

## Success Story:

### Hospital Survey Efforts Leads to Improved Service and Ratings

A culture change with a greater focus on what matters most to the patient along with a team that is highly competent and always kind has, increased hospital ratings and increased customer satisfaction at the Washakie Medical Center of Worland, Wyoming.

“Making health care easier so life can be better is what this is all about,” said LeGay Naseath, chief nursing officer for Washakie. “It’s about having a just culture and acting on opportunities.”

#### **Inspiring change**

Hospitals that accept Medicare patients are required to participate in an annual Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and System Survey (HCAHPs). The survey captures discharged patient perspectives on hospital care and the results are tied to the Medicare Hospital Compare website, a website that has a star rating for hospitals based on several criteria.

Washakie Medical Center looks to continually improve their processes to provide greater focus on the patient’s preferences. One initiative implemented was a discharge phone call to follow-up with the patient to verify that they have filled all their prescriptions, knows how and when to take their medications, and understands other critical elements of self-care. Another initiative that shaped the culture at Washakie Medical Center was the implementation of a Community Service Advisory group. The primary focus of the group is the continuum of care for our community members. By putting a greater focus on the patient’s experience, Washakie Medical Center earns the patient’s trust, confidence and loyalty which improved their HCAHPs scores.

#### **Bringing forth a legacy of changes**

The team at Washakie first looked at creating a just culture environment. Taking advantage of opportunities to improve their patients’ likelihood to recommend Washakie Medical Center was focused on aligning and developing their people and teams through the quarterly People Experience Guide and focusing process improvement efforts around what their patients were telling them that mattered most.

Meetings were held to discuss the importance of a high-performing culture, what that meant and its benefits. During those educational sessions, new staff expectations were laid out. The staff were asked to practice the 5/10 rule; make eye contact with every patient they encountered within 10 feet and to say hello to patients when they were within five feet.

“We really started connecting with everyone,” said Deb Fox, the senior program manager of the hospital’s quality department.

Patient Safety Event Review meetings were another prong to the hospital’s initiatives. If there was a system or process that could be improved, staff were encouraged to communicate these events. The team reviewed these events and addressed the opportunities they provided to continually improve their processes to make Washakie Medical Center a great place to work and receive care.

“The patient is the biggest and most important factor in their overall care,” said Naseath. “It is up to us to provide them with the tools to manage their health once they are discharged home and make sure every patient’s preferences are taken into account.”

The hospital continues its commitment to Patient Family Centered Care through its Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC). The vision is to partner with patients and families by incorporating their unique perspectives to promote overall wellness and coordinate excellent patient-centered care.

“Each individual staff member is part of the team and everyone here is focused on providing the best experience possible,” said Fox. “We’re focused on hiring people who put their patients above all else. I personally wouldn’t want to go anywhere else than here.”

The Washakie Medical Center increased its overall hospital rating from 76 percent to 81 percent and reduced its staff vacancy rate, from 54 percent three years ago to being 100 percent staffed now. They focused on what’s important, achieved results, constantly grew and adapted by aligning their work to “make health care easier so life can be better.”

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