Who are Parent Navigators?

Parent Navigators are parents of children and youth with special healthcare needs (CYSHCN) who provide peer-to-peer mentoring, support and coaching to other parents of CYSHCN in our medical home. Parent Navigators are grant-funded, fully-benefitted employees at Children’s National. As a unique member of the care team, the navigators fill a missing link for our most medically complex children and families.

A New Member of the Care Team

What is the Navigator’s Role?

- Provide peer-to-peer mentoring and support
- Link families to community resources
- Model effective advocacy skills
  - Coach parents to be active partners with care team members
  - Provide tools (e.g. care notebooks) to help families organize their medical information
- Help families navigate the health care system
  - Clarify roles of care team members
  - Identify and eliminate barriers to care
- Work with families to understand their educational rights and responsibilities (e.g. IFSP, IEP)
- Prepare families for transitions

Parent Navigator Data

PNP provided services to 474 families with 964 total issues in FY2015.

History of Parent Navigation

The Parent Navigator Program (PNP) at Children’s was founded in 2008 with two part-time navigators serving one health care center. The program has grown to 6 full-time navigators (2 bilingual), available to serve over 2000 children with medical complexity in our 7 NCQA Level-3 certified medical homes.

Next Steps

- Evaluate impact of Parent Navigation on mental health outcomes for caregivers of infants being discharged from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, with current PCORI funding
- Integrate navigators into behavioral and mental health follow up and transition services

More than 95% of parents surveyed were satisfied with their PNP experience, felt it was helpful, and would recommend it to other families.

Program Sponsorship:

District of Columbia Dept. of Health-Community Health Administration and State of Maryland Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene-OGPSHCNS