the committee in various forums as necessary, and are accountable for communication of committee activities to non-committee champions in Patient care Services. The co-chairs also provide an orientation for new champions. Included in the orientation process is a discussion of these guidelines. The co-chairs and their respective coaches meet regularly with other committee leadership throughout Patient care Services to communicate their committee's work in progress and outcomes. The term of appointment is two years after which chairs may apply for reappointment, for a total of four years of service. Appointments will be made to facilitate a transition period for chair/coach positions. The co-chairs have three main responsibilities: teaching, committee work, and communication.

Teaching

- **Participate** in the training session with committee champions and chairs
- **Use** prepared materials
- **Evaluate** training sessions

Committee Work

- **Collaborate** with coach
- **Set** the agenda
 - Prepare and distribute the agenda
 - Review status of previous agenda items
 - Guide committee champions in discussion of agenda items
 - Move agenda forward
- **Facilitate** decision making and consensus building
- **Guide** committee champions in representing practice area(s) and clarifying information
- **Lead** committee meetings and adhere to time parameters
- **Evaluate** meetings and committee progress with coach following each meeting
- **Create** an environment for discussion
- **Distribute** committee minutes to champions and coaches
- **Negotiate** group process
- **Review** meeting's accomplishments with coach
- **Delegate** tasks to committee champions
- **Attend** monthly Committee Leaders Meeting
- **Report** committee's activities at Committee Leaders Meeting

Communication

- **Summarize** the accomplishments of the committee to new champions and others
- **Articulate** the professional nursing/health professions perspective (as appropriate) to committee champions
- **Participate** in the development of the annual report
- **Communicate** committee information in newsletter
- **Integrate** resources to facilitate committee's work
- **Help** determine additional resources to facilitate the committee's work
- **Contribute** committee updates to Committee Leaders Meeting
- **Update** committee champions about discussions at planning meetings
- **Solicit** input from committee champions to help direct subsequent meetings

3. *Coach*

Each committee has one coach whose role is to provide individual and group development and support to the co-chairpersons, champions, and the committee as a whole. The Executive Director of the Institute for Patient Care and the Advisor recommend the appointment to the Senior Vice President for Patient Care Services and Chief Nurse and the appointment is generally indeterminate in length. The coach also has three main responsibilities: teaching, committee work and communication.

Teaching

- **Design** training modules
- **Conduct** training sessions to prepare chairperson for role
- **Prepare** for meeting
- **Evaluate** training sessions
- **Facilitate** self-evaluation for chairpersons after meetings

Committee Work

- **Collaborate** with committee chairpersons
- **Help** set the agenda
- **Prepare** for meetings
- **Guide** chairpersons to structure and facilitate meetings
- **Assist** chairperson with skills needed to negotiate group process
- **Guide** chairpersons in clarifying information
- **Review** meeting's accomplishments with chairpersons

Communication

- **Articulate** professional nursing's/health profession's perspective to chairperson and committee champions
- **Help** produce the annual report
- **Prepare** information for publication in Caring Headlines
- **Access** resources to facilitate committee work
- **Contribute** committee updates to Committee Leaders Meeting
- **Update** chairpersons and committee champions about discussion at Committee Leaders Meetings

4. *Advisor*

The role of the advisor is to provide substantive expertise to the committees as well as provide linkage to a related office or unit in PCS. The Executive Director for the Institute for Patient Care recommends the appointment to the Senior Vice President for Patient care Services and Chief Nurse and the appointment is generally indeterminate in length. The advisor role is to:

- **Inform** committees and leaders about related initiatives in PCS
- **Provide** latest evidence in the substantive area of the committee
- **Guide** the strategic plan of the committee using expert knowledge
- **Utilize** knowledge from committee's discussions to inform departmental initiatives
- **Facilitate** discussion by providing theoretical framework
- **Integrate** the work of the committee into departmental strategic initiatives

Attendance

1. The first responsibility of membership is to attend all meetings. Any necessary arrangements enabling a member to attend (e.g. schedule, assignment) are the responsibility of the individual member. These should be arranged with the director and time keeper *in advance*. Pre-planning can facilitate meeting attendance but our primary mission is to care for patients. Therefore, members must be flexible when plans for coverage fail. Resource nurses, supervisors, clinical specialists and directors can assist with those day-of-meeting decisions.
2. Unexcused absences from three (3) consecutive meetings will constitute a voluntary resignation. Co-chairs will monitor attendance and will raise the issue with members who miss meetings to assess level of interest of staff member in continuing on the committee, barriers to attending and possible solutions.

Participation and Communication

Every Collaborative Governance member, whether a champion or a member is expected to be a conduit for two-way communication. First, the member will engage their colleagues on their units and in their departments about practice issues so that members will be able to adequately represent their peers. Second, the member will take back to their peers and directors important information about the committee work or other key PCS information. The process of gathering information and disseminating information is a key responsibility of all members and includes careful reading of emails and other notices, such as Magnet and Joint Commission and other regulatory agencies. The Collaborative Governance member is a key conduit for information in PCS.

The member should actively participate in committee discussions and activities. Pertinent information, ideas, and suggestions should be communicated at meetings.

Timely completion of projects, information gathering and other assigned committee work is necessary.

Occasionally, after some participation, a member may feel that their membership on a given committee is not a good fit. The member will discuss this with the co-chairs who will help the member transition off of the committee or to another committee if a vacancy exists.

Evaluation

Periodically, the chairs will set aside some time within the agenda to check in with members to assess, from their perspective, how things are going and if there are any recommendations for improvements within the committee. Individual feedback to committee members regarding performance will be provided as requested/needed.