



# Building a Stronger Community via PFAC Recruitment (Patient and Family Advisory Council)

## Student Interns

Jasmine Han, Thomas Jefferson University, Sidney Kimmel Medical College

Sophia Grossman, Thomas Jefferson University, College of Rehabilitation Sciences, Occupational Therapy

## Academic Preceptor

Maria Hervada-Page, MSW, Thomas Jefferson University, Sidney Kimmel Medical College

## Community Preceptor

Andrew Gudzelak, Health Center Data Evaluation, Mazzoni Center

## Mazzoni Center

The Mazzoni Center is a community healthcare clinic dedicated to offering services that promote the health and well-being of the LGBTQ communities. Located in Center City Philadelphia, the Mazzoni Center clinic services include primary medical care, mental health and substance-use treatment services, legal services and gender-affirming services. The center is also the host of the largest free trans-specific conference in the world, the Trans Wellness Conference, and is one of the largest providers of HIV prevention and care in the city of Philadelphia.

Services include:

- Primary Care
- Gender Affirming Care
- HIV Care
- STI/STD testing and treatment
- PrEP and PEP
- Youth Drop In
- Legal Services
- Food bank
- Insurance/Housing

## Background

The Patient and Family Advisory Council is a group of involved Mazzoni Center medical providers (i.e. physicians, nurses, PAs), administrative staff, patients, and family of patients who meet once per month (currently over Zoom). PFAC's purpose is to facilitate discussions of patient experiences in a safe, honest environment. A coalition of dedicated PFAC members ideally will have deep, ongoing conversations that lead to real solutions.

## Goals

The Mazzoni Center administrators who run the Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) asked the interns to recruit more members for the council, specifically patients who were HIV positive, patients on PrEP or PEP, and those of diverse ethnic backgrounds and gender identities.

## Activities & Contributions



## Project Description

The Bridging the Gaps student interns started a recruitment process for PFAC. They created flyers outlining the PFAC goals and responsibilities and handed that out to the staff members at the clinic, the providers, and hung the flyers up at the front desk area, in the bathrooms, and in other waiting areas. Additionally, the interns made a powerpoint slide for PFAC to post on the TVs in the waiting room and an Instagram post for the Mazzoni instagram page. They recruited individual patients by speaking with them during their visits, calling them on the phone, and via email.

## Activities & Contributions



## Accomplishments

Due to the interns' recruitment efforts, the number of patients present on the council doubled as of the end of their internship, with other patients expressing interest in attending future meetings. The interns were able to participate in two PFAC meetings during June and July and interact with patients. Additionally, new participants on the council expressed their ideas and suggestions such as creating an accessible and wheelchair-user friendly walkway into the clinic or finding a meeting time that allows patients who work to still participate in the council.

## Reflections

The Patient and Family Advisory Council embodies the concept of “bridging the gaps.” It brings medical providers and patients together in a space meant for honest conversation, questions, and constructive criticism, which then enables changes to be implemented. Thanks to PFAC, patients are better cared for and providers have a better understanding of the wants and needs of the population they serve.