

Family Council Terms of Reference and Structure

Who we are:

Independent of Louis Brier Home & Hospital (“LBHH”), the Family Council is a self-directed council comprised of family members, friends, residents, and representatives of persons in care (residents). The Family Council works with LBHH designated staff liaisons for collaboration and information-sharing purposes. The Family Council acts as a voice for the often, “voiceless”, residents in care at LBHH.

Philosophy:

To improve the quality of life and quality of care for all residents of LBHH by promoting an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, sensitivity, caring and support among staff, residents and their family members, volunteers, and friends.

Mission:

The Family Council provides feedback, ideas, suggestions and solutions to LBHH with the goal of attaining the highest possible standards of care set forth by the Vancouver Coastal Health and Accreditation Canada.

Purpose of the Family Council:

- To enhance the communication and education of Families by being a resource of knowledge regarding activities, events, protocols, changes, key staff, future planning and frequently asked questions.
- To advocate a culture change that addresses a stimulating, meaningful and engaging environment in a homelike atmosphere
- To provide educational opportunities for families to enhance their understanding of the experience of residents in care.
- To provide mutual support for all residents and their families
- To welcome families of new residents, offering support, assistance and education
- To advocate for continuous improvement, in the quality of life of the residents
- To promote a positive attitude towards aging and the role of residents’ families
- To provide a forum for discussion and resolution regarding shared concerns and complaints and take action as appropriate, maintaining confidentiality at all times; working collaboratively with LBHH to address concerns and follow up on actions.
- To provide a forum where family feedback and input help in building recommendations to LBHH, which result in decision making, that contributes to overall quality of life for residents.

Process:

1. Hold monthly meetings as a forum for discussion.
2. Invite and Feature LBHH Board members and Key Administration in order to embrace direct, two way communication.
3. To advocate on behalf of residents through:
 - a) Identifying specific concerns and informing appropriate and relevant individuals within LBHH;
 - b) Offering recommendations to LBHH through an open communication channel.
 - c) Reviewing and discussing current and proposed policies, procedures, and practices.
4. To promote knowledge transfer, education, and awareness of families and friends of residents by:
 - a. Inviting staff and guests from within and outside Louis Brier to speak at family council meetings on specific and general issues related to elder care, and
 - b. Publishing in the monthly Snider Schmooze, newsletter
 - c. Publishing an insert for the new resident “Welcome Package”

5. To act as a resource and support to families of residents. Offer assistance consistent with the mandate of family council.
6. To promote mutual support for families through sharing of experiences and information.
7. It is NOT to replace the direct communication between resident (or family member) and staff on individual personal matters.

Core Membership and Organizational Structure:

All family members are encouraged to participate in meetings. The council will develop a formalized organizational structure of elected officers, formal sub-committees and a decision-making process based on simplified Robert's Rules of Order. The slate of leadership (as per consensus at the 1st Council meeting), includes two Co-Chairs, a Secretary (to be elected) and a Vice Chair (to be elected).

The larger the group and the more complex its functions and activities, the greater the need for a formalized structure.

Council membership is based on an inclusive model. Anyone can be on council who currently or previously had a family member at LBHH. Any resident designate will be eligible to be nominated for Council in ensuing years. If a voting member of the Family Council does not attend 3 consecutive meetings and does not notify an officer at lb.familycounsel@gmail.com, their voting rights will be revoked for the year. At the end of the 2nd year a nominating subcommittee will be established to put forth names for Council nominations. Core membership limited to approximately 25 members (representing 10% of LBHH residents).

Voting privileges are for council members in good standing. Good standing means having paid the \$10.00 annual fee and regularly attending meetings. In camera meeting will not include non-voting members.

Term of members (1-2 years recommended). In the event a member of family council no longer has a family member resident at Louis Brier, the member of Council will: have an option to continue for the duration of their term or; become a friend of family council. Friends of family council are called upon to attend and assist at special occasions and functions, thereby availing of their continued support and interest.

An "executive committee" of up to 4 members (Co-chairs, Secretary, Vice Chair and Treasurer) will be charged with being the representative of the Family Council in meetings with senior admin (such as the CEO) that require a smaller working group.

Subcommittees will be formed to take on further research and reporting on best practices regarding presented issues in order for the Council to be knowledgeable when advocating for positive change.

LBHH Support and Liaison

The LBHH staff representative will provide administrative and technical support and liaison to Family Council. For the meetings to which they are invited, they will be encouraged to participate in Council, but will not vote.

Election of Officers

Election of the co-chairs and vice chairs will take place every 2 years through a formalized nominations process from within the FC. Members will bring forward a slate of candidates for discussion and approval.

When and if a situation arises where one of the officers resigns or can no longer fill his/her position an interim officer will be appointed for the balance of the term of office.

No elected officer shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms of office, unless elected and mutually agreed by officers and members.

Officers

The following officers are elected for a two-year term, beginning March 1st, 2016:

Co-Chairs

Secretary

Vice Chair

Treasurer

Secretary: The term of the secretary will be the same as that of the officers. Secretary reviews and edits the notes of the recorder; Prepares and disseminates the minutes; Maintains a file of all council minutes; Handles council correspondence.

Recorder: A recorder (recording secretary) will be appointed for each meeting, 2-3 individuals on a rotational basis.

Meetings

Meetings will be held once a month (decided at the end of each meeting).

Quorum

Quorum will consist of five members eligible to vote, representing a minimum of four residents.

Minutes and Agenda

Minutes, along with the agenda for the next meeting, will be distributed to all members of the Family Council and any resident delegates that have formally requested the information. They will also be available at the Family Council literature rack, located at nursing stations.

Amendment of Terms of Reference

Amendments may be made at any regular meeting of family council by a two-thirds vote, providing the proposed changes have been circulated at the previous meeting.