

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 Department (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.

Committee Descriptions and Responsibilities

A strategic plan guides the work of the Collaborative Governance program which is comprised of seven operating committees, each having defined responsibilities and membership requirements that are reviewed and revised annually and informed by new strategic initiatives. They are presented here.

Diversity Steering Committee

The Patient Care Services **Diversity Steering Committee** is committed to supporting and developing strategies which transform our work setting into a more inclusive and welcoming environment for staff, patients, and families alike. The committee's work includes professional development, student outreach, programs centered on culturally competent care and input into the development of patient education material specifically designed for use by clinicians who care for a diverse patient population. This is a multidisciplinary committee which works closely with the PCS Office of Diversity.

Responsibilities:

- Enhance professional development.
- Promote culturally competent care and staff education.
- Prepare patient education materials.
- Conduct student outreach: MGH Foreign Nurses Group.
- Develop a community, sensitive to each person as a human to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Create a climate of inclusion in activities throughout the system.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- All Patient Care Services professional staff are eligible to apply during the annual application process.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs.

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

- Applications are occasionally accepted from professional staff outside of PCS and will be recommended based upon the needs of the committee.
- Committee meetings and events are open to the PCS community.

Meeting Schedule:

- 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 12pm to 1pm.

Ethics in Clinical Practice Committee

The Patient Care Services **Ethics in Clinical Practice (EICP) Committee** is a multidisciplinary committee, which was formed to develop and implement activities and programs to further clinicians' understanding of ethical aspects of patient care. The work of this committee involves identifying strategies to integrate ethical judgment into professional practice.

Responsibilities:

- Design and implement activities and programs to support the development of staff in Patient Care Services in the area of health care ethics.
- Employ strategies to educate EICP members in the area of health care ethics.
- Identify and address ethical issues and conflicts faced by clinicians in Patient Care Services.
- Provide consultation to the organization regarding policies, procedures and programs with ethical implications.
- Expand the impact of EICP through collaboration with other Collaborative Governance Committees, links with the organizational initiatives, and professional conference participation.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- All Patient Care Services professional staff are eligible to apply during the annual application process.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs.
- Applications are accepted from professional staff outside of PCS based upon the needs of the committee.
- Committee meetings and events are open to the PCS community.

Meeting Schedule:

- 1st Wednesday of each month from 1pm to 3pm.

Nursing Practice Committee

The Patient Care Services **Nursing Practice Committee** reviews, revises and communicates standards of practice for professional nursing at MGH. This work includes reviewing and approving new products, new practice recommendations, and communicating of outcomes and revisions to staff throughout Patient Care Services.

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

Responsibilities:

- Consult and approve standards of practice including clinical care and documentation guidelines.
- Approve clinical practice recommendations.
- Determine and communicate standards for professional nursing practice at MGH.
- Communicate committee outcomes throughout Patient Care Services and to others, as appropriate.
- Communicate changes and additions to clinical pathways.
- Approve clinical product selections.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- All registered nurses in PCS are eligible to apply during the annual application process.
- In order to provide a forum for staff nurses to raise and discuss issues integral to their practices, the committee leaders seek to recruit predominantly staff registered nurses and maintain some membership positions for advanced practice nurses and nurses in leadership positions.
- Applications are occasionally accepted from professional staff outside of PCS and will be recommended based upon the needs of the committee.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs. Generally, the committee leaders recommend not more than one representative per patient care unit.

Meeting Schedule:

- 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm.

Nursing Research Committee

The Patient Care Services **Nursing Research Committee** exists to foster the spirit of inquiry around clinical practice. The committee supports nurses in the research utilization process and communicates the results of nursing research activities.

Philosophy:

Passion and purpose fueled by energizing forces builds great achievements.

Responsibilities:

- Foster a spirit of inquiry around clinical practice.
- Promote awareness of institutional nursing research activities.
- Encourage and provide support for research-based practice.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- Registered nurses are eligible to apply during the annual application process to the Nursing Research Committee.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs.

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

- Once appointed to the committee, members are asked to choose and actively participate in one of three subcommittees:
 - Did You Know...Posters Subcommittee
 - Nursing Research Expo Subcommittee
 - More Than Just a Journal Club Subcommittee

Meeting Schedule:

1. General committee meeting
1st Friday of each month, 1-2:30pm
2. Subcommittees
 - a. "Did You Know..." Posters: 1st Friday; 12pm - 1pm immediately before NRC monthly meeting;
 - b. Nursing Research Expo: 1st Friday; 12pm - 1pm immediately before NRC monthly meeting
 - c. More Than Just a Journal Club Subcommittee: 2nd Wednesday, 1:15pm-2:15 pm

Patient Education Committee

The **Patient Education Committee** is a multidisciplinary committee whose goal is to support clinical staff in developing their role in patient education activities that reflects the diverse patient population served. The committee supports these activities through stimulating, facilitating and generating knowledge of Patient Education materials, programs and systems that will improve patient care and enhance the environment in which clinicians shape their practice.

Responsibilities:

- Develop strategies to assist healthcare providers in patient education design and implementation.
- Disseminate patient education information and activities to the larger MGH community.
- Collaborate with Norman Knight Nursing Center for Clinical and Professional Development to develop patient education programs to benefit PCS staff.
- Participate in Joint Commission task force to promote interdisciplinary education tools.
- Recommend systems and technology to support the cataloging, dissemination, documentation and evaluation of patient education activities and materials.
- Assure activities and materials reflect diversity of the population served.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- All Patient Care Services professional staff are eligible to apply during the annual application process.
- Applications are accepted from professional staff outside of PCS based upon the needs of the committee.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs.

Meeting Schedule:

- 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm.

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

Quality Committee

The Patient Care Services **Quality Committee** is a multidisciplinary committee responsible for identifying opportunities to improve patient care. Members develop knowledge and skill in using the quality improvement process. The committee works closely with the Director of PCS Quality and Safety. The committee co-chairs represent PCS as active members of the PCAC. Members use the quality improvement process to identify high risk and problem prone aspects of care from their clinical settings and from analysis of hospital wide patient incidents. Systems analysis and improvement recommendations are referred to appropriate work groups for action and/or implementation.

Responsibilities:

- Recommend quality activities based on important aspects of care and services (high volume, high risk, problem prone).
- Identify strategies to improve quality.
- Provide an arena to evaluate and disseminate program development regarding quality initiatives not specifically initiated by this committee.
- Provide increased communication and awareness of systems improvement programs.
- Review findings and recommend departmental actions related to Department of Quality and Safety evaluations.
- Engage in joint projects with other Collaborative Governance committees.
- Align the work of the committee with PCS strategic goals.

Membership:

- All Patient Care Services professional staff are eligible to apply during the annual application process.
- Applications are accepted from professional staff outside of PCS based upon the needs of the committee.
- Annually, committee leaders recommend applicants to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse based upon the committee's needs. Generally, the committee leaders recommend not more than one representative per patient care unit.

Meeting Schedule:

- 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Staff Nurse Advisory

The Patient Care Services **Staff Nurse Advisory Committee** provides a forum for communication between nursing leadership and clinical nurses at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Committee members representing all patient care units engage in dialogue with nursing leaders about matters of patient care and professional development.

Responsibilities:

- Provide dialogue between the chief nurse and clinical nurses.
- Dialogue includes matters affecting patient care delivery and clinical and professional development in the Department of Nursing.
- Opportunity is provided for two-way communication.

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

Membership:

- Registered nurses from PCS are eligible to apply annually and/or as positions become available.
- Generally, only one nurse per patient care unit may serve at a time.
- Nursing directors are responsible for ensuring that their units are represented and are responsible for making the final recommendation to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse.

Chair:

- Jeanette Ives Erickson, RN, MS, FAAN, Senior Vice President for Patient Care and Chief Nurse

Meeting Schedule:

- 1st Tuesday of each month from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Leaders' Committee

The Leaders' Committee, composed of all chairpersons, coaches, advisors, and the executive director of the Institute for Patient Care, provides a forum for communication between and among the leaders. All committee leaders are expected to attend this monthly meeting during which committee reports, new PCS initiatives, general hospital news, and planning are discussed.

Co-Chairs:

- Gaurdia Banister, RN, PhD, Executive Director, Institute for Patient Care, Patient Care Services

- Susan Lee, RN, PhD, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Institute for Patient Care and Associate Nurse Scientist, Yvonne L. Munn Center for Nursing Research, Patient Care Services

Meeting Schedule:

- 2nd Thursday of each month from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm.

Membership

How to Apply

Applications for appointment/reappointment to Collaborative Governance committees are accepted annually from August 1st to October 1st and must be submitted in writing to the employee's director for endorsement.

1. Meet with your director to discuss your interest in Collaborative Governance.
2. Download the Appointment/Reappointment 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.
5. Once approved, your director will submit electronically.
6. Both you and your director will receive a confirmatory email.
7. The committee will review the applications in early October and make recommendations for appointment to the Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse.
8. Appointment letters are mailed to the staff's home during the first week in November.

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

One of the aims of Collaborative Governance is to provide staff-level involvement so that the majority of each committee will be comprised of staff level professionals. Occasionally, professional staff, who are not PCS members, are appointed to the committees, especially where their position, knowledge, or expertise will substantially contribute to the work of the committee. Eligibility criteria vary by committee and are listed above under each committee.

Term of Appointment

1. The Senior Vice President for PCS and Chief Nurse generally grants two-year appointments to committee members.
2. At the end of the two years, committee members may apply for a re-appointment for an additional two years.
3. Occasionally, the needs of the committee require exceptions to the above guideline.
4. In July, co-chairpersons will remind those committee members, who will be completing their two-year term in December of that year that their term is expiring. The member may apply for reappointment to the same committee, may apply for initial appointment to another committee, or give written notice to their co-chairpersons of their intent not to reapply.
5. Appointment renewal is contingent upon continued interest on the part of the committee member, acceptable past performance, committee responsibilities and membership requirements, and the endorsement of the employee's director.
6. Resignation from a committee will be submitted in writing or via email to the committee leadership.
7. Vacancies may be filled during the year as needed at the discretion of the committee leadership.
8. Transfer of a committee member from one department or unit to another will result in the review of membership by the committee leadership and the employee's new director to assess impact on membership representation.
9. Three unexcused absences will constitute a voluntary resignation from the committee.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

1. Committee Member

The committee member is generally a PCS professional staff member whose role is to attend meetings, provide input and expertise about his/her respective clinical practice areas and disciplines, participate in the activities of the committee, and disseminate the work of the committee and other PCS initiatives to his/her units/departments. The member role has three main responsibilities: teaching, committee work, and communication.

Teaching

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

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

Committee Work

- **Attend** meetings
- **Collaborate** with committee members
- **Participate** in the formation of the agenda
- **Obtain** agenda and come to meetings prepared
- **Participate** actively in committee discussions
- **Formulate** strategies to represent information from peers' perspectives
- **Help** move agenda forward
- **Obtain** and review committee minutes
- **Review** meeting's accomplishments with chairperson and constituents
- **Complete** tasks assigned by the chairperson

Communication

- **Summarize** the accomplishments of the committee to new members and peers
- **Read** emails and disseminate news to peers in a timely manner
- **Articulate** the professional nursing/health professions perspective (as appropriate) to committee members
- **Contribute** to the annual report
- **Communicate** with peers and obtain their perspectives on issues
- **Integrate** resources to prepare for committee work
- **Help** determine additional resources to facilitate the committee's work
- **Update** the co-chairpersons about committee participation
- **Evaluate** contributions to success of the committee
- **Solicit** input from committee members to help direct subsequent meetings
- **Disseminate** information to peers not only about committee work but other information, as well.

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 members, represent the committee in various forums as necessary, and are accountable for communication of committee activities to non-committee members in Patient Care Services. The co-chairs also provide an orientation for new members. 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. 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 training committee chairpersons and members
- **Distribute** training materials and prepare members
- **Evaluate** training sessions

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

Committee Work

- **Collaborate** with coach
- **Set** the agenda
 - Prepare and distribute the agenda
 - Review status of previous agenda items
 - Guide committee members in discussion of agenda items
 - Move agenda forward
- **Facilitate** decision making and consensus building
- **Guide** committee members 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 members and coaches
- **Negotiate** group process
- **Review** meeting's accomplishments with coach
- **Delegate** tasks to committee members
- **Attend** monthly Committee Leaders' Meeting
- **Report** committee's activities at Committee Leaders' Meeting

Communication

- **Summarize** the accomplishments of the committee to new members and others
- **Articulate** the professional nursing/health professions perspective (as appropriate) to committee members
- **Participate** in the development of the annual report
- **Communicate** committee information in newsletter
- **Integrate** resources (The Team Handbook) to facilitate committee's work
- **Help** determine additional resources to facilitate the committee's work
- **Contribute** committee updates to Committee Leaders' Meeting
- **Update** committee members about discussions at planning meetings
- **Solicit** input from committee members 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, members, and the committee as a whole. The Executive Director for 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 meetings
- **Evaluate** training sessions
- **Facilitate** self-evaluation for chairpersons after meetings

Committee Work

- **Collaborate** with committee chairpersons
- **Help** set the agenda; meeting times
- **Prepare** for meetings

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

- **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 members
- **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 members about discussions at Committee Leaders Meetings

4. Advisor

Selected committees (Diversity Steering, Ethics in Clinical Practice, Nursing Research, Quality, and Patient Education) have a fourth role, the purposes of which are 1) to provide substantive expertise to the committees, as well as 2) to provide a 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, and directors can assist with those day-of-meeting decisions.
2. Unexcused absence 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 committee, barriers to attending and possible solutions.

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

Participation and Communication

Every Collaborative Governance 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 information. The Collaborative Governance member is a key conduit for information in PCS.

The members 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 the committee or to another committee, if a vacancy exists.

Evaluation

The *self-evaluation form* is distributed to members at the beginning of each committee year. Through this form member expectations are described. 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.

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