

CASE STUDY: Innovation



Hospital Information

Located in California
5,000 annual admissions

TeamHealth Services
Hospital Medicine

Results

80% increased patient satisfaction
(from 5% to 85%)

Family Rounds Appointment Guidelines

- Open-ended
- Patient/family-driven
- Allotted at 15-minute time slots
- Held by phone or at bedside
- Scheduled in the afternoon to facilitate comprehensive patient updates and physician workflow

Challenge

A community hospital in California was looking to improve the inpatient experience and shift the emphasis of care to a more patient-centric approach.

Solution

After identifying the need to improve communication between providers, patients, and families as a key driver of patient satisfaction levels, project team members met every two weeks to develop and outline an innovative approach to the hospitalist workday that would enable families to schedule daily appointments with the covering hospitalist attending. Called Family Rounds, this system would implement daily meetings that adhered to established guidelines. The team developed multiple tools to help communicate the program as well as materials that could be distributed once the system was launched. Posters were set up in various departments of the hospital, including patient waiting areas and by the nursing station.

Upon admission, patients were given an informational brochure entitled "Making Sense of Your Stay" that detailed what they could expect from their hospital stay. The brochure included:

- a short biography for each physician next to their photograph
- a discharge checklist and reminders for patients and their families of the discharge time
- a simple and concise explanation of the doctor's inpatient workday divided into three key components—work rounds, family rounds and discharge rounds—to help set patient and family expectations

The nursing leadership also developed scripting to help them introduce the family rounds program and the brochure. After a short period of inpatient marketing, the program was launched, and provider and family participation were tracked using daily appointment grid data.

Results

Success of the program was measured according to utilization by families and improvement in patient satisfaction scores. Improvement was noticeable immediately and has held for participating physicians. Physicians who utilized the program, defined as conducting at least one family meeting per five patient contacts, showed a statistically significant improvement in patient satisfaction. For the most prolific users, satisfaction dramatically climbed from 5% to 85%.