



Fort Carson-MEDDAC News

Family clinics looking for patient representatives to weigh in

By: Stacy Neumann, Medical Department Activity Public Affairs

An initiative at Evans Army Community Hospital is bringing more patients to the decision making table. The Medical Department Activity's five Family Medicine Clinics, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics are each standing up a Patient and Family Centered Advisory Council.

Serving on the council gives beneficiaries the opportunity to sit down with providers during meetings aimed at improving the health care experience. Rhonda Burton, clinical nurse at Warrior Family Medicine Clinic, said she hopes patients are motivated to get involved.

"Help us to help you. If you want to see change, I need to know what you want. I want to empower you to help," said Burton.

The councils are a key part of the Patient Centered Medical Home model now in place at the Fort Carson's MEDDAC. The concept calls for beneficiaries to work in partnership with a core team, allowing patients and providers to become more familiar with one another and promote wellness.

Warrior's Patient Council held its first meeting in September and plans to get together every two months. Participants sat around a circular table to show that everyone was equal and all input was valued. Burton said two patients attended the initial assembly but Warrior's goal is to get 14.

"We want to promote communication and collaboration between all parties," Burton explained. "This gives us the opportunity to hear about patient experiences, identify areas of excellence and improvement, and educate beneficiaries about our care. We need feedback about whether we are effectively communicating with them."

Beneficiaries may only serve on the council of the clinic where they are enrolled. Patients may ask any provider or medical services assistant in their clinic about how to become involved in their Family Medicine Clinic's Patient and Family Centered Advisory Council.