



Vancouver Island Association of Family Councils (VIAFC) Tool to Increase Family Council (FC) Membership

Note: majority of ideas will require discussion with Long-Term Care Home (LTCH)

PROMOTION:

- Have sign-in sheet and a FC poster at sign-in desk
- Use Info brochures: 1) what is a family council?; 2) FAQ's
- Posters of FC meetings on coloured bristle board to attract attention
- Ask if the FC can include a statement in LTCH's newsletter
- If no newsletter, encourage creation of one
- Have a FC Bulletin Board in a highly visible place
- Have regular announcements from LTCH re: FC events and updates
- Reminders (and encouragement) sent out by LTCH regarding upcoming meetings
- Ask to have a FC statement in monthly LTCH mail outs
- Discuss FC at meet and greets and other events. Have info brochures available
- Ask Mgt to send a note to their data base asking families to opt-in by sending contact information to FC Chair. Indicate attending FC is an option-we want their information (family member contact information and resident's name) to keep them informed
- Encourage existing FC members to reach out to other families

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- Have important, interesting guests, "brought to you by the family council"
- Alzheimer's Society, Dementia/Geriatric Specialist, Seniors Advocate, LTCH Managers, Dietitian, Physio Therapist, Head Chef, DoC, Rec Manager
- Ask Council members about potential guests
- Have a "family" education day" on how to operate a wheel chair, etc

CELEBRATE SUCCESSES:

- Include "kudos" as an agenda item for FC meetings
- Ask families if there are particular staff members they would like to celebrate and provide those names to Mgt - do not include names in meeting notes (confidentiality)
- Have "WOW" stickers to acknowledge specific staff members
- Celebrate program/policy successes in mall-outs (from LTCH)

COLLABORATE AND COMMUNICATE:

- Collaborate with Mgt to raise profile of FC
- Be involved at end of intake process for new residents and their families
- Have permission for families to sign up for FC when they enter LTCH
- Have a one-on-one with new family members to welcome them/answer questions
- Organize group discussions on topics of interest to families
- Talk to families about the FC and invite them to join; indicate they don't have to attend meeting, that if they provide e-mail info and resident's name, they will receive info from the FC
- Do a survey with the families/representatives on your list (once people opt-in) to get an idea of the issues, what themes are present and what areas need attention
- Offer support to families who need it. Have a couple of FC members engage with families, take them out for coffee etc.
- Be clear to new staff regarding the role of the FC

MEETINGS:

- Survey families for best meeting days and times
- Late afternoons or evenings often work better
- Meeting frequency could determine attendee number. Consult with families
- Try to keep meetings to one hour
- Meetings can be formal or informal, more formal for larger homes generally works
- Ask Mgt to provide coffee/tea and snacks for FC meetings
- Try hybrid meetings to include more families
- Have families only discussion for 1st 30 minutes; include LTCH Mgt for last 30 minutes or vice versa
- Have Mgt send an invite to all families/representatives on their data base
- Have a Code of Conduct for FC Members, just in case, and especially if there is a member who makes meetings "miserable"
- Be open to after meeting discussion
- Avoid a doom and gloom meeting climate

HAVE FUN!

- Encourage FC/staff gatherings with coffee and snacks
- Arrange for a wine and cheese evening for families, paid for by the LTCH
- Ask LTCH to have a "meet and greet" with a cake or a barbecue for staff and families
- Have a welcome tea for new families, organized by the LTCH and attended by FC
- Arrange "tea parties" with snacks for residents and some family members
- Organize a "Dinner Club" for FC members
- Be involved in Rec Activities with residents, where appropriate
- Solicit family members to volunteer their music-arrange with LTCH Mgt
- Help decorate LTCH for holidays-include residents where appropriate
- Have a book drive
- Organize a reading session for residents