

University of Toledo Medical Center

Toledo, Ohio

The mission of The University of Toledo Medical Center is to improve the human condition by providing patient-centered, university-quality care.

The UTMC is a 319-licensed bed Academic Medical Center located in an economically challenged neighborhood in Toledo, Ohio. In October 2010, we learned that the Ohio Hospital Association's Annual Facts Report ranked UTMC's patient experience 143 out of 147 medical facilities in northern Ohio. We were delivering excellent medical care, but our patients were extremely unhappy. We were not engaging them holistically. We responded to this disheartening news not by wringing our hands, but by making an improved patient experience our top strategic priority.

We immediately conducted an in depth cultural audit. We found that we were "*us centered*," not "*patient centered*". Furthermore, the audit revealed that staff expectations about patient satisfaction were vague, and accountability for implementation lacked substance and consistency. We concluded that in order to radically improve the patient experience at UTMC, we needed a sustained, organization-wide cultural transformation.

To this end, in November 2010, we launched our iCARE University, which stands for communication, access, respect and excellence. The first of its kind, iCARE University offers hands-on patient satisfaction training in a beautiful, state of the art dedicated facility. Within weeks, more than 2,200 staff members participated in live, rigorous patient experience and behavioral training classes facilitated by UTMC's CEO and Service Excellence Officer. The sessions clearly conveyed our caregiver-to-patient and caregiver-to-caregiver behavioral expectations and concluded by asking each participant to sign the UTMC Behavioral Standards Pledge to signal their personal commitment to improved patient satisfaction.

During the patient satisfaction sessions, we found that our staff clearly needed to better understand the criteria by which they were being measured and what matters most to our patient population; therefore, during the first two quarters of 2011 we expanded our iCARE curriculum to include Press Ganey survey methodology and HCAHPS training classes. We enlisted Press Ganey subject matter experts to come to campus and train our key stakeholders on the utilization of the Press Ganey Improvement PortalSM (patent pending), Press Ganey Online, *info* EDGE[®] and

Priority Indexes by service line. We then trained all of our physicians, residents, fellows and staff in Value-Based Purchasing and HCAHPS. These sessions, coupled with our initial patient experience trainings, enabled our entire UTMC caregiver population to have a common understanding of our customer's healing experience expectations, as well as a better understanding of the national healthcare climate in which hospitals operate.

In February 2011, we launched a Patient Experience Steering Body and seven Patient Experience Actions Teams to obtain and sustain buy-in from leadership and staff throughout the organization. Each team is composed of champions, physicians and executive leaders selected for their ability to make a difference at the point of service. The Steering Body and Action Teams meet individually on a bi-weekly basis to address key aspects of the hospital's daily operations. They also routinely review any patient concerns listed on our Press Ganey Improvement Portal and explore ways to prevent or mitigate similar issues in the future.

In March 2011, we started hosting Patient Experience Line Up meetings for leaders and departmental representatives in an effort to reinforce our cultural transformation journey

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and promote stakeholder engagement. During these lively weekly meetings, we display patient comments and analyze Press Ganey *info* EDGE and PaGER reports. We also depict service failures and desired patient interactions through live role-plays involving real physicians, nurses and support staff. Additionally, we acknowledge individuals and areas that have demonstrated success or have been recognized for service excellence in the customer comments section on the Press Ganey surveys.

During the later part of 2011, we rolled out several initiatives to support our cultural transformation. We assigned clear ownership accountability and created targeted improvement goals for every question listed on the HCAHPS and Press Ganey surveys. Each department created ninety day patient experience improvement action plans based on the Press Ganey Priority indexes. We introduced scripting guidelines for interacting with patients. We also developed and launched our own Universal Scripts for answering the phone, leaving voicemail messages, and providing directions to ensure the highest level of professionalism across the organization.

Eight months after our iCARE University launch, our HCAHPS scores registered significant

progress. Our “Rate Hospital 0-10” domain improved from 47% in November 2010 to 65% in June 2011 (Press Ganey, December 2011).

Overall, we improved our individual cumulative performance in nine HCAHPS survey domains in 2011:

To ensure continued progress, ownership, and accountability in 2012, we continue to lead iCARE patient experience trainings, host Steering Body and Action Team meetings, create and implement ninety day departmental action plans, lead Patient Experience Line Up meetings, and promote Universal Scripting. In addition, in April 2012, we initiated Quarterly Hospital Patient Experience Performance Reviews whereby department and unit specific leaders are praised, challenged, coached and re-energized following an in-depth review of their area’s performance. In April 2012, we launched the phrase “All Hands on Deck! Are Your Hands on Deck?” to remind staff of their critical role in our cultural transformation.

The University of Toledo Medical Center embarked on a cultural transformation journey in November 2010. During 2011, the focus of iCARE University was the enculturation and equipping of 2,460 caregivers with key, high-impact tools aimed at improving the overall

patient experience. The tangible results reflected in the significant gains posted in the most recent survey provide strong evidence that with the right tools and deep commitment, an organization can realize deep and sustainable transformation. In the case of UTMC, that cultural transformation is helping us to realize our mission of improving the human condition, one patient experience at a time.