

Patient Satisfaction feedback in Partnership Health Group

The main approach of PHG to managing patient satisfaction is to be pro-active. Key to this are early identification and rectification rather than reacting after patients have given feedback, and live electronic measurement of patient satisfaction is the key to this. The results of this electronic feedback should however only be a confirmation of what the Unit Manager has identified and addressed in her unit on a daily basis.

The management of patient satisfaction starts with Quality Care Rounds conducted by the Unit Manager. These rounds are conducted to:

- ❖ validate information obtained from the Patient Satisfaction Feedback Device ,
- ❖ to evaluate clinical care,
- ❖ to gain additional information and
- ❖ to observe the environment for hygiene and safety factors

Three main areas observed are:

- ✓ Customer Satisfaction,
- ✓ Clinical Care and
- ✓ Environmental Aspects, which will be discussed in more detail later in this module.

Unit Managers must be clear about the standards for these areas as all observations must be done against these standards and all corrective action measured against these standards.

To assess customer satisfaction the following areas are reviewed:

- Information gathered from the Patient satisfaction device is validated. This is done by selecting a particular question from the PSF device and asking patients about their experiences in relation to the service area covered by the question.
- Identified problem areas are checked to see if they've been rectified
- new issues are noted
- Suggestions, comments or complaints raised by the customers during the quality care round are noted for follow up

Through its commitment to quality, PHG views suggestions and complaints as essential for improving customer care. There is a need to acknowledge the value of constructive criticism and complaints. Viewed positively, complaints are a valuable contribution to the development of high quality care. Dealing with complaints is therefore a priority within PHG and it is essential that these are addressed promptly.

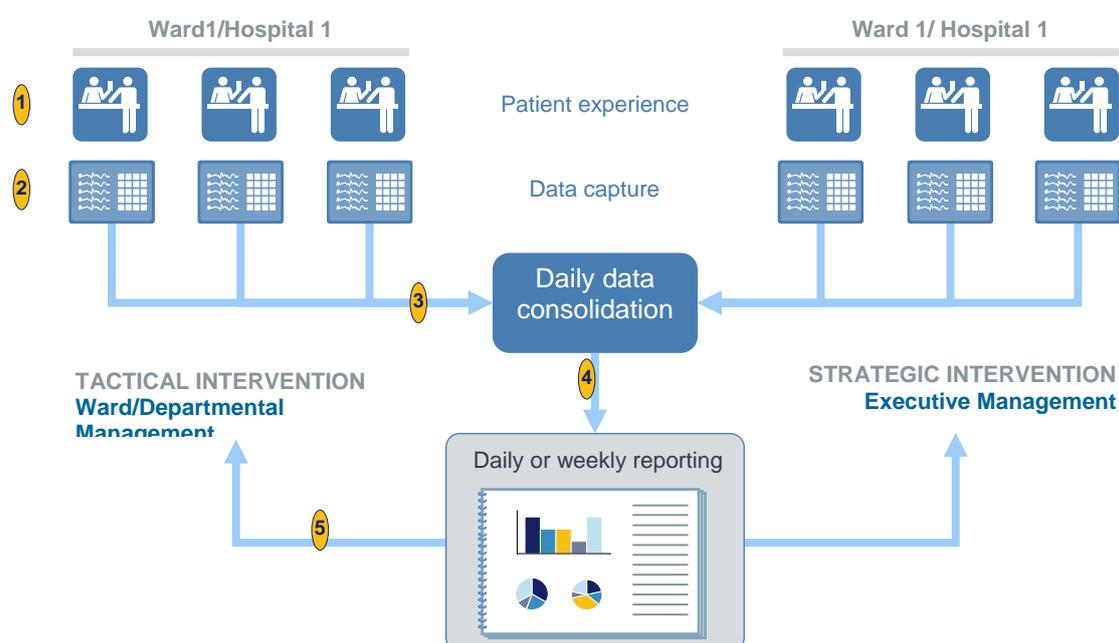
Once a Clinical/Quality Care Round has been conducted the following action is taken:

- Immediate corrective action where a customer complains during a ward round and the problem can easily be rectified, for example: if the patient is cold, giving them a blanket.
- The appropriate Guest-card is completed for any issues identified
- information gathered from care rounds are discussed during review meetings.
- information discussed during review meetings is communicated to staff members that cannot attend these meetings by placing it on the unit's notice board.
- Reward and recognition – Unit Managers must look for opportunities to recognise and reward positive contributions to quality patient care by employees.

The challenge for PHG in the management of patient satisfaction is:

- To link the unit/department specific measures and management processes to a quantitative tracking system.
- To enhance the Quality philosophy.
- To be able to track quality patient care throughout PHG.
- To benchmark and compare patient care interdepartmentally as well as between ISTC's.
- To reduce the workload of data capturing and report generation.
- To respond quickly to problems and trends (real time info)
- To improve quality of service by implementing quality projects and team actions.

The process



The process description

- Patients are asked to provide feedback by hospital staff. Where appropriate portable devices are brought to their bedside
- The patient reads the questions, and answers by pressing the appropriate buttons, which takes 15-20 seconds
- On a daily basis all responses are automatically downloaded to a secure server and information from across the entire hospital/trust/region is collated and analysed.
- Reports are created and automatically emailed daily (or weekly) to the relevant managers, with each report relating to that manager's specific area of responsibility
- The information contained in the Ward/Department level reports is used as the basis for weekly staff meetings. Members of staff are kept up-to-date with patients' views and current issues, and are encouraged to suggest ways of improving performance. This encourages participation.

- Information from higher level reports provides the basis for strategic decision making.

Applications

- Separate devices are provided for different areas of the hospital: wards, clinics, specialist departments, reception, outpatients, food etc.
- Of the 5 questions on each device, some can be specific to individual departments and others common throughout the hospital. This enables direct comparisons to be made across all departments within a single site, as well as between similar departments in other hospitals.
- Responses are transferred to one or more 'black boxes' on site, and on a daily basis, usually at night, they automatically dial up to download the data to a secure server (1,000 responses takes 20 seconds).
- The questions can cover many potential subject areas: e.g. friendliness of nursing staff, quality of service, ward cleanliness, privacy, and knowledge of staff.
- The questions can be changed whenever required, although this is usually done every 3-6 months. Different avenues can then be investigated. Changing the questions is simply a matter of exchanging the top plates of the devices. The system recognises that the change has been made
- On a weekly basis (or daily if required) all the data is collated and analysed. Collation takes place for each 'site'
- Reports are then produced and emailed to the relevant managers, each report providing information about that particular manager's area of responsibility
- The 'ward' information in the reports is then used as the basis for discussion at staff weekly meetings, ensuring that they are up-to-date with patient issues and requirements. They are also encouraged to suggest ways that service can be improved
- The Hospital and 'Group' reports provide accurate higher level information that assist in improving strategic decision making

Adding Value

- Improves Patient Satisfaction.
A system that enables the continuous collection of large numbers of patient responses analyses and sends easily-assimilated reports every week, directly to staff, it is the most efficient way of improving satisfaction.
- Very high response rate.
Due to its ease of use, patients are happy to respond. Response levels are therefore much higher than achieved by other means
- A Consistent Measure
The same information is collected from all locations, allowing direct comparisons to be made, both from one location to another, as well as over time.
- Indicator
It provides an excellent indicator of where scarce management time and research should be focused, enabling more effective use of limited resources
- Improves both Tactical and strategic management:

- Decision cycle is speeded up dramatically
- Managers or nurses are provided with regular and accurate information that relates directly to their area of responsibility
- Enhances Goodwill
Demonstrates to patients that you care about them. People like to feel their views are important. It generates Goodwill.
- Encourages staff to:
 - Take care of patients
 - Be aware of patients needs
 - Get involved in the process of improving service delivery
- Bringing staff into the decision making process also improves staff satisfaction
- Simplicity
The system is simple, automated, the devices can be checked remotely, and they do not interfere with local networks. It requires no additional work by any hospital staff.
- Weighting
The relative importance of questions and responses can be weighted, in order to emphasise specific issues

Reporting

- Reports can be provided on a daily or weekly basis, or at any interval required
- Data is analysed on a weekly and monthly basis and sent to relevant managers
- All reports are sent via electronic means
- The integrity of the system can be checked for fraudulent entries.

Improvement Chart

An A1 laminated wall chart is used by staff to

- Note down the past week's performance
- evaluate it against the previous weeks
- Articulate their action plan for the next week
- Data forwarded to Strategic management

Conclusion

The management of patient satisfaction does not end once feedback has been received from the customer. It is a process of continuous quality improvement that involves even the lowest category of staff. It includes subcontractors and is dependent on the hearts and minds of people that are totally focussed to keep our customers happy.