

Child and Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC): Terms of Reference

This document outlines a shared set of expectations for all members and associated Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH) staff of the Child and Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC). This is a living document that will be used to guide the work of the council. It will be formally reviewed every two years but can be changed as needed with approval of council members.

Overview

Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH) is committed to collaborating with patients and families in the planning and delivery of safe, quality healthcare services.

The Child and Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC) is a formal group of youth volunteers with diverse health and life experiences who bring a youth perspective to the planning and delivery of child and youth health related programs and services.

Purpose

CAYAC consults with child and youth health related programs and services at the Alberta Children's Hospital and throughout Alberta Health Services (AHS) to provide a youth perspective to enhance the quality and safety of child and youth healthcare services.

Guiding Principles

CAYAC will be guided by Alberta Health Services' organizational values of compassion, excellence, respect, accountability and safety.

The principles of Patient and Family Centred Care will also guide the council. These principles include respect and dignity, information sharing, participation, and collaboration.

Council Meetings

- CAYAC meets on Saturdays six times a year. The Council does not meet May through August.
- Meetings are in-person meetings with the option of some online meetings.
- Meetings include consultations, ice breakers and team building activities, updates, healthcare stories, engagement opportunities, and mini-education sessions.
- Members will have the option of participating in additional subcommittee work and/or other engagement opportunities.

Membership

The Council is to be comprised of about 30 members who:

- Are between the ages of 12-21. Members under the age of 18 require their parent/guardian approval.
- Live in Southern Alberta (Red Deer south).

- are current recipients of healthcare services, past patients, siblings of patients, or healthy youth in the community.
- reflect a balance of membership from urban and rural areas, diverse cultural and life experiences, gender, and varied experiences within the healthcare system.
- Have a desire to work collaboratively with ACH in improving the quality, safety, and experience of patient care.
- Have successfully completed ACH advisor screening and AHS Volunteer Resources requirements.
- Participate in six monthly meetings per year.

CAYAC Peer Mentors will be in attendance at each meeting to support members and to act as facilitators/notetakers in small groups.

Non-members may participate at council meetings. These individuals may include prospective members to help determine fit and interest, consultants looking for input/feedback, ACH PFCC support staff, guests sharing their story, ACH staff with related roles, and ACH site leadership.

Administration

The ACH Patient and Family Centred Care Team will support the ongoing development and maintenance of the Council. A staff coordinator will oversee the work of the Council.

Terms of office

- New members agree to serve as advisors on the Council for a minimum of one year.
- Members may remain on the Council until the age of 21 (as of September).
- New members are invited to join the Council in the fall of each year.
- Members may request a leave of absence of up to a year.
- On an annual basis, members will be asked to evaluate their contribution to the Council.
- Members wishing to step down from the Council during their term should communicate this intention in writing. An exit interview will be offered.

Leadership

CAYAC uses a shared leadership model. CAYAC Coordinators work together with members and CAYAC Peer Mentors to shape the work of the Council. The role of co-chair is rotated at each meeting. Anyone who has been to at least three meetings can be a co-chair.

The two meeting co-chairs will be responsible to work with the CAYAC Coordinator to set the agenda and lead the meetings.

Member Eligibility

- A recruitment criteria will be set yearly by membership to ensure that CAYAC members reflect a broad representation of youth from Southern Alberta.
- Youth who meet the recruitment criteria will be invited to the September meeting to experience a meeting.
- Potential new members will be interviewed and selected by a recruitment working group made up of CAYAC member volunteers and the CAYAC Coordinator.

Member Responsibilities

- Complete all AHS volunteer registration requirements and abide by the AHS volunteer policies and guidelines.
- Attend six Saturday meetings per year. Those who miss two or more meetings a year may be asked to leave the Council.
- Maintain confidentiality of information shared/discussed in council meetings.
- Contribute insights, personal health experience, and feedback to the best of their ability.
- Listen to and consider the perspective of others.
- Check email regularly and respond to requests for meeting RSVPs.
- Contribute to the planning and running of the Council.
- Connect with the CAYAC Coordinator with any questions or concerns.
- Refer to advisor volunteer orientation manual for further details.

Peer Mentor Responsibilities

- Support CAYAC members and provide coaching on the advisor role.
- Help new members understand their role and integrate into the Council.
- Facilitate small group discussion and activities, drawing out participant's ideas and perspectives within the time frame allotted.
- Utilizes appropriate facilitation strategies to hear from everyone, especially if perspectives/experiences might be different.
- Remain neutral, not providing their own thoughts and opinions, nor judging any of the input/feedback provided.
- Refer to ACH Facilitator Guideline resource for further information.

CAYAC Coordinator Responsibilities

- Provide council members with agenda in advance and follow-up in a timely manner with any post-resources/information.
- Coordinate consults with AHS/ACH healthcare providers.
- Work with the meeting co-chairs to plan and facilitate the meeting.
- Support the council members and peer mentors during the meetings and outside of the meetings, which may include debriefing and/or coaching.
- Work with members on the ongoing maintenance and development of the Council.
- Ensure that the terms of reference remains relevant and amend as required.
- Provide updates to ACH management and leadership teams.

Accountability

- The Council reports to ACH site leadership.
- At the end of June of each year, an annual report will be created with a summary of the activities and accomplishments of the council. This will be shared with ACH site leadership and PFCC Managers.
- At the September council meeting, a formal update will be provided of the previous year's consults outlining how the Council input/feedback was used. Ad hoc updates from the consults may be made throughout the council year.

Evaluation

- At each council meeting, members will provide feedback on the meeting to help inform future council meetings.
- On an annual basis, council members will complete a survey to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the council and to reflect on individual participation. The annual survey will inform council planning.

Member Reimbursements

- CAYAC members will be reimbursed for out-of-town travel mileage and parking for in-person meetings and other Council duties or related activities.