Family-Centered Care in Action at Nemours

Kim Resnick, FAC Member

At the heart of family-centered care is the belief that health care providers, patients, and their families are partners in working together to best meet the needs of the child. Nemours is making great strides in incorporating the family-centered care philosophy into every aspect of a family’s experience. They understand that parents and family members provide a child’s primary strength and support. A parent’s insight can only enhance—and perhaps improve—the clinical care that is provided to each patient.

Nemours is both sensitive and responsive to the unique needs of patients and their families. Some of the amazing examples in which Nemours specifically incorporates family-centered care are:

- **Family Advisory Council** – Parents meet monthly to discuss the importance of family-centered care and have volunteered on subcommittees that are specifically geared towards creating that special environment at Nemours. Some of these include our Parent-to-Parent Support group and Family-as-Faculty Program, where parents address the incoming staff during the monthly orientation process.

- **Youth Advisory Council** – This group consists of children ages 10 – 18 who have either been patients at Nemours or who are siblings or friends of patients. We have gained invaluable insight from this group, especially during the planning and designing of our new expansion project.

- **Family Resource Center** – Families can visit this designated area in the hospital where many services are provided, such as laundry facilities, internet capabilities, TV viewing, and snack center. The Family Advisory Council (FAC) also hosts a Coffee Hour here once a month for families interested in learning more about family-centered care and how the FAC helps in achieving that goal.

- **Family-Centered Rounds** – Efforts are underway to increase the number of physicians and departments allowing families to participate in bedside rounds. Parents are very excited to be included in this process.

- **MyNemours** – On Nemours.org, there will be more information provided to families surrounding family-centered care initiatives as well as ways that families can become involved.

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What is the Family Advisory Council?

Founded in April 2005, the Family Advisory Council (FAC) of Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children is a group of approximately 20 families and members of the Nemours staff who meet monthly. The FAC is led by Parent Co-Chair, Jim Burrows, and Staff Co-Chair, Ed Woomer. The Council’s family members have experience with the duPont Hospital for Children in both inpatient and outpatient settings and in almost every specialty Nemours offers, providing great insight into the care Nemours delivers. The mission of the FAC is to contribute to the development and enhancement of family-centered care at the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children and Nemours Children’s Clinics.

For more information, please call (302) 651-4014.

Family Advisory Council Coffee Hour

Each month the Family Advisory Council hosts a free coffee hour in the Family Resource Center on the hospital’s 3rd floor.

Come to chat, meet other families, and take a moment to relax in the company of others who have “been there.” Upcoming Coffee Hours:

- October 19 | 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
- November 16 | 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- December 14 | 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Q&A with Ed Woomer

Staff Co-Chair, Family Advisory Council

It seems like becoming staff co-chair of the FAC is a natural fit for you. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your position at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children.

I definitely agree that it feels like a natural fit for me to be staff co-chair of the FAC and I’m very happy to be involved and have this opportunity.

I am a social worker by trade and for 28 years have worked in a hospital setting helping kids and being actively involved with families.

To me, family-centered care is a dedicated, holistic approach to health care. It’s where there’s an equal partnership between the family, patient, and health care team.

In my role as Senior Director, Patient Family Services at duPont Hospital for Children, I oversee six service departments, which include social work, patient relations (the welcome center, main lobby reception, and patient escort), our interpreters and interpreter programs, and our care management department.

MyPlate Food Guide Offers New Ways to Develop Kids’ Healthy Eating Habits

Mary Trotter, MS, RD, LDN

With all of the different roles parents play in their child’s development, it’s not surprising many parents struggle to act as the family nutritionist and establish healthy eating habits. MyPlate, a new icon recently introduced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), now makes it easier to figure out how to feed kids nutritious, balanced meals at home and on-the-go. MyPlate helps to make meal planning easy by illustrating ideal servings of the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein, and dairy food groups on a colorful divided plate.

The plate icon encourages parents to serve a variety of food groups at each meal. Just by looking at MyPlate, parents can readily see that vegetables and fruits should take up half of the plate, and grains and lean protein should take up the other half. A side helping of dairy shows kids will also need a serving of low-fat milk or another dairy product to complete their meal.

MyPlate offers simple messages that are easy to incorporate in your family’s daily diet:

- Fill half your child’s plate with vegetables and fruits
- Make at least half the grains you serve whole grains, like oatmeal and brown rice
- Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and water rather than sugary drinks
- When buying pre-packaged foods, choose ones low in sodium
- Avoid serving oversized portions

Vegetables are one of the largest portions on the plate because they provide many of the vitamins and minerals kids need for good health, plus vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and contain fiber. For parents with picky eaters, adding more vegetables to their child’s plate may seem difficult at first; however, a few simple preparation tips can help you and your family enjoy the vibrant vegetables of the season.
Tips to Liven Up Meals with Fruits and Vegetables

- **Fire up the Grill** — Grilling brings out great flavor in vegetables. Try grilling mushrooms, carrots, peppers or potatoes on a kabob skewer — kids will enjoy a fun, new way to eat their vegetables. Fruit on the grill is a whole new experience too!

- **Expand the Flavor of Casseroles** — Peas, pinto beans, tomatoes and sautéed onions add color to this convenient, weekday meal.

- **Pair with Pasta** — Planning something Italian? Slip some peppers, spinach, red beans, onions or cherry tomatoes into your traditional tomato sauce. Vegetables provide texture and satisfying low-calorie bulk.

- **Get Creative with Sandwiches** — Vegetables make a great addition to your favorite sandwiches and wraps. Substitute mayonnaise with creamy avocado or try sliced tomatoes and romaine lettuce for extra flavor.

- **Savor Stir-Fry** — Try a new cooking method! Stir-frying vegetables like broccoli, carrots, sugar snap peas, mushrooms, or green beans are a quick and tasty addition to any meal.

The goal of MyPlate is to think of the plate as an entire day of eating. Throughout the day, try to make half of what your kids eat vegetables and fruits, and the other half grains and lean protein. And you don’t have to serve all the food groups at each meal (vegetables for breakfast, anyone?). Simply use the plate as a guide when planning and serving meals. If breakfast or lunch doesn’t include a vegetable or fruit, try to serve an item from one of those food groups at snack time.

Nemours Safety Store

Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The Nemours Safety Store, located in the duPont Hospital for Children, teaches families about injury prevention and sells items that help keep children secure. Call (302) 651-4279.

What are your immediate goals for the FAC?
I have four immediate goals:

1. To get to know all the FAC members and learn their stories. Each member has a unique story to share and I know I can learn a lot by hearing their perspective on their experiences here.
2. I want to continue to work on existing programs, including integrating members onto more hospital committees.
3. It’s important we recruit Hispanic and other minority families onto the FAC.
4. I also want to be a resource for all FAC members and an advocate for their needs.

What does family-centered care mean to you?
To me, family-centered care is a dedicated, holistic approach to health care. It’s where there’s an equal partnership between the family, patient, and health care team. Family-centered care is about collaboration. It’s when the doctor, nurses, and other health care team members are on a level playing field with the family and together reach a consensus about what’s best for the patient.

What’s one surprising thing people may not know about you?
For almost as long as I’ve been working in health care, I have played guitar and banjo in a bluegrass band!
Family-Centered Care in Action at Nemours (CONTINUED)

- **Expansion Plan** – The FAC was greatly involved in meetings with Nemours executives as well as the architectural firm designing the new expansion. We were excited to be such an integral part of the design process by providing opinions and suggestions for the designated family space areas, private room design, and more.
- **Child Life** – This is a wonderful help for families at Nemours. Child Life professionals are there to meet the psychosocial and emotional needs of children and families during hospitalization. They also provide fundamental support such as child care for siblings of patients and promote positive coping while aiding patients and families in their adjustment and understanding of the entire hospital experience.
- **Pastoral Care** – Nemours understands that each family is unique and they respect patients and families’ belief systems while coping with stressful situations. Nemours provides pastoral care and spiritual guidance for those who may seek comfort in speaking with the pastoral staff.
- **Family-Centered Care Initiative** – Nemours is consistently working towards providing better family-centered care for patients and families. Through this initiative, we are looking at surveys completed by families. We are analyzing processes that are working well, and discussing those that need improvement.
- **Cultural Competency Initiative** – Nemours is working on creating programs to help staff better understand the unique cultural differences among patients and families. This education and understanding will help staff honor and respect patient and family perspectives and choices. Patient and family knowledge, values, beliefs and cultural backgrounds should all be incorporated into the planning and delivery of care.

We are proud to announce that 2011 is the first year that providing family-centered care is an “official” objective on both the Nemours Enterprise and Delaware Valley strategy maps. We are excited and hopeful that family-centered care will be at the forefront of our success in patient and families satisfaction with Nemours!

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**KINfolk**

Over ten years ago, KINfolk began as one laptop, one internet connection, and one patient at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children. Since those humble beginnings, the nonprofit organization has provided laptop computers and internet access to more than 6000 children each year whose lives have been disrupted by disease and injury at 17 hospitals across the United States.

For a hospitalized child, sometimes far from home, communication literally becomes a lifeline. The KINfolk laptops are Skype-capable and have built-in DVD players, allowing patients a great way to connect with family and friends as well as providing a wide variety of entertainment options.

“Kids who are not bored, who are distracted from pain, and who can stay in touch with their support network are much happier patients,” explains KINfolk Executive Director Melinda McGuigan. “We had one little girl literally light up when she found she could ‘Skype’ her dog!” To learn more about KINfolk, visit [www.kinfolknet.org](http://www.kinfolknet.org).

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For more information on the Family Advisory Council, call (302) 651-4014, email familyadvisory@nemours.org or visit Nemours.org.

Nemours’ KidsHealth.org offers thousands of doctor-reviewed articles written for parents, kids, and teens.

Family Voices Newsletter is produced by the Family Advisory Council and Nemours Associates. For more information or to suggest a story, contact us at (302) 298-7347 or ndargeni@nemours.org.

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![Family-Centered Care in Action at Nemours](image)