

Kerry's Place Autism Services

Family Advisory Committee (FAC) **Terms of Reference**

Background

The Mission of Kerry's Place is 'to enhance the quality of life for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and to empower them and their families, through evidence-based practices and person-directed supports'. This mission statement recognizes that each person with ASD is an individual and that services provided by Kerry's Place should, to the extent possible, be tailored to and focus on the needs, hopes and objectives of the individual.

Mandate

Individual and family-directed support is an approach, which respects the central role of the family in a supported person's life and, therefore, upholds the importance of the family as a partner on the support services team. The Family Advisory Committee (FAC) provides advice and input to Kerry's Place Autism Services (Kerry's Place) and acts as a resource to management in all aspects of service pertaining to supported persons and their families.

The FAC will uphold the values of Kerry's Place through demonstrating respect, championing choice, working with integrity, fostering teamwork and emphasizing continuous learning for supported persons and family-directed approach.

Purpose

To create a forum for families and supported persons to share experiences and recommendations to promote the highest quality of programs and services.

FAC Roles and Responsibilities:

- Advises senior management through the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Focuses on improvements that will provide high quality service for all families and supported persons.
- Promotes opportunities for communication and collaboration among supported persons, families, management and staff at Kerry's Place and community partners.
- Facilitates the development and enhancement of access to information, support and educational resources which help supported persons and their families, to assist Kerry's Place in improving services and programs.
- Advises, promotes and shares information to supported persons and families as they relate to Kerry's Place programs and services.
- Provides input on potential education and training programs that would be beneficial to team members and enhance the services and supports.

Accountability/Reporting Relationships:

- Serves as an advisory committee to management.
- Meeting minutes will be provided to the Board Quality Outcomes Committee.
- The FAC staff liaison, as the resource support for the Committee, works with Senior Management and the staff to identify and coordinate topics of interest and focus.
- The FAC is comprised of family members and staff.
- Twelve members; comprised of nine family members, two staff, and staff liaison.

Qualifications for Family Members:

- Represents families as a well-informed participant.
- Respects diversity and differing opinions.
- Works collaboratively with staff and other families/supported persons.
- Remains open-minded and maintains a non-judgmental attitude.
- Active listener.
- Maintains a sense of humour, a sense of vision and a positive attitude.
- Has the ability to maintain respect for privacy and confidentiality.

Membership Requirements:

- ***FAC Family Member Shall:***
 - Be a family member of a person supported at Kerry's Place.
 - Attend a screening interview.
 - Sign the Oath of Confidentiality upon the start of a term.
 - Attend a Family Leadership Program Information Session.
 - Attend 75% of meetings throughout the course of the meeting year, January to December.
- ***Staff FAC Non-Voting Members:***
 - A Senior Management Representative who is either the CEO or delegate (Senior Management), and one other senior staff.
 - FAC staff liaison provides resource support.
 - From time to time, other staff may be invited to meetings by this Committee. These staff will assist the FAC to achieve its goals and accomplish current projects.
- ***Guests:***
 - Are welcome to attend meetings and provide input by notifying the FAC staff liaison, in consultation with/at discretion of the FAC Co-Chairs, of their wish to attend a particular meeting a week in advance.

Selection of Members:

- Family members will be recruited through Kerry's Place website, or can be nominated / encouraged by staff to complete the letter of application.
- A screening tool will be used, as well as an interview, to nominate family members.
- The Co-Chairs and the CEO will select and appoint new family members to the FAC.
- FAC members will be expected to consider support issues or concerns from the children and adult sectors of Kerry's Place. The FAC may ask a subgroup of members to address issues specific to children and their families, or adults in the residences.

Terms of Office:

- Voting members are appointed for two years.
- A second term of two years will be permitted, for a maximum of 4 years.
- A term year follows the fiscal calendar (April to March).
- Recognition: Members will be acknowledged for their participation through a Service Award when their term is completed. Additional ways to provide recognition can be discussed by members.

Meetings:

- The FAC will meet at least four times per year.
- Additional meetings may also be called at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
- All meetings will be publicized internally and on the website.
- **Co-Chairs:**
 - The Co-Chairs could be a family member and a senior staff or two family members.
 - Initially, in order to stagger the expertise at the launch of the committee, one Co-Chair will be elected for a two-year term and a second Co-Chair will be elected for a one-year term. Thereafter, all following incumbents will be elected for a two-year term.
 - The process to elect Co-Chairs will include a statement of intent or nomination and an election by the FAC.
- **Qualifications for Co-Chairs:**
 - Candidates must have experience serving on the FAC as a member for a minimum of one year;
 - Shall be participative and engaged in the activities by the FAC.
 - Should demonstrate an understanding of the purpose, role and responsibilities of the FAC.
 - Must possess the ability to work constructively with members of the FAC.
- **The Co-Chairs shall:**
 - Call and chair meetings.
 - Develop the meeting agenda with the FAC staff liaison.
 - Review and revise meeting minutes.
 - Confer with the CEO and Senior Management on matters related to FAC work.
 - With support of the FAC staff liaison, write an annual report summarizing the FAC's activities and achievements during the year.

- Represent and speak on behalf of the FAC at special events and functions related to Kerry's Place work.
- **FAC Liaison Staff:**
 - Shall be responsible for taking and distributing the reviewed agenda and minutes of the meeting.

Voting and Quorum:

- Recommendations to senior leadership made by the FAC will be determined by consensus of the group.
- A minimum of 50 percent of the Voting Members must be present for a vote to be taken.
- If a vote is required on a recommendation, staff members do not vote.

Agenda and Minutes:

- The Co-Chairs in collaboration with the FAC Staff Liaison will set agendas.
- Items for the agenda can be forwarded to the Co-Chairs and the FAC staff liaison in advance of the meeting. Additional items for the agenda brought forward at the meeting will be added at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
- Minutes shall be circulated within three weeks of each meeting via email.

Copies of Minutes Shall Be Distributed To:

- All members of the FAC.
- The CEO.
- Senior Management Team.
- Members of the Board of Directors' Quality Outcomes Committee.
- Other interested individuals based on request.

Conflict of Interest:

- Members agree to follow the FAC Conflict of Interest Guidelines.

Code of Conduct:

- Members agree to follow the FAC Code of Conduct Guidelines.

Review Terms of Reference:

- The FAC Terms of Reference will be reviewed every year for the first three years of existence, then every three years, with revisions as required.