

Research Assignment Topic

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Health care professional development: (Hospital Management) Working as a team to improve patient care

Abstract

In delivering health care, an effective teamwork can immediately and positively affect patient safety and outcome. The need for effective teams is increasing due to increasing co-morbidities and increasing complexity of specialization of care. Time has gone when a doctor or a dentist or any other health practitioner in whatsoever health organization would be able to solely deliver a quality care that satisfies his or her patients. The evolution in health care and a global demand for quality patient care necessitate a parallel health care professional development with a great focus on patient centered teamwork approach. This can only be achieved by placing the patient in the center of care and through sharing a wide based culture of values and principles. This will help forming and developing an effective team able to deliver exceptional care to the patients. Aiming towards this goal, motivation of team members should be backed by strategies and practical skills in order to achieve goals and overcome challenges. This article highlights values and principles of working as a team and principles and provides team players with a practical approach to deliver quality patient care.

Strategies to Improve Patient Satisfaction and

Organizational performance in Health Care

Hospital leaders who fail to respond to poor patient satisfaction reports may experience lower organizational performance. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies of leaders in private health care settings to improve patient satisfaction.

This study may provide strategies that health care leaders in the public setting can apply to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. One private health care provider operating in capital territories selected as both private and public healthcare centers are located in these areas.

Data were gathered from 12 participant interviews and from an examination of available physical artifacts such as organizational documents provided by the participants and individuals. Transformational leadership was the underlying conceptual framework for this research. Triangulation was used to ensure the rigorousness of the study. In the study, themes were identified after member checking the transcribed open-ended interview questions. The 5 themes identified were cohesive culture of employee engagement, patient-focused model of care, timely access and follow-up of results and coordination of care, continuous system quality improvement, and employee accountability. These themes underscore the importance of a culture of employee

Engagement; they also illuminate care that focuses on the patient-care that ensures timely access, follow-up and coordination of care, quality improvement based on patient feedback, and employee accountability. Current publicly-funded hospitals and health care centers may apply these findings to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance.

Dedication

I dedicate this experienced study to my executives and to my team members who listens to my ideas, challenges my thinking and never gives up on me. To all, your love and continued support has helped me to succeed in my professional, academic and personal life.

I would also like to thank my seniors for support of my academic work.

Keywords: Teamwork, Health organization, Quality care, Effective team, Communication

Introduction

An effective teamwork is now globally recognized as an essential tool for constructing a more effective and patient-centered health care delivery system. Identifying best practices through rigorous research, which can provide data on optimal processes for team-based care, is subject to identification of the core elements of this system. Once the underlying principles and core values are agreed and shared, researchers will be able to more easily compare team-based care models and commissioners will be able to promote effective practices [1]. Therefore, a number of designated health professional bodies worldwide have come out with recent statements to define teams and their roles and the characteristics of a successful team [1–4]. They elaborated on essential values

and principles of a team based health care, to share a common ground on this very hot topic. These have all been highlighted in this article. The potential challenges, and practical tips on how to successfully approach the task, have also been explored and included alongside proposed implementation strategies.

Universal Healthcare

Without our health, we have nothing. Money, friends and family, happiness--all are afterthoughts without our health. As such, both as individuals and as a society, maintaining our health must be an indispensable priority. Despite the many faults of our healthcare system, Communities realize this. Healthcare is undoubtedly a major concern in our nation.” the heated debates on healthcare across the nation,

The economics of healthcare is not at all simple. What you put in is certainly not necessarily indicative of what you get out, as shown by the striking discrepancy between what we pay and what we get out of our healthcare system.

Definitions, Importance and Evolution

The nature of a team is varied and complex. Though many patients may think that the most effective team is the multidisciplinary team, however, teams may be drawn from a single professional group.

Definitions A team can be defined as a distinguishable set of two or more people who interact dynamically, interdependently and adaptively towards a common and valued goal/objective/mission, who have been assigned specific roles or functions to perform and who have a limited lifespan of membership.

Team-based health care is the provision of health services to individuals, families, and/or their communities by at least two health providers who work collaboratively with patients and their caregivers—to the extent preferred by each patient – to accomplish shared goals within and across settings to achieve coordinated, high-quality care. The incorporation of sharing responsibilities with accountability between team members in health care systems offers great benefit. However, in practice, shared responsibility without high-quality teamwork can result in immediate risks for patients. For example, poor communication between health-care professionals, patients and their caregivers, has emerged as a common reason for patients taking legal action against health-care

providers. Medical errors, "near misses" and other adverse events may also occur due to inadequacy of communication among team members even in a well coherent team. Moreover, lack of purposeful team care can also lead to unnecessary waste. Therefore, identification of best practices may help avoiding some of these dangers, and may help to control costs.

An effective team is a one where the team members, including the patients, communicate with each other, as well as merging their observations, expertise and decision-making responsibilities to optimize patients' care. Understanding the culture of the workplace and its impact on team dynamics and functioning will make a team member a good team player.

Importance Nowadays, patients are rarely looked after by just one health professional. In the context of a complex healthcare system, an effective teamwork is essential for patient safety as it minimizes adverse events caused by miscommunication with others caring for the patient, and misunderstandings of roles and responsibilities. Patients are undoubtedly interested in their own care and must be part of the communication process too; their early and throughout involvement has been also shown to minimize errors and potential adverse events.

The evolution of patient care one all-knowing physician, or a private nurse living in the community in the "good old days" cared for people, and either was very easy to approach when needed at any time of the day. Health care has changed enormously since then with more rapid pace in the last 20 years. It is now seen as undesirable in health care to practice in isolation and may even put the patient at risk. The complexity of modern health care, which is evolving rapidly acts as a driving force behind the transition of health care practitioners' from being soloists to members of teams who share a common aim.

Today No single practitioner can handle, absorb and use all this information, and the need for specific knowledge in specialized areas of care by different team members has become a necessity. Now, more than ever, there is an obligation to strive for perfection in the science and practice of inter-professional team-based health care. Each clinician relies upon information and action from other team members. Yet, without explicit acknowledgment and purposeful cultivation of the team, systematic inefficiencies and errors cannot be addressed and prevented.

The Development and Characteristics of a Successful Health Care Team

Different types of teams can be identified in health care systems:

Core teams these are directly involved in caring for the patient.

They usually consist of team leaders and members who are direct-care providers such as nurses, dentists, pharmacists, doctors, assistants...etc. They also include case managers.

Coordinating teams the group responsible for operational management, coordinating functions and resource management for core teams.

Contingency teams Formed to deal with emergencies or specific events (e.g. cardiac-arrest teams, disaster-response teams, etc.

Ancillary teams/services the group supports services that facilitate patient care such as cleaners or domestic staff.

Support services and administration those who provide indirect, task-specific services in a health-care facility support services. It includes secretaries and the executive leadership of a unit or facility. This team has 24-hour accountability for the overall functioning of the organization. In order for any team to form and develop in a way that makes it coherent, effective and strong enough to face future challenges, research have shown that it usually passes through the following stages:

Forming: Typically characterized by ambiguity and confusion. Team members may be unclear about tasks at this stage. They have not yet chosen to work together and may communicate in a superficial and impersonal manner.

Storming: A difficult stage when there may be conflict between team members and some rebellion against the assigned tasks. Team members may get frustrated here when do not progress well in the tasks.

Norming: Open communication between team members is established and the team starts to confront the task at hand. Generally accepted procedures and communication patterns are established.

Performing: The team focuses all of its attention on achieving the goals. The team is now close and supportive, open and trusting, resourceful and effective.

After being formed and continue to develop, Healthcare teams interact dynamically and have the common goal of delivering health services to patients. In order to succeed, the team members need to share certain characteristics, which include [2]:

Possess specialized knowledge and skills and often function under high-workload conditions.

Know their role and the roles of others in the team(s) and interact with one another to achieve a common goal.

Act as a collective unit, as a result of the interdependency of the tasks performed by team members.

Possess specialized and complementary knowledge and skills.

Take decisions.

Values, Principles and Benefits

The values needed in an effective team member harmonize with the core competency domain of "Values/Ethics. The following are five personal values that characterize the most effective members of high-functioning teams in health care [1]:

Honesty: A high value is put on effective communication within the team, including transparency about aims, decisions, uncertainty, and mistakes. Honesty is critical to continuous development and for maintaining the mutual trust, which is prerequisite for a high-functioning team.

Discipline: Team members carry out their roles and responsibilities with discipline, even when it seems inconvenient. Such discipline allows teams to develop and stick to their standards and protocols even as they seek ways to improve.

Creativity: Team members are excited and motivated to tackle emerging problems creatively. They see even errors and some unanticipated bad outcomes as potential opportunities for improvement.

Humility: Team members do not believe that one type of training or perspective is uniformly superior to the training of others, though they recognize differences in training. They also recognize that they are human and will make mistakes. Hence, a key value of working in a team is that fellow team members can rely on each other to help recognize and avert failures, regardless of where they are in the hierarchy.

Curiosity: Team members are dedicated to reflecting upon the lessons they learned in their daily activities and using this reflective experience in continuous professional development and the functioning of the team.

Principles of Team-Based Health Care

There are many models to describe effective teamwork. Historically, these have come from other industries, such as the aviation's crew resource management (CRM) [2]. The principles that characterize a successful team based health care include [1]:

Shared goals: The team, including the patient and, where appropriate, family members or other support persons, generate a common and clearly defined purpose that includes collective interests and demonstrates shared ownership.

Clear roles: There are clear expectations for each team member's functions, responsibilities, and accountabilities, which optimize the team's efficiency and often make it possible for the team to take advantage of division of labor, thereby accomplishing more than the sum of its parts. **Mutual trust and respect:** Team members

earn each other's trust, creating strong norms of reciprocity and greater opportunities for shared achievement. They respect and appreciate the role of each other. They also respect each other's talents and beliefs, in addition to their professional contributions. Effective teams also accept and encourage a diversity of opinions among members.

Effective communication: This is crucial for the teamwork success. The team prioritizes and continuously refines its communication skills. It has consistent and accessible channels for complete communication, and used by all team members across all settings.

Measurable processes and outcomes: Reliable and timely feedback on successes and failures should be agreed and implemented by the team. These are used to track and improve performance immediately and put strategies for the future.

Leadership: Effective team leaders facilitate, coach and coordinate the activities of other team members. Effective leadership is a key characteristic of an effective team.

Benefits of effective teamwork

Effective teams can improve care at the level of the organization, the team itself as a whole, the individual team member and the patient (Table 1) :

Table

The benefits of effective teamwork

Organizational benefits-Team benefits-Patient benefits-Benefits to team members

Reduced time and costs of hospitalization Improved coordination of care Enhanced satisfaction with care
Enhanced job satisfaction

Reduction in unexpected admissions efficient use of health-care services Acceptance of treatment Greater role clarity

Services are better accessible to patients Enhanced communication and professional diversity Improved health outcomes and quality of care
Reduced medical errors Enhanced well-being

Challenges to Effective Teamwork

Several barriers exist to establishing and maintaining effective teamwork in health care [2]:

Changing roles

In many health-care teams, there is considerable change and overlap in the roles played by different health-care professionals. These changing roles can present challenges to teams, in terms of acknowledgement and role allocation.

Changing settings

Some changes in the nature of health care such as increased delivery of care for chronic conditions require the development of new teams and the modification of existing teams.

Health-care hierarchies

The strongly hierarchical structure of health care can be counterproductive to well-functioning and effective teams where all members' views are considered.

Individualistic nature of health care

Many health-care professions, such as nursing, dentistry and medicine, are based on the autonomous one-to-one relationship between the health care provider and patient. While this relationship remains a core value, it is challenged by many concepts of teamwork and shared care.

Instability of teams

Some health-care teams are transitory in nature, coming together for a specific task or event (e.g. Trauma team).

Failing teamwork leads to accidents

Reviews of high-profile incidents have identified three main types of teamwork failings, namely, unclear definition of roles, lack of explicit coordination and other miscommunication.

Resolving disagreement and conflict

The ability to resolve conflict or disagreement in the team is crucial to successful teamwork. This can be especially challenging for junior members of the team or in teams that are highly hierarchical in nature.

How to apply teamwork principles?

Here are some tips to help health care teams to head towards successful achievements, which include:

A life example of a strategic plan.

Practical tips for health care team members.

Monitoring progress through patients' satisfaction.

Practical strategic approach

"The context for health care and support is changing. Most significantly, with people living longer, we have a greater number of older patients and people to support, many with multiple and complex needs, and with higher expectations of what health, care and support can and should deliver. Delivering health and care support and services involves us working with people in a new partnership, offering and engaging with people in making choices about their health and care. Care compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment.

Action area one: Helping people to stay independent, maximize well-being and improving health outcomes.

Action area two: Working with people to provide a positive experience of care.

Action area three: Delivering high quality care and measuring the impact.

Action area four: Building and strengthening leadership.

Action area five: Ensuring we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place.

Action area six: Supporting positive staff experience.

Practical tips for health-care professionals [2]

Always introduce yourself to the team

Clarify your role

Use objective (not subjective) language

Learn and use people's names

Be assertive when required

Read back/close the communication loop

State the obvious to avoid assumptions

Ask questions, check and clarify

Delegate tasks to specific people, not to the air

If something doesn't make sense, find out the other person's perspective

Always do a team briefing before starting a team activity and a debrief afterwards

When in conflict, concentrate on "what" is right for the patient, not "who" is right/wrong?

And remember: "Teamwork doesn't just happen". It requires [2]:

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An understanding of the characteristics of successful teams

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Knowledge of how teams function and of ways to maintain effective teams.

Patient satisfaction a sensitive indicator for a successful health delivered teamwork is
Patient satisfaction, which requires:

C.P.R.

C: Compassionate Communication

P: Patient information/Pain management

R: Response

For a high patient satisfaction, the delivery of the following is critical [4]:

Communicate to the patient who you are, what you do and who are the members of the team.

Inform the patient daily what their plan is for the day and set expectations – write on the whiteboard so they can see it and revise as they need.

Inform the patient and family if they have any questions, concerns to call – you are there to help.

Encourage the patient to communicate how they are doing in managing their pain – their comfort is vital!

Include the patient – tell them what you are doing in the room, even the simple things like adjusting IV's or taking a vital sign. The more you communicate about what you are doing, the more comfortable they will be with asking questions.

Conclusion

The ambition of delivering quality patient care is subject to high performance through patient focused teams. However, we need to close a gap between traditional practices and the new attitudes required from an effective team to achieve such a great ambition. Therefore, health care organizations should aim at providing exceptional patient care by adopting wide team based culture in which certain values and principles are shared and transparently communicated among team members including patients who should be placed in the heart of the care.

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Background of the Problem

Most measures of health care focus on objective measures of clinical outcomes of patient care and rarely seek the patient's views (Hostetter & Klein, 2011).

Patient-reported outcomes are critical measures of assessing whether health care is improving the health of patients (Hostetter & Klein, 2011). Patient-reported outcomes focus on the patient's wellbeing and satisfaction of the care given (Hostetter & Klein, 2011).

Understanding that patient satisfaction may improve organizational performance, The Institute for Health Care Improvement developed the Triple Aim strategy of simultaneously improving population health, the patient's experience of care, and reducing per capita costs of health care (Stiefel & Nolan, 2012). In the United States,

Problem Statement

Leaders who do not measure patient satisfaction lack information on quality improvement, which may result in decreased organizational performance (Kleefstra Zandbelt, de Haes, & Kool, 2015). Hospitals with the lowest satisfaction scores generate 21% more health care costs (Leber, 2014).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies that leaders in private health care settings use to improve patient satisfaction. Learning from this study may provide strategies that health care leaders in the public setting can apply to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance

Implications for Social Change

The results of the study might improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. Improving patient satisfaction and organizational performance for hospitals positively contributes to the social well-being of people and communities. Improving patient satisfaction and hospital performance in hospitals potentially improves the health of the population. Improving the health of the population decreases mortality and morbidity. Ensuring efficient, patient-centered health care for the population may improve human conditions and have a positive social impact.

Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

My main goal in conducting the literature review was to provide a review of the topic and to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding from the researched topics

Implications for Social Change

The research study contributes to social change by providing strategies to improve patient satisfaction as consumers of healthcare. Hospital leaders that focus on patient satisfaction and performance positively contribute to the social well-being of people and communities by addressing healthcare needs according to patient perspectives (Merlino, 2013). The results of the study might improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. Improving patient satisfaction and organizational performance for hospitals into the future positively contribute to the social well-being of people and communities.

Improving patient satisfaction and hospital performance in hospitals potentially improve the health of the population. Improving the health of the population decreases mortality and morbidity. Ensuring efficient, patient-centered health care for the population may improve human conditions and have a positive social impact. Positive social change to people and communities may result from strategies to improve patient satisfaction as

101 consumers of health care. As well, healthcare leaders that focus on patient satisfaction and performance may provide a better health care experience for patients and families.

Recommendations for Action

The results of this study might prove valuable to healthcare leaders working in the public sector. Public healthcare leaders may find the strategies that private healthcare facilities use to improve patient satisfaction to improve organizational performance useful. The study findings included five distinctive themes: (a) cohesive culture of employee engagement (b) patient-focused model of care, (c) timely access, and follow-up of results, and coordination of care, (d) continuous system quality improvement, and (e) employee accountability. First, health care leaders in the public sector should strive for a culture of employee engagement to patient satisfaction by investing in customer service training for employees. When the front desk recognizes a patient immediately and the doctor and the nurse interact with the patient and not the chart it sets a tone for a more human patient-focused experience. Leaders may need to work on building employee engagement by ensuring a culture of trust and commitment between employees and administration. Second, health care leaders in the public sector should support a focus on the patient experience, starting with communication that reflects

compassion for the patient and the family. Communication to patients and families must be timely, and understandable with built in mechanisms to ensure continuity and that nothing gets missed. Patients and families need to be part of the healthcare team as they provide valuable information to the medical team and this connection adds to patient satisfaction

102 and organizational efficiencies. Third, health care leaders in the public sector should strive for patients to experience timely access and coordination of care across the continuum. This may involve coordination of both public and private health care resources to expand the availability of resources. In addition, patients need timely followup of results. This may require different processes for follow-up of such as the utilization of telephone, and email in order to meet patient needs. Fourth, health care leaders in the public sector should develop a system of continuous quality improvement that is based on the patient's perspective instead of the systems perspective. Health care providers in the public system need to eliminate duplication and overly-complicated administrative processes and make quality changes based on what is important to the patient. The public system may consider measuring performance with the net promoter score, (NPS), to determine if the patient would recommend the hospital to friends and family. Fifth, health care leaders in the public sector should build on employee accountable and commitment to the patient experience, this may involve a process for hiring and retaining all staff including physicians based on evaluations designed by patients.

Recommendations for Further Research

In this study, I collected data from one private health care facility with offices in

Vancouver, B.C., Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta. I interviewed nine leaders and three employees at the private health care facility. The small sample size is one limitation of the study. Moreover, the study was limited to one private health care organization.

Therefore, to generalize the findings, future researchers can expand to different public

103 health care facilities. Further researchers can use quantitative research to test the five themes found from this study on a larger set of data. As well future studies may consider interviewing patients and families.

Reflections

In this study, I explored strategies that leaders in private healthcare settings use to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. Learning from this study

are to provide strategies that healthcare leaders in the public setting can apply to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. I had a good opportunity to learn and conduct research to solve this business problem. I also gained more knowledge from interacting with the research participants. I was fortunate to receive timely consent from twelve study participants. I was impressed with the willingness of the participants to answer the interview questions and the relatively fast turn-around of the member checked transcriptions. The study helped me to better understand the research process and the time it takes to interview and transcribe the interview results. The experience with conducting this research study will help in my future academic and professional career.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore strategies that leaders in private healthcare settings use to improve patient satisfaction. Learning from this study were to provide strategies that healthcare leaders in the public setting can apply to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance. To explore the strategies used by a private health organization, I conducted research using a semi-structured

104 interview technique and examination of physical artifacts including business documents and the website. I recorded the interviews, coded and analyzed the data to identify common themes. The study results included five distinctive themes: (a) cohesive culture of employee engagement (b) patient-focused model of care, (c) timely access, and followup of results, and coordination of care, (d) continuous system quality improvement, (e) employee accountability. From this study healthcare leaders in the public setting can apply five strategies to improve patient satisfaction and organizational performance.

Ensuring efficient, patient-centered health care for the population may improve human conditions and have a positive social impact. Positive social change to people and communities may result from strategies to improve patient satisfaction as consumers of health care. As well, healthcare leaders that focus on patient satisfaction and performance may provide a better health care experience for patients and families. I would recommend future research to expand the study to different types of private health care facilities in different locations.

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Professionals to implement

This priority requires healthcare professionals to implement ongoing, holistic Care Management that extends beyond outpatient clinics and healthcare systems. Taking better care of patients and improving their outcomes becomes much easier once you've engaged them in their own care and partnered with their families and communities.

As well as improved outcomes and quality of life.

Follow these core principles to improve your team's patient care and health outcomes:

1. Show respect

Like you, your patients have direct and indirect needs and desires that affect patient outcomes. Their level of medical education, financial constraints, transportation availability, and care access influence their choices and their patient experience.

Acknowledging and taking care of patient concerns demonstrates that you see them as humans with unique needs. This kind of patient care may also help motivate them to respect their health journey and follow their care plan.

Not sure how to start practicing this type of patient care? Harvard Medical School researchers have identified eight principles that guide patient-centered care plans. Respect fuels all of them.

2. Express gratitude

You're grateful to have a practice where you can take care of patients and help them achieve their health goals. Express that gratitude to them every chance you get. A simple, "Thanks for choosing our practice" goes a long way, especially when it's accompanied by small things like eye contact and the patient's name. The Clinical Advisor reports that medical professionals who apply these basic social skills generate much higher patient satisfaction scores.

Ideal patient care addresses basic human needs. Ask each individual patient and each patient's family about their preferences, goals, and expectations. When you trust them

as a healthcare partner, they're more likely to trust your recommendations and become loyal patients.

Reward that loyalty with milestone and holiday celebration treats or gift certificates when a patient refers a friend or when a patient's family member helps spread the word about your expertise. When you demonstrate your appreciation regularly, you'll reap the economic benefits of the patient-centered care model: more referrals.

3. Enable access to care

To enhance the care of patient populations across regions, ethnicities, and social classes, medical professionals have transcended the boundaries of the traditional medical environment to address the social determinants of health.

Persistent, long-term factors like education, social position, income, and living environment play a significant role in promoting patient care and preventing or reducing disease effects. Addressing these (often subtle) determinants will improve patient outcomes. To do so, care team members must know a patient's medical history and implement patient care technology that helps prevent errors and encourages care plan compliance.

It's critical to make appointment scheduling quick and easy. A future patient should never be left to wait on hold or have to click five times on your website just to contact you or schedule an appointment.

Platforms designed for patient care automate this function — they even send thank-you and welcome messages to new patients after they've booked an appointment. Care Management software will enable you to seamlessly manage patient care compassionately while meeting the needs of each individual patient and each patient's family members who may be assisting with decision-making and care plan implementation.

4. Involve patients' family members and friends

Taking care of patients requires embracing the support and contributions of every patient's family and loved ones.

Family-centered medical professionals allow competent patients and their caretakers to participate in healthcare decision-making. The concept of patient-centered care

emphasizes the context and broader life experiences that can either generate illness or enable healing.

As care plans become more collaborative, medical professionals are becoming more proficient in patient-centered care communication. Providers in all specialties are learning to listen, facilitate choice, share information, build trust, and promote compliance — enabling them to expend time and energy more efficiently. When they explain the potential benefits and adverse effects of care plan medication to the patient's family, providers generate the trust that enhances the patient experience.

5. Coordinate patient care with other providers

Although your patient care coordination platform will be customized for your healthcare setting, all successful patient-centered care follows the same core principles. Patient data and messaging are shared at all levels of the organization. When medical professionals in primary care, urgent care, long-term care, and specialty care address food, pain management, housing, transportation, as well as mental and behavioral health challenges, they're practicing whole-person care.

Because primary care planners, nursing homes, hospitals, social services agencies, and religious institutions directly impact patient care, it makes sense for all of them to collaborate to take more holistic care of patients and of each patient's family. To do so effectively, they need Care Management platforms that enable communication between health care settings.

These platforms can also track patient care, identify opportunities, give patients access to their own medical records, enhance patient communication with medical professionals, and improve care plan compliance.

6. Provide emotional support

To improve patient experience, medical professionals in all specialties provide emotional support for patients, even in the most difficult situations. Ideal patient care entails a bit of psychology; it requires picking up on cues to determine how open each individual patient is to various types of support.

Do they just need you to listen and consider the research they've done? Do they want to know you relate and that you'll accompany them through their struggles? Do they expect honesty and vulnerability when they realize you don't have all the answers?

Would a moment of silence be appropriate? Holding their hand through a teary-eyed moment?

Taking care of patients is a science and an art — let instinct and experience guide you. Rather than disrupting your workflow, you'll see that connecting with the patient will, in the end, enhance it. It will make you feel valued, trusted, and needed. There's no better way to build loyalty and referrals while reaping the personal rewards of your profession.

7. Engage patients in their care plan

By encouraging questions and demonstrating that you're always open to new ideas, you'll inspire patient-centered care communication and put your patient's family at ease. When you educate them about their condition and treatment choices, you empower them to partner with you. Show them models and diagrams, refer them to websites and videos, and share case studies of the kind of patient outcomes they're striving for.

Request feedback in another way to engage and take care of patients. Whether that means asking them how they felt about their appointment, administering phone surveys, or establishing patient advisory committees to suggest improvements, hearing from them will help each medical professional on your care team thrive.

8. Address your patients' physical needs

Whether they need pain management or daily exercise, patients appreciate continual guidance, reminders, and motivation. Whether you work in primary care, specialty care, emergency care, or long-term care, optimal patient care requires keeping physical needs and comforts top-of-mind.

Hospitals and offices are already uncomfortable, unfamiliar spaces in which to practice patient care. To prevent your facility from being an obstacle to healing, enhance the coordination of patient-centered care — including pain management. Ideal patient care requires helping weak or anxious patients with necessary tasks, creating a soothing, restorative environment, then checking in post-appointment to make sure their patient experience was conducive to healing.

When your patients are active, well-fed, and well-rested, they may have more energy to channel into care plan compliance. Patient care to address mental illness requires medical professionals to accommodate emotional needs. Older patients may have higher physical demands that affect their ability to comply. Each individual patient deserves a custom care plan to nurture their basic physical needs. And each patient's family deserves to be heard and engaged in care plan compliance.

9. Support your patients' mental health

The National Institute of Mental Health has found that physical trauma and chronic health dysfunctions can trigger depression or anxiety. Side effects of medications used to treat those dysfunctions can also disrupt brain chemistry and cause these conditions.

Stress, for example, can stimulate the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, which controls mood, digestion, immune response, and energy expenditure. Patients experiencing Parkinson's disease, thyroid disorders, or beta-blocker side effects often report symptoms that mimic depression. According to Science Daily, antidepressants can also cause anxiety. To take care of patients, be aware of warning signs when building your patient relationships. Provide sensitive patient-centered care until you can consult a mental health professional.

By implementing a patient Care Management system, your team can provide mental healthcare across facilities and enable various medical professionals to help address mental health issues — regardless of their training. A software program designed for patient care can relieve the burden of mental health screening, assessment, and specialist referrals. It lets you provide better patient care with fewer administrative tasks.

10. Help your patients manage their medications

Because medications have so many potential contraindications and affect each individual patient differently, it's important to teach medication management and to offer alternative pain management options. Give each patient and each patient's family a complete and accurate medication list.

Once it's accessible to all stakeholders on a Care Management platform, it will be easier to address medication reconciliation issues. Specialized next-generation software can help to identify behaviors that may put patients at risk for overdosing, underdoing, or missing medications. It will give all care team members context about what may be interfering with prescription adherence.

11. Deliver quality patient care experiences

Enhancing the patient experience requires that you focus on all touch points a patient has with your healthcare system. Take care of patients by ensuring they experience quick, compassionate treatment and pleasant interactions with each medical professional along the way. Interactions, culture, and patient perceptions about your continuum of care are critical to value-based care models, which are becoming more popular in the healthcare industry.

12. Practice whole-person care

The whole-person care model addresses dysfunction and pain management in outpatient integrative clinics, medical centers, and hospitals. This model is being integrated into conventional medicine guidelines and is most often recommended to address chronic pain, diabetes, obesity, and the repercussions of the opioid crisis.

Patient care that nurtures the physical, mental, spiritual, and environmental factors that can trigger dysfunction creates a more effective (and less expensive) pathway to chronic condition and pain management. Successful patient-centered care examples abound in clinics that embrace whole-person care for these common dysfunctions.

13. Streamline Care Management with technology

Ideal patient care promotes activities that educate patients so they can manage their health conditions more effectively. Successfully implementing inter-team care delivery requires streamlining patient care as well as provider communication.

Care Management reduces the need for repetitive medical services and improves patient outcomes. It makes patient care coordination and clinical treatment easier and less stressful by eliminating duplication and enabling patients to improve their quality of life, one message at a time.

If you want to improve patient outcomes, reach more patients, prevent team burnout, lower the costs of patient care, and improve quality of life for patients and providers, consider implementing patient-centered care technology at your practice.

14. Disaster's Management & Rehabilitation

15. Quality Feed back

For Quality in Healthcare has identified how streamlined communication helps this process improvement requires:

Engaging patients and families throughout the organization.

Consistently measuring patient feedback.

Redesigning health care delivery based on that feedback.

Incentivizing staff accountability.

How technology can improve patient care

Healthcare delivery that promotes well-being doesn't stop at the doors of your medical center. Optimal patient care requires the kind of ongoing communication and education that only a robust healthcare-centric technology platform can enable. It takes software designed specifically for Care Management and for clinicians who prioritize outcomes.

The Mediks Institutes of Health Sciences reports that high-quality patient care requires appropriate infrastructure, training, care team competence, and health IT efficiency.

A patient-centered platform makes taking care of patients more efficient and satisfying by cutting down on repetitive administrative tasks to allow more time and energy for the care of patient priorities — like education — that enables them to manage their own care.

The right Care Management software will assist your care team with the following:

Access

Healthcare accessibility — both in medical centers and in healthcare provider clinics — should constantly be expanding. Care Management software can help improve access to healthcare with patient-centered communication features and Tele-health options that bring patient care to where the patient is.

Timeliness

Waiting times for high-demand patient care services have been too long for decades. Researchers have been addressing this issue by continually reviewing patient surveys and other data, then applying this feedback to restructure patient care in healthcare systems.

When much of patient engagement — appointment scheduling, patient onboarding, symptom checking, and biomarker testing — can be executed outside the office with Care Management software, the time spent in the office is minimized, as is clinician burnout. When patients and clinicians can accomplish more in less time, all in-office appointments are streamlined and wait times are shortened.

Administration

Care Management systems intelligently assign necessary team members to address patient needs at the right moment in order to maximize your most precious resource — your care team's time — so that less of it is spent on administrative tasks and more on patient care.

Communication

Satisfying individual patient needs and addressing concerns of the patient's family early on in the care plan can help eliminate frustration and anxiety. Optimally managing treatment requires communications through a variety of modalities.

Ancillary services

The immediate care of patient needs requires more than just clinical treatments delivered by medical professionals. Communication-enabling technology, pain management, food, and mobility assistance should all be accessible features in patient care for each individual patient and for the patient's family. Social-emotional and behavioral support are critical as well. A robust Care Management platform can help care teams manage and oversee ancillary services holistically without wasting time.

Extend the reach of your care team

Medical professionals in all specialties can extend the reach of their patient care by taking these simple but transformative steps:

Incorporate remote patient monitoring

Remote patient monitoring is the management of acute or chronic conditions via remote patient monitoring technology while securely collecting and exchanging patient data.

Monitoring devices have enabled medical professionals to collect real-time health data and provide relaxed virtual patient care that enhances patient experience. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically sped up the adoption of remote patient monitoring technologies in healthcare organizations of every size and specialty.

Manage care more effectively

Care Management is a practice designed to help medical professionals improve patient care and teach patients how to manage their health conditions more effectively. Care Management programs help improve health outcomes by reducing the need for medical services. This innovative technology enhances the coordination of patient care

and eliminates duplication while helping both patients and providers improve their quality of life.

Streamline patient engagement

Patient engagement enables the delivery of value-based patient care. When patients are engaged, they feel empowered to actively participate in their care plans, so their health outcomes improve — and so does your bottom line.

Coordinate patient care with the latest technology

Your patient care coordination efforts can't improve patient care or resolve patient confusion and care team frustration if you're using outdated tools and systems that slow down care plan implementation. Patients need to understand their diagnosis and treatment options — which requires a seamless flow of communication between care team members, the patient, and the patient's family.

Reduce administrative burden on care teams

Welkin Health has developed a team-centric Care Management software that makes your care team's day much more manageable — and that means more time for patient care.

Welkin allows each clinician to see each individual patient's journey — including assessment scores, needs, preferences, and communications — in a centralized profile for complete transparency. Our innovative platform allows you to automate your patients' assessments and send those updates and reminders. It even features email templates and educational videos so you can deliver personalized patient care.

Empower your care team to deliver outstanding patient care

Although patient-centered care was introduced to enhance patients' wellness, it has also been a boon for healthcare professionals in all specialties. Embracing a more humanistic way of interacting, listening with an open mind, acknowledging patients' views, and engaging every patient's family will improve the care of patient populations that may

have been considered challenging to treat in the past. It will also boost your care team's career satisfaction.

With the help of next-generation Care Management technology, implementing patient-centered care is now easier than ever. Patient care software programs can ensure that each care team is up to speed on medical history, symptoms, patient preferences, and care plan stages. Patient Relationship Management (PRM) systems simplify workflows so providers can focus on what really matters — improving patient outcomes.

To facilitate (and enjoy) patient-centered care while growing your practice, guide to patient-centered Care Management.

Patient-Centered Care:

Patient-centered care respects and integrates a patient's values, preferences, and goals into clinical decision-making and outcome assessments. This partnership between caregiver and patient addresses the physical, mental, spiritual, and social determinants of a patient's health to achieve better outcomes.

The reports that successful patient-centered care entails:

Shared decision-making: giving patients, patients' families, and caretakers a say in care plan decisions and giving them time to research before making those decisions.

Customized care: treating each patient as a unique individual who deserves to choose from multiple diagnostic and treatment options.

Information sharing: presenting each patient with all the observations and data the care team has gathered, as well as the latest relevant condition and treatment research.

Achieving these objectives requires a shift of perspective on patients. Once your care team adopts administrative software that eliminates tool fatigue, they'll have the time and energy to implement those new perspectives into their ideal patient-centered care.

What is Patient-Centered Care?

Patient-centered care is an approach to healthcare where each individual patient's health needs and concerns are at the center of every decision by the care team. In this care model, the patient is empowered to make health goals, express desired outcomes, and actively participate in their treatment plans with their care team.

Benefits of patient-centered care

The benefits of patient-centered care, such as better outcomes and higher rates of patient engagement and satisfaction, allow both the caregiver and the patient's goals to be met. Here are the evidence-based benefits of this increasingly popular care model:

Improved outcomes

Decades of research have demonstrated that when patient values and patient preferences are prioritized, they engage more in treatments, leading to better health outcomes. Hospitals and practices that implement patient-centered care report:

Faster recovery.

Decreased utilization of healthcare resources.

Increased patient, family, and care team satisfaction.

Improved health outcomes.

Improved patient satisfaction

Patient satisfaction corresponds with how well a healthcare service aligns with a patient's expectation of care. Patient-centered care helps increase patient satisfaction rates by taking their personal health goals and desires into consideration and involving them in their own treatment along the way.

Improved reputation for your organization

Thanks to online reviews and social media, it's easier than ever for your patients to discover your reputation. Healthcare professionals cannot view patients merely as individuals seeking treatment for one condition—patients are healthcare consumers expecting the exceptional benefits of genuinely patient-centered care.

Better job satisfaction for staff

One of the many benefits of patient-centered care is higher staff morale and job satisfaction for care providers. Most healthcare professionals go into the field because they are sincerely passionate about helping people. When clinicians feel like they work at a healthcare organization that focuses on patient-specific needs—more specifically, one that implements quality improvement measures—they are more likely to feel satisfied with their job and less likely to experience burnout.

How to practice patient-centered care

Most health care providers can define patient-centered care accurately. Successfully implementing this patient care model, however, requires extensive training on best practices that can be enabled with the right digital tools.

To make healthcare safer, more accessible, more equitable, and more affordable, and to allow patients, caregivers, clinicians, employers, and insurers to make informed healthcare decisions, researchers have standardized a set of evidence-based best practices:

Johns Hopkins University's Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality developed the "Best Practices in Patient-Centered Care Research and Dissemination" Project to improve the patient experience.

Make healthcare accessible

You can't implement patient-centered care if the people who need it can't locate or travel to your office, clinic, or hospital. To get ambulatory service, your future patients must know about your facility and the transportation options available to reach it.

To work around their routine and work schedules, you must also offer a wealth of appointments, which should be quick and easy to schedule. You should also make sure the referrals you provide to accessible specialists are clear and easy to follow.

Respect patients' values, needs, and preferences

Set aside what you may have learned in medical school and open your mind to the continually evolving integrative health care landscape your patients live and work in. If their religious or cultural values promote or reject certain treatments, respect that fact.

Coordinate care

Focus groups at the aforementioned research centers have documented how illness-caused vulnerability makes patients feel powerless. You can empower them by actively participating in and fully understanding their care plan. When you coordinate front-line patient care, clinical care, ancillary care, and support services, be flexible. Follow up to ensure each clinician is informed about each step in the patient's care plan.

Inform and educate your patients

Curious, intelligent patients often feel their providers patronize and condescend when informing them about their condition, prognosis, or treatment. Not telling them all the details can cause patients to become suspicious, angry, and bitter. They may lack the motivation to follow your care plan if they fear you don't truly care about or respect them.

You can easily counter this fear by providing thorough but easy-to-read information on their clinical status, progress and prognosis, care processes, and autonomous self-care. People who feel they're in control of their healthcare tend to take control of their healthcare.

Provide emotional and physical comfort

Ideal patient care requires acute attention to the healthcare environment. If your office, clinic, or hospital is sterile, cold, cluttered, fluorescently lit, or garishly and uncomfortably furnished, it can negatively impact mood and even induce anxiety.

Once they're physically comfortable and calm, your patients may be more likely to discuss their take on pain management and disclose their need for assistance with daily activities. Listen and resolve any issues immediately before their trust wanes. If you comfort and reassure them, they'll trust you. Why is reassurance important in patient health and social care? If patients aren't confident you have their best interests at heart, they'll turn elsewhere—and walk away from an optimal health outcome.

Once you've made your environment warm and inviting and managed your patients' physical pain, make sure to address any internally generated anxiety their status, prognosis, or treatment is causing—it often affects them more than the diagnosed physical condition. Finances are a huge source of anxiety that can be reduced with a bit of research and budgeting.

Involve family and friends

You can dramatically improve the patient experience by accommodating family and close friends at your facility. Involve them in your decision-making if you see they are your patient's deeply trusted advocates. Make sure you explain your patient-centered care plan to all of them so they can participate and ensure consistency.

Provide any logistical resources or emotional support needed to caregivers, who so often experience burnout and health issues. Demonstrate that you recognize their needs and are available to act as their trusted consultant and supporter.

Ensure continuity of care

Patient-centered care does not end when the patient leaves your clinic or hospital room. Make sure the patient's family and caretakers are fully vested in your care plan and understand the patient's physical limitations, dietary requirements, and medication schedules. Help them coordinate ongoing treatments and ensure they're informed about access to physical, financial, clinical, and social support.

Nurses often provide the first touch point with patients to set the stage for these new expectations which is often first introduced to patients by nurses.

How can you measure the results of patient-centered care?

The first standardized survey in the U.S. is the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Survey (CAHPS®). This data collection tool was developed by The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). It measures patient experience by asking discharged patients whether they got the care they needed quickly enough and whether they enjoyed thorough, compassionate communication with doctors, care providers, and customer service representatives.

How patient-centered care will help your care team thrive

Despite its name, patient-centered care offers just as many benefits for providers. This holistic healthcare approach will help your care team:

Improve patient outcomes

According to the National Institutes of Health achieving patient satisfaction requires adopting a new attitude, which affects patient outcomes.

Though patient loyalty is an elusive goal and patient satisfaction an indirect indicator of clinician performance, they are always strong motivators for your care team. Delivery of patient-focused care requires that we deliver care holistically and compassionately for every patient, every time.

Reduce expenses and total cost of care

Research conducted by Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield in 2014 revealed that patients who participated in patient-centered programs had a 9% lower total cost than those who participated in traditional fee-for-service care models. Patients who received

patient-centered care were also 8% less likely to be admitted to a hospital and 5% less likely to end up in the emergency room.

When a healthcare organization identifies what an individual patient needs, it can eliminate needlessly expensive tests, reduce hospital admission rates, and reduce ER visits—all of which lower the total cost of patient care.

Boost staff satisfaction

For the last few decades, policy-makers, health care organizations, and patient advocates have been more focused on studying the effects of patient-centered care on patient—not provider—satisfaction. Recently, The National Institutes of Health found that clinicians who reported successful patient-centered care in their facilities were more likely to have higher morale, less burnout, and greater job satisfaction. Both providers and support staff thrive in a more efficient, satisfying work environment.

Streamline resource allocation

Transforming a healthcare system into a patient-centered healthcare hub is not easy, but once accomplished, the transition enables your care team to more efficiently allocate resources.

Rather than spending time and energy proposing and implementing diagnoses and treatments that patients will reject or ignore, you can work with them to find an option that makes sense to them.

Don't just reprocess visit reports and test results every time a patient needs to see a new specialist with a different perspective, patient-centered care lays out a holistic care plan in collaboration with all parties from the start.

Instead of spending a large portion of your budget on various platforms and Care Management tools, prioritizing the patient requires software that streamlines your workflow to maximize time and energy spent on the patient—not data processing. When you reduce “click fatigue,” you conserve your most precious resource: clinician energy and focus.

Reduce care costs

Holistic, preventive, patient-focused care models aim to prevent disease rather than treat it once it’s reached more dangerous and expensive stages.

How Care Management software enables high-quality patient-centered care

Efficiency is every care team’s goal, but it must be balanced with patient-centered care objectives. Choosing the right technology can help you implement this care model more effectively by streamlining provider-provider and patient-provider communication and enhancing relationships.

Efficient and effective communication is vital to gain patient trust, gather data, and support patients emotionally. Stressed out clinicians find it difficult to prioritize proper communication when juggling administrative tasks with tightly scheduled patient appointments and touch points between appointments.

Easy program design: Many Care Management platforms are designed with the assumption that you have a developer on staff. If you don’t, go with a solution where your team can configure or modify programs without hiring engineers or developers.

Integrations: Choose tools that allow your team to automate actions, set preferences, and create workflows for your unique environment; make sure they work with your existing and future health systems.

High security: Make sure your chosen platform is compliant with healthcare security standards.

Team-first care delivery: Automated assessments and reminders for clinicians, coaches, and patients will help your team deliver the right care at the right time.

Intelligent workflows: Always test-run any platform you're considering to see how easily it allows your team to adjust to patient needs.

Centralized communications: Make sure your chosen program makes communication simple and intuitive for patients, while enabling clinician's quick and easy management of patient data across teams and facilities.

Simplify patient-centered care

Deciding to implement patient-centered care is a big decision and generating results takes time. Improve your care team's job satisfaction, promote ideal patient care, and attract new patients by designing a holistic, patient-centered, software-enabled care plan. Then, enjoy the benefits.

Patient experience and patient satisfaction may go hand-in-hand, but healthcare providers shouldn't assume they're synonymous. Clinicians often prioritize patient experience in healthcare because it has the power to drive measurable quality improvements at medical centers and healthcare organizations. But as the healthcare industry becomes more consumer-centric, clinicians are more motivated than ever to level up their care delivery for a patient experience that inspires patient satisfaction — leaving each patient feeling heard, understood, and empowered.

Maintaining or growing your market share in the competitive healthcare industry depends on how you elevate the patient experience (how a patient perceives the quality of their care) and how you improve patient satisfaction (how well a healthcare organization provides care compared to the patient's expectation).

As you and your care team review this guide to achieve a better patient experience, be aware of how your focused efforts to inspire patient satisfaction ultimately promote clinician satisfaction.

Prepare: Get to know the patient you're about to meet by reviewing medical records and even messages they've left for your practice. Develop a methodology that will help you block out everything else and focus all your attention on the patient who is about to enter your exam room.

Listen: Sit at eye level and lean toward your patient so you can listen intently to your most valuable information source without interrupting.

Connect: Empathize with your patient's story — understand their circumstances, acknowledge their research and treatment efforts, and celebrate their successes ... even if they occurred before you knew the patient.

Read cues: Tune in to your patient's body language and emotional cues — notice, validate and address them to become a trusted partner.

Align priorities: Discover what matters most to your patient and integrate those values into every care plan and interaction going forward.

Culture

Cultural dimensions of healthcare organizations are an important factor in defining the patient experience and improving outcomes. Although the relationship between culture, patient safety, and quality measures is not straightforward, patient-centered care and a positive patient experience have been shown to affect a healthcare system's performance metrics.

Perceptions

Although a good deal of data has been collected on both the patient experience and patient satisfaction, there has been relatively little research into how patients define and perceive the quality of their healthcare. This is rapidly changing.

This study showed evidence that supports the association between perceived care coordination and self-reported medical, medication, and lab errors. As healthcare organizations continue to strive for a quality improvement methodology that improves care experiences and clinical outcomes, this study's results emphasize the importance of integrated, patient-centered care.

From nursing care at home, to rehabilitation after surgery or illness, to long-term home health service for patients with a chronic disease or disability, an uninterrupted

continuum of care leads to a better patient experience — which is likely to inspire high patient satisfaction.

Let's say you get feedback from a patient. They tell you that you've effectively presented discharge and follow-up care instructions. You now have some actionable insights that can help you understand whether your efforts to improve the patient experience actually improved patient care ... but you won't know whether the patient was at ease and satisfied with that efficient procedure.

Understanding why patient experience in healthcare matters

According to Healthcare IT News, a positive patient experience is a new priority for health systems that recognize the value of customer satisfaction, which can help your care team:

Health care professional development:
Working as a team to improve patient care

Abstract

Strategies to Improve Patient Satisfaction and
Organizational performance in Health Care

Dedication

Keywords: Teamwork, Health organization, Quality care, Effective team, Communication

Introduction

Universal Healthcare

Definitions,

Definitions

The Development and Characteristics of a Successful Health Care Team

Forming

Storming

Norming

Performing:

