

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 them get the best care possible. Listed below are some of the different people and 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 many 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 your child while they are 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 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 your child 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 in 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 measure your child's blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature, weight, and height. You may hear this called taking your child's vital signs. They help with 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.

Dietitians

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 medicine 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. They help your child be familiar with equipment, treatments, and procedures. They help your child and family understand and manage the stress caused by illness, injury and healthcare. They can also support and educate your sick child's brothers and sisters using these same methods.

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)

A Physical Therapist (PT) will help your child with mobility and function. Your child might need PT to help with an injury, a chronic illness, deconditioning, or developmental delay. Depending on the needs and age of your child, the PT will work on rolling, sitting, crawling, standing, walking, and transitioning between different positions. For example, they will help your child move from sit to stand or floor to stand, etc. A PT may address balance, flexibility, coordination, strength, and/or endurance to help your child learn to play or return to play. PTs provide ideas for non-pharmacological pain management. They teach you safe ways of positioning and moving your child. A PT will also provide any necessary orthoses or adaptive equipment to encourage your child to explore their environment.

Occupational Therapists (OT)

An Occupational Therapist (OT) will help your child increase independence and participate in daily activities. Your child might need OT to help with an injury, a chronic illness, or developmental delay. Depending on the needs and age of your child, the OT may work on using objects and toys, handwriting, visual skills, trunk strength and endurance, bathing, dressing, and grooming. An OT will address upper arm strength and flexibility, along with coordination to help your child learn to play or return to play. OTs also provide any necessary orthoses or adaptive equipment to help your child be able to take part in activities of daily living and explore their surroundings.

Speech Therapists (ST)

A Speech Therapist (ST) will help your child with speech, language, social communication, feeding, and cognition. Your child may need an ST to help with an injury, a chronic illness, or developmental delay. Depending on the needs of your child, the ST may work on attention, memory, problem solving, judgement, eating and swallowing, communication, and speech and language.

Chaplains

The chaplains provide spiritual support for patients and families. They help arrange religious needs for your family with 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 patients 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, and helping in the gift shop. Volunteers also help with locating wheel chairs for families and help families at the information desk learn their way around the hospital.