Reducing Healthcare Disparities with a Culture of Caring

The culture of an organization is the standard of excellence of the organization.

~ Bill Walsh

Adelante Healthcare

- Adelante Healthcare received its first Federal 330 grant in 1979 to operate as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).
- We started as an agricultural, mostly rural clinic serving migrant farmworkers, farmers and their families in El Mirage, AZ.
- Nine health centers in Maricopa County serving 65,000 patients.
Growing Pains

We experienced rapid growth and change
• Employees grew to 500+
• Intensive focus on health outcomes
• Need to develop new leaders
• Increased need for fund development
• Added requirements for data and measures
• Continuing to add new health centers to expand access
• Desire to honor our past & position us for future success
**Why Focus on Caring?**

Caring is key to who we are as an organization

• Caring impacts our employees
• Caring impacts our patients
• Caring builds connections to our community
• Caring impacts our bottom line

**Language of Caring**

We used the Language of Caring program as the tool to kick-start and drive the cultural change across our organization.

We continue to use it to communicate effectively with each other and our patients.

Language of caring provides evidence-based, skill-building programs that trained our care teams in the practice of caring communication and patient-centered care.

**The Adelante Approach**

We have been working to align the organization's:

• Vision & Mission
• Values
• Strategy
• Leadership
• Hiring & Selection
• Rewards & Recognition
Understanding Our Culture

The Language of Caring team helped us to answer the following questions:
- What is it like to work here?
- How does work get done?
- What gets rewarded?
- How does the employee experiences vary at different locations?
- How does the level of the employee change their experience?
- What is the gap between the culture we wanted and the one we have?

Methods to Monitor Culture

We listen and gather feedback
- Exit Interviews
- Language of Caring Surveys
- Focus Groups
- 90 Day New Hire Surveys
- Retention Conversations
- Patient/Client Feedback
- Employee Engagement Surveys

Cultural Transformation Method

We continue to build Language of Caring into how we care for our patients and everything we do.
- Incorporated Language of caring into New Hire Orientation.
- Added targeted questions to our employee engagement survey.
- Increased collaboration by training providers and staff together.
- Designed recognition program and feedback tools to reinforce caring.
Caring System

We understand that caring starts with our employees.

• Language of caring training was provided to all staff and providers.
• We updated job descriptions.
• Used JIT tools and on-line resources.
• Increased focus on leadership development.
• Created a Language of Caring recognition program.
• Added a Language of Caring Competency to our performance appraisal.
• Validated language competencies of staff and strengthened translation skills to ensure patients are receiving accurate information.

Employee Survey Feedback

The following Language of Caring survey questions showed an increase to the mean score related to employee engagement.

- Your co-workers demonstrate caring as they engage with our patients/clients.
  2017 = 3.35  2016 = 3.27  2015 = 3.30

- Your co-workers demonstrate caring as they engage with you and each other.
  2017 = 3.21  2016 = 3.21  2015 = 3.21

Patient Centered Care

Hearing from a patient in our Buckeye Health Center.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PS9woU7pA8&ab_channel=DesertSage
Reducing Disparities
Care Teams have improved our patient's Health Outcomes.

How are We Doing?

Patient Satisfaction Results – Pre Language of Caring

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Patient Satisfaction Results – Post Language of Caring

Raising the Bar on Service
Strengthening Community Connections

The Language of Caring Difference

- Peer facilitators and coaching roles have created opportunities for leadership development across the organization.
- Multisite training sessions have facilitated increased interdepartmental communication and collaboration.
- The very flexible and customizable tools and resources allowed us to implement a program and continue to meet business and patient needs.

Lessons Learned

- Leaders at all levels need to model Language of Caring skills in all forms of communication.
- Very important to hire candidates who fit into a caring organization.
- We need to continue to keep caring about our patients and caring about our employees top of mind.
- Continuously evaluate how decisions you make positively or negatively impact the organization’s culture.
QUESTIONS?

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