

WHAT CAN PATIENTS AND FAMILIES DO?



ASK

- Get to know the names of the healthcare providers and what they do.
- Ask questions, clarify your assumptions, be respectful as you ask for information "Could you help me understand why..." or "How can I help?"



KEEP TRACK

- Use a notebook or the back of this document or whiteboard in the patient's room to write down questions, answers, names, history, tests, observations, etc.
- Choose one person as the main contact to share progress with family and friends, and tell the doctors and healthcare staff as well as other family members.



CONTRIBUTE

- Families have important information that healthcare providers might need to know to provide good care. Find out when the care planning meetings and patient rounds will occur and ask to be present.
- Contribute your knowledge to planning care and the discharge plan.



ENSURE SAFETY

- Write down information about all medicines. This might include medication name, purpose, how often it is taken and how much.
- Ask for instructions in writing, in words you understand.
- Clean your hands.
- Speak up and tell the healthcare team if you are concerned about a change in your loved one's well-being.



PROVIDE COMFORT

- Discuss if, and how, family members might help with routine care.
- Discuss opportunities for a family member to be present during critical illness, uncomfortable procedures, or just before and right after surgery.

The principles of patient and family centered care (respect, information sharing, participation and collaboration) are the foundation for Family Presence. These resources have been developed by the organizations below with patients and families across Canada. We hope this will help you begin the conversation about family presence with your own loved ones and your healthcare providers. Created Summer 2016.