



## 2020: Year of Patient Experience

### Executive Summary

June 25, 2020 Webinar

#### Abraham Segres

Vice President Quality and Safety, Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association

- The VHHA Board has declared 2020 The Year of Patient Experience. The goals of the initiative are to:
  - ~ Identify: Identify, highlight and celebrate efforts by Virginia hospitals and health systems to improve the patient experience of care.
  - ~ Integrate: Continue to link and integrate patient experience improvement efforts with broader quality and patient safety improvement efforts.
  - ~ Connect: Facilitate connections between Virginia hospitals and health systems and other stakeholders for the purpose of shared learning.
  - ~ Improve: Support efforts to improve Virginia hospitals' individual and aggregate performance on national patient experience measures.

#### Patient Experience: Before, During, and After COVID-19

Nancy Wick Littlefield, DNP, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC

Executive Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer, Riverside Health System

Chair, VHHA Patient & Family Experience Forum

#### Pre-COVID Patient Experience

- Riverside Health System significantly improved the patient experience between 2016 and 2019. In 2016, patient feedback was inconsistent and HCAHPS performance was "mediocre." HCAHPS performance improved in 2017 but remained relatively flat in 2018. In 2019, Riverside intensified its patient experience improvement efforts and hardwired practices, resulting in a 4-5% increase across all HCAHPS domains.
- The 2019 improvement effort took a holistic focus, designed to build connection by learning who patients and staff members are as individuals, and who and what is important to each patient.
- Drivers of improvement in 2019 included: data transparency, leadership engagement, purposeful communication regarding accountability and outcomes, real time feedback, alignment of mission to results, transition of some people, improvement in staffing to volume and a focus to remove agency, and not chasing the latest strategy. Biweekly meetings were held. Riverside emphasized that the performance of local facilities was a reflection of local leadership and held local leaders accountable for their progress and outcomes.

## **Patient Experience During COVID-19**

- Riverside experienced a decline in HCAHPS scores during the first and second quarters of 2020. While other hospitals were reporting a "halo effect" on scores as the community celebrated healthcare heroes responding to COVID, Riverside scores were declining. Patients expressed frustration with communication, responsiveness, and inability to have loved ones present.
- Riverside concluded that the change was due in part to a shift in focus from connection to safety. For example, while leaders previously rounded to connect with patients and staff, now the focus of rounding was to check for PPE. Connection with loved ones also was dependent on individual nurse initiative, rather than a standardized practice.

## **Current Patient Experience and Lessons Learned**

- HCAHPS performance in Overall Rating and Willingness to Recommend has improved from March - May 2020. Responsiveness remains a bit of a challenge due to the time it takes to put on PPE, but also has improved between March and May.
- Recognizing that the past improvement was indicative that Riverside was on the right track, leaders returned to a focus on connection, as well as safety. Riverside hardwired a communication strategy to connect with loved ones by setting up specific times for discussion and is exploring using text messages to family in EPIC. To adjust for the reduced personal connection while wearing PPE, Riverside staff began narrating all care provided and focusing on the importance of body language/eye contact.
- One of the lessons learned for leadership was that it is important to keep your eyes on the target and be resilient in times of change. Instead of being discouraged, draw on prior successes, react quickly, and adapt to the new normal.
- As visitation restrictions are eased, Riverside is listening to staff members' feedback on the need for a balanced policy that promotes access, while not interfering with rest or the care of other patients. Staff members indicated that some patients have commented that they prefer fewer visitors but feel pressured to allow friends and family to come.

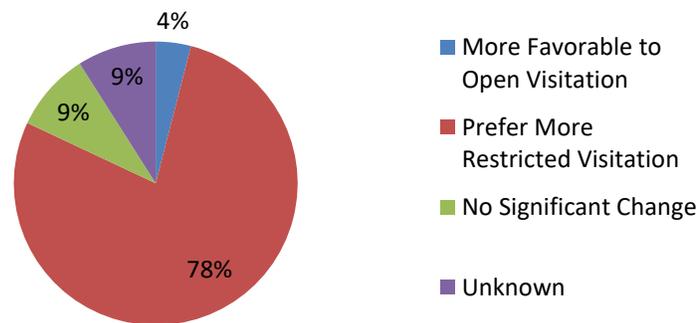
## **Ongoing Focus and Work**

- The importance of connection to patients and families will remain a focus, as well as connection to staff. Riverside is also committed to collaborating with other organizations, including through the VHHA.
- Patient experience is examining diversity and inclusion and patient experience data is being segmented by population to explore differences.
- Patient and Family Advisory Groups were on hold during COVID but will be restarted. The system will be adjusting the demographics of the groups to reflect the populations served.
- Concentrating on high reliability will help to ensure that the system does not jump to quick strategies, but instead examines what will be truly sustainable.

**Carrie Brady**, VHHA Patient Experience and HCAHPS Advisor

- The Year of Patient Experience is grounded on four foundational elements: leadership, patient and family engagement, staff engagement, and effective use of data. The presentation today illustrates how all of the foundations are important and work together.
- During the pandemic hospitals and health systems have adjusted their visitation practices for safety. As visitation is being expanded, hospitals are reporting that most staff would prefer a more restricted visitation policy to continue. This may be an opportunity for revisiting visitation in a patient-centered manner that enables loved ones to be present, but also enables staff members to support patients in setting limits on well-meaning visitors that the patients might not want to see in the hospital but don't feel comfortable excluding.

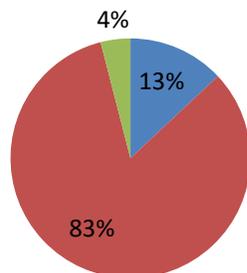
### Staff Attitudes Toward Visitation (n=23)



- The pandemic has affected leader rounding practices, with less rounding on patients and more on staff. 83% of respondents indicated that leaders are rounding less frequently on patients than they did before the pandemic began, but 44% indicated leaders are rounding more frequently on staff than before the pandemic.

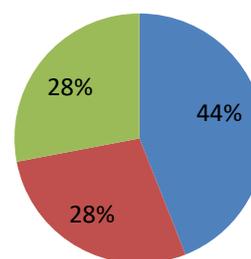
### Leader Rounding Frequency

#### Patients (n=24)



■ More Frequent ■ Less Frequent  
■ No Change

#### Staff (n=28)



■ More Frequent ■ Less Frequent  
■ No Change

Next Webinar: July 23, 2020

## Improving Patient Experience in Virginia Hospitals and Health Systems



### Webinar #5: Rapid Process Improvement and Patient Experience

Thursday, July 23, 2020  
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

#### Objectives:

- ▶ Discuss the use of HCAHPS scores to guide improvement strategies
- ▶ Review one hospital's patient experience success sharing plan
- ▶ Share insights from the impact of COVID-19 on deployment of key patient experience tactics



Mary Mannix, FACHE  
CEO, Augusta Health  
Fishersville, VA



Crystal Farmer, RN, MSN  
VP and CNO, Augusta Health  
Fishersville, VA

Target Audience: Leaders and managers in Virginia hospitals and health systems.



Register using the following link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/248707739099388175>

Contact Abraham Segres at [asegres@vhha.com](mailto:asegres@vhha.com) with questions regarding event details.

Register using the following link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/248707739099388175>