



## **Family Presence**

Family means something different to each patient. Allowing a patient to define who their primary support person is, enables another partner in their care. We frequently interact with families and/or support persons throughout the course of a patients care; What is the value of including them as care giving partners?

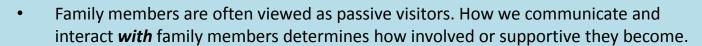
Research shows that the *presence* and *participation* of family members:

- provides cost savings
- enhances the patient/family experience of care
- improves management of chronic/acute illnesses
- enhances continuity of care
- prevents hospital readmissions



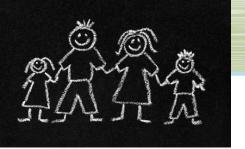
Research shows that isolating patients from the people who know them best places them at risk for:

- medical error
- emotional harm
- inconsistencies in care
- costly unnecessary care





- **Take the lead!** Don't wait for them to show initiative. Find ways to include them from the start!
- Ask them, "How would you like to support the care of your family member?"
- Communicate clearly with families about the expectations and parameters of family presence to avoid confusion.



## **Talk About Family Presence**

Within AHS various practices already exist around family presence. Start the conversation and talk about family presence as a team!

Questions for consideration about family presence in your area:

## Questions for frontline staff to discuss:

- In what ways do we currently involve families?
- What concerns do we have about embracing families as partners in care? What do I need in order to address this?
- In what areas could we work with families in providing quality care? How can we support them to take on these roles?
- How do we document and communicate a patients preference around family presence on our unit?
- How do we connect with family members in discharge planning?
- In what ways do we communicate with families about the expectations and parameters of family presence?



## **Questions for Leaders to discuss:**



- When has our family presence practice last been revisited?
- Does our current family presence practice reflect the seven AHS core values?
- How do we currently receive feedback about our family presence practice?
- How do we encourage or discourage families to become involved in the care of patients?
- What are the current attitudes, concerns and needs of the staff around family presence? How can I help to address these?
- What types of stories are common in our area around family presence?
- What are the current/future implications for staff around family presence?
- How can we include other frontline staff (food services, housekeeping etc) in our approach to family presence?

This Practical Wisdom Adapted From: