

Family Council
January 12, 2016

Present: Betsy Hayes, Bill Hayes, Judy Stewart Vidal, Sue Bailey, Pam Washburn
Guest: Administrator Shannon Cayea

Betsy convened the meeting at 1:35 p.m., welcomed the participants, and reminded the Council of the importance of handwashing and contact avoidance in minimizing risk of spreading the current gastric illness present at FOCUS (and elsewhere).

Minutes

The December minutes, which had been distributed previously by email and which have been available at the lobby desk, were reviewed and accepted without revision, on a motion by Bill and seconded by Sue.

Council Discussion

Council Recruitment: The facility website now has a section reserved for postings by the Family Council, such as meeting announcements, minutes, and information about the Council itself. The group was able to view this information sheet online at today's meeting, at www.focusotsego.net. The Council thanked Pam Washburn for her work on this.

The Admitting office will provide the Council Information Sheet to new residents and their families. Copies will continue to be available at the lobby desk as well. Families wishing to contact the Family Council are advised to email the chairperson at familycouncil@focusotsego.com

Organizational Leadership: Using a format drawn from the website of the National Consumer Voice on Quality Longterm Care, Council members created a draft of an organizational outline of the Council's structure and function. This is appended to these minutes, and will be presented to the group at the February 9th meeting, for final approval.

Interest in Family Support Group: Betsy announced that Ombudsman Chris Geertgens has offered to facilitate a support group for family members and friends of residents, to help with coping. The Council will inform its membership of this, facilitate referrals to Chris, and can serve as an additional advocate on issues of common concern. A Council member mentioned a resource that may be helpful to others trying to manage illness and disability at home: Self-Directed Care, which includes case management and funding of personal care aides through Medicaid. Regional Centers for Independent Living, such as the offices in Oneonta or Binghamton, can provide information and assist in referrals.

Recognition of Staff: CNAs Tayna on Serenity, and Henry on Mountain Ridge were lauded by the Council for their work on their respective units. Notices of this recognition will be posted by the Council.

Attendance at meetings was discussed. Suggestions to increase attendance included publishing info on the FOCUS website, asking people in person to join us and changing time of meetings. The people present preferred to keep Tuesday meetings.

Updates from Administrator

Shannon Cayea joined the meeting, and answered questions about managing the current bout of illness experienced by staff and residents (ill staff should stay home if actively sick, or use masks with upper respiratory illness; judicious use of paid sick time off is expected), staff access to Hoyer lifts, and a recent experience with an employee temporarily not being able to cash a paycheck (not a matter of inadequate FOCUS funds).

Recruitment and Retention of Staff: Staffing is improving, and there is decreasing reliance on temporary staff from outside agencies. The current BOCES CNA class has resulted in 3-4 new CNAs likely beginning work in evening positions. Council members commented on the improvement in continuity of care, and on the positive quality of individual staff performance.

Staff have now been trained in using the new electronic medical record system, “SigmaCare”, which will begin operation next Tuesday. This is structured so that different disciplines will document concurrently and all staff will be able to see and contribute to the chart, which has not been the case with the previous systems. Several FOCUS staff have had experience with SigmaCare in prior jobs, which helps the transition to the new system. In addition, beginning next month, Bassett records will be able to be accessed on a case by case basis via Bassett’s EMR “portal”, including lab results and discharge summaries. These changes should improve accurate and timely communication about residents’ health status and care plans, and decrease FOCUS staff frustration.

Updates: There has been no clarification yet to the question raised at the December meeting regarding the basis for the 20% increase in the daily fee, to \$300/day, over the past year and a half. Shannon has asked FOCUS Ventures LLC to respond to this question, and hopes to be able to address this at the February meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday February 9 at 1:30 p.m.

Bill Hayes, Secretary