Enhancing Patient Satisfaction & Employee Morale Through Volunteer Services
Why is Patient Satisfaction Important

- It’s critical to the mission of the health care system
- It’s the right thing to do
- It impacts the bottom line $$$

84% of health leaders rank patient experience among their top three priorities’
How do we measure patient satisfaction?

- Department Score Cards
- Thank you notes and comments from patients
- Surveys
Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS)

- Required by CMS (the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) for all hospitals in the US.
- Randomly sent to adult inpatients, excluding patient admitted for psychiatric care.
HCAHPS Survey
Goal #1

Produce comparable data on patients’ perspectives of care that allows objective and meaningful comparisons among hospitals on topics that are important to consumers
Patients who gave their hospital a rating of 9 or 10 on a scale from 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)

- Regional West Medical Center: 62.0%
- Community Hospital: 75.0%
- Nebraska (Average for all reporting hospitals): 80.0%
- National (Average for all reporting hospitals): 73.0%
Goal #2

- Public reporting of the survey results is designed to create incentives for hospitals to improve quality of care.

For a hospital with $120 MILLION in annual revenue, improving patient satisfaction could deliver $2.2M - $5.4M in additional revenue annually.
Goal #3

- Public reporting serves to enhance public accountability in health care by increasing transparency.
HCAHPS Survey Measures

❖ Communication related measures
  ❖ Communication with doctors
  ❖ Communication with nurses
  ❖ Responsiveness of hospital staff
  ❖ Communication about Medicines
  ❖ Discharge Information
HCAHPS Survey Measures

❖ Environment of care
  ❖ Cleanliness of the hospital environment
  ❖ Quietness of the hospital environment
HCAHPS Survey Measures

❖ Pain Management

❖ Became controversial because of the opioid crisis.
❖ Question about pain control is still asked on the survey but is no longer considered for reimbursement purposes.
HCAHPS Survey Measures

❖ Overall Rating
  ❖ Overall rating of hospital
  ❖ Recommendation of hospital
The Impact on the Bottom Line

In 2013 Hospitals began to face a potential loss of 1% of Medicare billings from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for low patient satisfaction survey scores.

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<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
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<td>1.75%</td>
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How Do Volunteers Impact Patient Satisfaction Scores?
“The humanization of services offered by volunteers adds to the quality of the hospital and enhances patient satisfaction”
The Important Role of Volunteers

• Volunteers fill gaps left unfilled by hospital employees
• Offer individualized attention
• Volunteers can often speak on behalf of the patient and offer solutions to various concerns that the patient may have.
A 2004 study by The Wales Council of Voluntary Action found that over 60% of respondents in health settings reported that volunteers improved services provided to patients.
Volunteers Impact on Employee Morale

- Employee morale: job satisfaction, outlook, and feelings of well-being an employee has within a workplace setting.
- By supplementing existing staff, volunteers relieve the workload of clinical and administrative employees.
- Volunteer services have a positive impact on productivity within the hospital.
Benefits of Volunteer Interventions

Volunteer interventions are highly valued by nursing staff

- Allows them to focus on tasks that can only be performed by licensed staff

Volunteers can spend time with patients who are anxious or distressed

- Often useful with patients with cognitive impairment

They add human interaction and nonclinical support to bring patients comfort and improve their overall
Benefits of Volunteer Interventions

They add human interaction and nonclinical support to bring patients comfort and improve their overall hospital experience.
Volunteer Resource Management

• Quality Maximization vs. Cost Reduction
  • Focusing more on the quality of volunteer work and not the cost-benefit
  • Makes the work of volunteers meaningful

• Volunteer resource management practices relate to volunteers’ ability to perform job tasks, motivation to perform job tasks, and opportunities to perform job tasks.

• Commitment-enhancing volunteer resource management is linked to patient satisfaction.
  • 2015 study “Strategic Human Resource Management of Volunteers and the Link to Hospital Patient Satisfaction”
Real Outcomes

- 2007 study titled “Valuing Volunteers: The Impact of Volunteerism on Hospital Performance”
  - Analyzed data from 50 hospitals (mostly not-for-profit) and found that:
    - The benefit of having volunteers outweigh the costs.
    - Increasing the number of services and assignments, including hours, could raise patient satisfaction scores.
    - The patient experience is improved when volunteers are there to assist.
Maximizing the Value of Volunteers

• Make a direct connection between hospital volunteers and patient experience

• Adapt volunteers’ duties according to organizational needs

• Incorporate Volunteers’ own experience
  • The experience should be meaningful in order to produce the best outcomes
Maximizing the Value of Volunteers

- Quantify and measure volunteers’ impact:
  - Develop evidence to determine the impact that volunteer services has on patient satisfaction levels

- Foster relationships within the organization to enable volunteer programs
References


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