

Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders

# NICHE



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### PHYSICIAN AND NURSE ROUNDING: IMPACT ON PATIENT SATISFACTION

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**PROBLEM:** Patient satisfaction in older adults was less than desired.

**SOLUTION:** Increase older adult patient satisfaction in the NICHE unit by implementing an innovative physician and nurse rounding program.

**Problem Identified** The staff at Gaston Memorial assessed the patient satisfaction rate for the NICHE unit and determined it was low. To provide the highest quality care required better trust and communication between the nurses and physicians serving the NICHE unit as well as deeper engagement with the patients and families/caregivers.



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**Solution Formulated** The NICHE team created a program where physicians and nurses rounded together in order to enhance communication with patients and families/caregivers.

To gauge results, a study was initiated prior to implementation of the rounding. For the study, baseline patient satisfaction information was gathered in April-June 2009, using the results of Press Ganey®. Following implementation of physician and nurse rounding on July 1, 2009, patient satisfaction was continuously monitored for a year.

The program focused on patients admitted or transferred to the NICHE unit. As the physician began rounds, the nurse joined him or her to collaborate on the patient's care, and relay communications or questions that the patient may have previously voiced to the nurse. (Rounds were conducted at the bedside.) Results were tracked quarterly to evaluate if the new process was effective. Strategies were used to keep staff focused on rounding and included gathering feedback from staff, re-enforcement of the aim of rounding, observation and education. Final results were evaluated after the fourth quarter of implementation.

**NICHE Role** The NICHE Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) core curriculum is designed for use by those at NICHE sites who train nurses in best practices for hospitalized older adults. GRNs are the foundation of system-wide improvement to achieve positive outcomes for hospitalized older adults. The NICHE program, available to hospitals throughout North America, offers evidence-based, interdisciplinary approaches to promote improved care for the hospitalized older adult.

**Evaluation/Results** Data collected using the Press Ganey® patient satisfaction tool revealed a positive impact of the “interactive” physician and nurse rounding on both overall and physician specific scores. Overall raw scores increased from a baseline of 77.7 to 85.6, which was measured one year following the implementation. Specific physician scores increased an average of 12 points (min.: 9.7, max.: 14). All increases were sustained over the year. Bottom line: in one year the overall patient satisfaction in the NICHE unit increased from the 17th percentile to the 90th percentile. As a result of this project's success, physician and nurse rounding was expanded to include other patients within the hospital.

### For more information

1. Bechtel, C. & Ness, D.L. (2010). If you build it, will they come? Designing truly patient-centered health care. *Health Affairs*, 29 (5), 914-20.
2. Havens, D.S., Vasey, J., Gittel, J.H. & Lin, W.T. (2010). Relational coordination among nurses and other providers: impact on the quality of patient care. *Journal of Nursing Management* 18 (8), 926-937.
3. Wanzer, M.B., Wojtaszczyk, A.M., Kelly, J. (2009). Nurses' perceptions of physicians' communication: the relationship among communication practices, satisfaction, and collaboration. *Health Communication* 24(8), 683-91.

### NICHE-related resources

1. NICHE Geriatric Resource Nurse Core Curriculum. Available at [http://nicheprogram.org/knowledge\\_center](http://nicheprogram.org/knowledge_center).

### About NICHE

NICHE is a national organization designed to help health care professionals in hospitals improve the care of older adults. NICHE hospitals seek to create an environment where older adult patients receive care that results in better outcomes. This climate of success encourages patients and their families to seek NICHE designated hospitals for their medical needs. The NICHE Network now numbers nearly 300 hospitals throughout North America.

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