

Patient Experience/ Culture of Service & Service Excellence

Acknowledgement & Commitment to Standards:

Patient Experience, Culture of Service & Service Excellence

Service Excellence begins at the front door and continues through EVERY department with EVERY interaction, and is required by EVERY hospital team member and physician. We must continually look at our processes “*through the eyes of our patients*” so that we can continue to improve our service, systems and processes. Whittier Hospital Medical Center’s (WHMC) Healthcare Team and Administration are committed to delivering exceptional quality care and service to our patients and their families at all times. In order to be successful, we have identified the following “Service Behaviors” that are expectations of the Healthcare Team at WHMC:

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #1: Use AIDET at All Times:

One of the tools the Healthcare Team at WHMC are expected to utilize in communicating with our patients and families is a tool called “**AIDET**” which is an acronym that stands for **Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation and Thank You**. When you “**Acknowledge**” a patient/family, it means that you stop what you are doing, smile and greet them promptly using their name (if you know it). This makes the patient/family feel important and that their issue will be addressed promptly. It is also important to acknowledge visitors in the hallways and assist them to their destination. “**Introduction**” is an important element so that our patients/families know **who** is interacting with them and what their role or function in the hospital is. This is especially important because most departments wear scrubs and personnel all look the same to our patients/families. Make sure you introduce yourself by name, title and function. “**Duration**” is the next element, and is important so that our patients/families can anticipate how long a wait or procedure will be. It is important to keep the patient/family informed if a delay is encountered and update them as to how long a procedure may take so that we can calm any fear or anxiety that our patients/families may be experiencing. Remember to use “*Disney Time*” which means to always provide time estimates that are longer than you anticipate so that the patient/family is happy when we have exceeded their expectation by completing the task sooner than expected. “**Explanation**” is the next element of AIDET and is used to communicate information to the patient/family regarding the diagnosis, treatment plan, what to expect upon discharge and signs and symptoms to be alert for which may indicate a change in condition. This element is crucial as this is where we answer questions and reassure our patients about their condition, the routine in the hospital, or other complex processes. It is important that we use common terminology that the patient/family can understand and incorporate safety instructions into our explanations. If English is a second language for our patient/family, then make sure you get an appropriate translator or use the blue Cyacom phone. ALWAYS remember to ask the patient/family if you have answered all their questions, and use the script “*Is there anything else I can do for you?*” before leaving the room. The last element of AIDET is “**Thank You**”. We need to demonstrate appreciation to our patients/families and thank them for the privilege of caring for them. Our patients do have a choice in selecting hospitals and we want them to select our facility because of the exceptional care and service provided by our staff. Yes, **YOU** are the most important reason that our patients/families keep coming back! When you complete the “Thank You” step, you will acknowledge the patient, provide them the opportunity to ask/answer questions and provide closure for the patient/family.

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SERVICE BEHAVIOR #2: Treat EVERYONE with RESPECT: Patient/family needs will be addressed promptly and we will maintain patient dignity and respect at all times. Recognize and address cultural differences and positively represent the hospital at all times.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #3: Communicate with Compassion:

Complete the patient room board with your name and contact extension. Listen to the patient/family and address concerns quickly. Advocate for the patient. Keep the patient/family well informed by conducting patient/family conferences and/or providing frequent updates. Conduct hourly rounding and assist with patient toileting promptly. When using the telephone, first smile, then promptly answer the phone (by the 3rd ring), using your name, department and “*How may I help you?*”. Never rush when on the phone as the caller can hear this in your voice. Always end the conversation in a positive manner.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #4: Create a Positive First Impression: This means that staff will greet all patients/families with a smile, using a friendly approach. Patients/families will be addressed by their last name in a respectful manner. Staff will maintain a professional approach with all interactions which means that the dress code will be followed and your ID badge will be worn on the left lapel at all times.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #5: Utilize OnStage/Backstage Behaviors:

“ONSTAGE” occurs whenever we are interacting with our customers (patients, families, visitors, physicians, vendors, etc.). When we are interacting with a customer, then we are in “*performance mode*” and interaction is conducted as if it were in a performance on stage in public view for everyone to see. Most of our departments and care areas are “Onstage Areas” and interactions must be professional and in performance mode at all times. “BACKSTAGE”, like in a theater, are those areas that the public does not see or hear and this is where all the preparation, set up, discussion about issues, and other items that you don’t want the public to see occur. Backstage areas may include break rooms, storage areas, rest areas, closed offices, or any other area where conversations or preparations can be done confidentially. We expect the Healthcare Team to utilize the ONSTAGE and BACKSTAGE principals in the workplace.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #6: Apologize, and Amend When Needed:

If a concern/complaint is identified, listen to the patient/family concerns using active listening techniques. Remember that complaints are really “*gifts*” as they identify an area that we can improve upon. Acknowledge the concern and apologize that the patient/family had that experience. Summarize the concern and let the patient/family know what actions you will take to address their concern. Take action to resolve the issue. If you cannot resolve the issue at your level, then escalate it up the chain of command until resolution occurs. Recovering our patient and families trust (also called Service Recovery) after an incident is key and all staff members from the time that an issue is identified, must be focused on exceeding the patient/family expectations at all times.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #7: Maintain a Safe Environment:

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Correct unsafe situations immediately. Keep the work area clean, orderly and clutter-free. Pick up litter, keep hallways clear and equipment on one side of the hallway. If broken items are identified, label them and remove them from service.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #8: Protect Patient Privacy & Confidentiality at All Times: Keep patient, personal, and business information confidential. Only access a patient's information when you have a business purpose to gain that information (on a need-to-know basis only). Discuss patient information in private areas and conduct conversations with discretion. Eliminate gossip.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #9: Work Together as a TEAM:

We must have a TEAM approach when working together as this provides an effective method to distribute the workload and to assure that all tasks are addressed. ALL Healthcare Workers are expected to function as a team.

SERVICE BEHAVIOR #10: Leave a Lasting Impression:

The discharge is the last impression that the patient/family will have of the hospital and staff. Patients are anxious to go home; therefore we need to process the discharge promptly once an order is received. Make sure that all discharge instructions are written in language the patient can understand. Provide written instruction sheets about the disease process and medication instruction sheets for drugs prescribed. Answer all questions and make sure the patient understands when to make the follow-up appointment with their physician. Let the patient know that they will receive a survey in the next couple of weeks and that it is very important that they complete the survey and return it to us as it is the only way that we know if we are doing a good job, or need to improve. Accompany the patient/family to the front door and make sure to thank them for choosing WHMC.

Remember: Service Excellence means Excellence with:

Every Patient/Family member
Every Interaction
Everytime!

HOSPITAL CONSUMER ASSESSMENT OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS (HCAHPS) OVERVIEW:

Why is this important? The hospital's goal is to achieve 90% on the government survey entitled the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS). This survey consists of the following composite areas which drive our overall scores:

1. Overall Rating: Score of 0 to 10 where **only a score of 9 or 10 counts** for the hospital.
2. Willingness to Recommend: **Only an answer of "Definitely Yes"** will count for the purpose of scoring for the survey.

For the following questions, the **only answer that counts is "ALWAYS"**.

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3. Nursing Communication: There are 3 questions which roll up into this category:
 - a. Did the nurse treat you with courtesy & respect?
 - b. Did the nurse listen to you?
 - c. Did the nurse explain things in a way you could understand?

4. Doctors Communication: There are 3 questions which roll up into this category;
 - a. Did the doctor treat you with courtesy & respect?
 - b. Did the doctor listen to you?
 - c. Did the doctor explain things in a way you could understand?

5. Communication About Medications: - This category includes 2 questions:
 - a. Before giving you a medication, did the staff tell you what it was for?
 - b. Before giving you a medication did the staff explain the side effects to watch for?

6. Responsiveness of Staff: This category includes 2 questions:
 - a. When you pressed the call button, how often did you get help as soon as you wanted it?
 - b. How often did you get help to the bathroom or bedpan as soon as you wanted?

7. Discharge Information: This category includes 2 questions:
 - a. Did nurse or hospital staff talk to you about whether you would have the help you need when you leave the hospital?
 - b. Did you get information in writing about symptoms to look out for after you left the hospital?

8. Pain Management: This category also has two questions:
 - a. How often was your pain well controlled?
 - b. How often did hospital staff do everything they could to control your pain?

9. Cleanliness of Hospital: How often was the patient room AND bathroom kept clean?

10. Quietness: How often was the area around your room kept quiet at night?

All of the questions from #3 above through #10, have the following answers: **ALWAYS**, usually, sometimes, and never. Of these answers, the only answer that counts is the answer "**ALWAYS**". As you can see, it **ONLY** takes **ONE** interaction with a patient or family that does not go well for the patient to consider selecting an answer other than "**ALWAYS**". It is for this reason that teamwork is so important and that **EVERYONE** must work together as a team, and adhere to the Service Behaviors and Service Expectations at all times to assure our success.