Let's Talk ABOUT...

Staff in the hospital

At Primary Children's Hospital, many people will work with your child. Each person has a different role to help her get the best care possible. Listed below are some of the different people, along with what they do.

Doctors

Primary Children's Hospital is a teaching hospital. This means that some of the people you work with are training to become doctors. You will work with one or all of the different doctors and students.

Attending Physicians

These people are responsible for all of your child's care. They oversee your child's medical staff. They may be your child's primary doctor or one of the pediatric hospitalists. A hospitalist is a doctor who is assigned to treat for your child while she is in the hospital. In the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) the attending doctors are sometimes called "Intensivists."

Chief Residents or Fellows

These doctors are finishing their training or are doing specialty training. They work with the other doctors and hospital staff to direct your child's care. Fellows in the PICU or Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are specializing in critical care medicine. They have completed their resident training. They work under the direction of the attending doctor.

Residents

Residents are doctors who have finished medical school and their internship. They continue their training by working with the chief resident, fellows, and attending doctors.

Interns

Interns have recently graduated from medical school. They train in many different areas in the hospital. They learn about the different types of care a child may need. They also work under the direction of the attending doctor.

Medical Students

They are in the third or fourth year of medical school, on their way to becoming doctors. They work with the residents under the direct supervision of the attending doctor.

Nurses

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN)/ Nurse Practitioners (NPs)

Nurse practitioners are sometimes called NPs for short. Additional education trains them how to diagnose, treat, and prescribe medications. NPs work in many different areas of the hospital. They work with the attending doctors to direct your child's care.

Registered Nurses (RNs)

They help care for your child while she is in the hospital. They assess your child, give medications, and work with the doctors, NPs, and other hospital staff to organize care. They also provide education to help you understand treatments, medications, and special care your child may need at home.

Charge Nurses

Charge nurses are RNs that supervise the activities of a unit during their shift. They coordinate patient admissions, discharges, and other unit activities. They make the patient assignments for the nurses each shift.

Case Managers

Case managers are RNs that organize care throughout your child's stay in the hospital. They also work with insurance companies to get help needed after discharge such as medical equipment, supplies, or home health care.

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

They help care for your child when she is admitted to the hospital. They assess and give some medications and help with treatments. They work in a team with an RN.

Patient Care Technicians (PCTs)

PCTs work under the direction of a nurse to help provide your child's care. They help with vital signs, baths, patient meals, transports, admissions, and discharges. They also set up equipment needed for when a child is admitted to the hospital or for procedures.

Other staff in the hospital

Health Unit Coordinators (HUC)

They greet families when they enter the unit. They answer phone calls, put charts together for new patients, get necessary paperwork your child will need, and enter treatment orders in the computer. They also help the charge nurse coordinate patient admissions and discharges.

Dieticians

These are people who have gone to school to learn about nutrition and diets. They help the doctors and nurses provide the right nutrition for your child. They also help with special diets.

Pharmacists

Pharmacists prepare and deliver medications ordered by the doctors or NPs. They check for allergies and harmful effects of medicines and food that may cause problems with medicines. They also check for harmful effects of herbal and other homeopathic therapies with medicines.

Respiratory Therapists (RTs)

RTs watch and assess for breathing problems. They help with breathing treatments your child may need including inhalers, oxygen, and nebulizers. In the PICU and NICU they take care of breathing machines. RTs also teach families how to care for a child with a tracheostomy.

Social Workers

Social workers help patients and families cope with stress when a child is in the hospital. They provide crisis intervention, emotional support, short-term counseling, and help with problem solving. They help families learn about financial aid, support programs, interpretation services, religious support, and long-term counseling. They help you have good communication with the medical staff.

Child Life Specialists

These people help prepare your child for hospital experiences, reduce fears, and help your child cope. They provide activities that are right for your child's age and help her get familiar with equipment, treatments, and procedures. They also support and educate your sick child's brothers and sisters.

Phlebotomists

These people draw blood samples when they are ordered by the doctor or NP.

X-Ray Technicians

These people do the x-rays and other scans ordered by the doctor or NP. They either come to the bedside with the x-ray machine, or your child visits the x-ray department.

Physical therapists (PT), Occupational Therapists (OT), Speech Therapists (ST)

Physical therapists are trained to assess and help your child with large motor movements such as getting out of bed, standing, and walking.

Occupational therapists are trained to assess and help your child with fine motor movements such as

gripping a pencil, holding a fork or spoon, and picking up small things.

Speech therapists are trained to assess and help your child with talking and speech. They also assess your child's ability to swallow foods and liquids.

Chaplains

The chaplains provide spiritual support for patients and families. They help arrange religious needs for your family with the local leaders of various faiths.

A chaplain is available 24 hours a day.

Interpreters

Interpreters assist with communication between people who do not speak the same language. They also help those who need sign language or other forms of communication.

Volunteers

Volunteers help children and their families by providing support to the other staff in the hospital. You will find volunteers playing with children, delivering flowers and packages to patients, helping in the gift shop, finding wheel chairs, and helping families at the information desk find their way around the hospital.

