

Caregiver Advisor Roles

The purpose of the “Type of Caregiver Advisor Roles Chart” is to acknowledge that there are different types of Caregiver Advisor roles based upon a caregiver’s availability, skills, and experience.

Understanding the different types of Caregiver Advisor roles can help Caregiver Advisors volunteer for appropriate and meaningful opportunities that match their skills and expertise.

- For this document, a **Caregiver Advisor** is defined as a caregiver – such as a family member or close friend who assists a person living with mental illness – who is involved formally with a hospital, community organization, or government agency to inform on all levels of the organization’s operations in a variety of positions, such as working groups or steering committees.

Please keep in mind:

- A Caregiver Advisor may fit into more than one role type at any given time.
- Caregiver Advisors are expected to complete an application before becoming involved in any type of advisory role.
- The types described below are general summaries and estimations of differing levels of commitments and needs but can be adopted to different structures specific to an organization.
- For all types, accommodations should be provided for Caregiver Advisors who find language a barrier.



Type of Caregiver Advisor Roles Chart – Part 1

Characteristics	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
1 Advisor Role Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee/Project Member (i.e. Accreditation Committee) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Advisory Council/Committee Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver Advisor Leader/Spokesperson
2 Average Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives the Caregiver Advisor perspective on a project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in many aspects of the council/committee's operations • Responds to collaboration requests to sit on organizational committees/projects to review policies, initiate change, shares experiences publicly, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the family voice at the senior management (i.e. Board of Trustee levels of the organization) • Operates as an ambassador and represents families • Connects with community caregiver organizations and tends to be involved in quality improvement initiatives as champions for change
3 Time Commitment Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project that lasts less than a year • Able to commit a few hours a month for project meetings and reviewing material to provide insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-4 years term positions • Able to attend the caregiver advisory council/committee meetings • Able to commit a few hours a month for reviewing and preparing material to provide insights • Able to commit additional hours for other requests for Caregiver Advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5+ years term positions • Able to attend monthly meetings • Able to commit a few hours a month reviewing and preparing material to provide insights • Able to commit additional hours for other requests for Caregiver Advisors • Able to commit a few hours a week connecting with community leaders
4 Advisor Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their caregiver experience is a good match or can be generalized for the project • The advisor has been vetted for their readiness and ability to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers who are interested in supporting the organization, have useable skills to offer, a willingness to learn, availability, and a passion for change • The advisor has been vetted for their readiness and ability to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated advisors who have years of experience with the organization and are respected champions for quality improvement and community relations • The advisor has been vetted for their readiness and ability to participate



Type of Caregiver Chart – Part 2

Characteristics	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
5 Types of Support Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Staff Liaison • Prompt delivery of corporate and advisory council/committee orientation • Access to experienced Advisor Mentor • Prepared and informed committee members who understand the fundamentals of positive advisor engagement • Financial reimbursement for any costs incurred while representing caregivers for the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Staff Liaison • Prompt delivery of corporate and advisory council/committee orientation • Access to experienced Advisor Mentor • Connection to organizational supports (i.e. email address, communications, meeting space etc.) • Financial reimbursement for any costs incurred while representing caregivers for the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Staff Liaison • Prompt delivery of corporate and advisory council/committee orientation • Connection to organizational supports (i.e. email address, communications, meeting space etc.) • Financial reimbursements for any costs incurred while representing caregivers for the organization • Granted access to relevant organizational information and confidential reports
6 Level of Skills Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational volunteer orientation and preliminary introduction to the goals of the collaborative team • Patient & Family-Centered Care educated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational volunteer orientation and preliminary introduction to the goals of the collaborative team • Access to conferences, skills training, and workshops that are related to position, when financially viable • Patient & Family Centered Care educated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational volunteer orientation and preliminary introduction to the goals of the collaborative team • Access to conferences, skills training, and workshops that are related to position, when financially viable • Offered additional training, such as public speaking training, quality improvement courses, etc. • Patient & Family Centered Care educated
7 Suggestions for Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up after the project to inform them on the project results • Letter of thank you and small token of appreciation • Reference letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a “Feedback Process” that ensures that the advisors are aware how their ongoing contributions have added value to the organization • Thank you given on departure letter • Offer to provide a professional reference letter • Token of appreciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a “Feedback Process” that ensures that the advisors are aware how their ongoing contributions have added value to the organization • Thank you given on departure letter • Achievement awards, public thank you • Paid for hours

