

PATIENT DELIGHT
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Creating a patient-centered culture: an industry-based, customer-centered approach using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES: Adoption of patient-centered care strategies can involve sweeping organizational transformation which may be resisted by many employees. Moreover, such strategies must be successfully integrated into other patient care initiatives such as critical pathways and continuous quality improvement (CQI). For example, a study can be initiated to ascertain initial experience with an industry-based, customer-centered approach to cultural change integrating a patient-centered care strategy and CQI within a cardiac services group (Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery, and Cardiac Care).

DATA AND METHODS: Target services (eg. open heart surgery and percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty - PTCA) can be selected and the services flow-charted in terms of patient "experiences". Focus groups can be convened to determine key quality characteristics "in the voice of the patient" which can be used to develop a quality measurement survey. A population of 100 odd consecutive former patients (status post open heart surgery or PTCA) can be surveyed. Analysis of survey results can provide an indirect measure of patient "delight" and "disappointment". Survey results can be publicized with open meetings and a newsletter. The input of "front-line" caretakers should be invited for quality improvement (QI) efforts as well as modifications of the measurement tool.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: 1) Six key quality characteristics can emerge: Caring, Comfort, Certainty, Convenience, Communication, and Cost. 2) Different quality characteristics would be important at different patient "experiences." 3) Baseline patient perception of quality could be (for example) 82% of maximum achievable or 46%, 38%, and 12% for delighting patients, meeting patients expectations, and disappointing patients, respectively. 4) The survey results would be powerful motivators for "front-line" caregivers whose efforts were focused on specific "experiences". It's concluded that an industry-based customer-centered approach to CQI can promote patient-centered culture change. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the target services as seen "through the eyes of the patient" and provides a framework for motivating participation of front-line caregivers and initiating continuous quality improvement efforts.

IMPLICATIONS FOR AUDIENCE: The implications of the study results and methods can be discussed further as they relate to creation of a patient-centered culture within an institution or cardiac service group and the integration of patient-centered care efforts with CQI initiatives.

What can add to patient delight:

- (A) Whether a healthcare center is serving comfort foods or a sodium-restricted diet, the goal of foodservice is to exceed patients' expectations and help improve their well-being. Specialized branded equipment companies support the center's efforts in every way. From front-of-the-house cooking for employees and family members, to the cooking suite in the kitchen that provides patient meals and, finally, to the warewash equipment that cleans and sanitizes the ware, the equipment company is a proud supporter of the center to enhance overall patient delight.
- (B) A particular Dental Clinic in NOIDA, India is a patient's delight. It is an aesthetically done up place with whole lot of modern and best of the dental equipments. The Dental Chair is a versatile state of the art equipment, with latest electronics and tools. It is one of its kind in India. The seamless upholstery and aseptic one piece ceramic basin ensures maximum hygiene and easy cleaning. Silicon tubing with each hand-piece ensures hygiene, zero bacterial growth and easy cleaning. The electronics attached gives the Doctor complete control and maximum concentration at work.