Executive Summary

Patient Perspectives on Outstanding Experiences: The Impact of Emotionally Intelligent Staff

This paper explores how the quality of staff interpersonal skills influences overall patient experience. The communication skills of hospital staff are often what have the largest influence on patient experience, and events before and after hospitalization also exert a surprisingly large impact. These are over-arching conclusions highlighted by the National Patient Experience Study (NPES), a national survey conducted by J.D. Power that examined the experiences of 3,500 recently discharged inpatients. Through outlining details of the study, this paper offers insights to help healthcare organizations apply excellent communication skills and focus on the power of positive interactions.

Of all the factors the study identified as impacting patient experience, the quality of interaction with hospital employees has the greatest influence. Taken together, Nurses, Doctors and Procedures account for nearly half (46%) of what drives overall experience. The ability of professional staff to show empathy and foster emotional connections with patients is a large part of achieving better ratings in these areas.

Authored by Richard Millard, Ph.D., senior director and practice leader for healthcare at J.D. Power, the paper describes the central attributes of emotional intelligence and outlines interpersonal behaviors staff can adopt to improve patient experience. It also shares Key Performance Indicators (figure 8), calculated from NPES benchmarks, that represent impactful targets for hospitals seeking to improve the experience of their patients. These targets enable hospitals to focus their efforts in those areas where the results may be most noticeable.

To download the complete paper and access other patient experience resources, visit www.theberylinstitute.org.

A Selection of Inpatient Key Performance Indicators

- On admission, patients reach their room within 20 minutes (or 90 minutes, if admitted from Emergency)
- Patients are always able to talk to their doctor when they need/want to
- Nurses always describe the care plan for the day
- Patients always get help as soon as they want after pressing the call button
- Doctors and staff thank the patient for choosing their hospital
- After discharge, the hospital calls to check on patients

Figure 8

About The Beryl Institute

The Beryl Institute serves as a professional home for stakeholders who recognize that the patient experience is an essential element in the execution and evaluation of healthcare performance. The Institute defines the patient experience as "the sum of all interactions, shaped by an organization’s culture, that influence patient perceptions across the continuum of care."