



Boosting Patient Satisfaction through Purposeful Rounding at Texas Health Resources Harris Methodist Fort Worth

Introduction

In the second half of 2023, Texas Health Resources Harris Methodist Fort Worth partnered with Lone Star Communications (LSC) to address a critical aspect of patient care: improving patient satisfaction. These efforts culminated in a Purposeful Rounding Project, completed the second quarter of 2024.

Background

The formal concept of intentional or purposeful rounding was introduced in the early 2000's by the Studer Group (2007) to improve patient safety and satisfaction. The practice has since spread to many countries to improve patient care quality. Healthcare organizations, specifically nursing, have continued to practice purposeful rounding with positive outcomes. In an integrative literature review by Ryan et al. (2018), purposeful rounding was shown to have positive effects on patient satisfaction in five of eight quantitative studies.⁴

Despite the known benefits of purposeful rounding, the implementation and success of this practice are still quite variable. The aim of this PI project was to utilize technology to assist nursing in the implementation of rounding and determine the impact on patient satisfaction.

The Problem

There are several key challenges impacting patient experience and safety:

- **Benchmark Patient Satisfaction Scores:** The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) developed benchmarks for both state and national satisfaction scores. Prior to the project, the average score for Texas Health sat below both the national and internal benchmarks. HCAHPS also highlighted that patients didn't feel that nurses "always" communicated well. This was a potentially significant contributor to overall patient satisfaction scores.
- **Inconsistency with Best Practices for Purposeful Rounding:** There was an inconsistent use of evidence-based proactive rounding practices across nursing units, which can contribute to a patient-perceived lack of nursing communication, resulting in decreased satisfaction with care.



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- **Net Promoter Score (NPS):** Although the hospital's NPS was close the healthcare industry average of 58, there was still considerable room for improvement to further differentiate THR Harris Methodist from competitors.

Purposeful Rounding Promotes

- **Increased Patient Safety and Satisfaction:** Regular, purposeful rounding improves patient safety by addressing patient needs proactively. It also enhances satisfaction through consistent engagement, fostering better communication and trust between nurses and patients.
- **Reduction in Call Light Usage:** Proactive rounding decreases the need for patients to use call lights, addressing their needs before they escalate.¹
- **Improved Financial Strength:** Higher patient satisfaction can lead to increased reimbursement rates and higher patient recruitment and retention of patients.²



Opportunities Identified

An onsite assessment was conducted at Texas Health Resources Harris Methodist Fort Worth by Lone Star's Clinical Informatics Specialists. The following opportunities for improvement were identified:

- **Staff Knowledge:** Staff knowledge of how to purposefully round and document rounding was not at the desired level, nor integrated into the standard workflow. It needed to be hardwired to produce the desired increase in patient satisfaction.
- **Lack of Standardization:** There was no standardization of rounding workflow or consistency in utilization of the 4-button stations within patient rooms to support standard workflows.

The Solution

The partnership with Lone Star Communications led to the implementation of a Purposeful Rounding Project designed to standardize rounding practices within the Medical Division. The solution focused on:

- **Hardwiring Purposeful Rounding:** Ensuring consistent and meaningful patient engagement during rounds, addressing core patient needs such as pain management, bathroom assistance, and comfort measures, with the goal of improving communication and meeting the patients' anticipated needs.
- **Improving Nurse-Patient Communication:** Staff were trained to enhance patient interactions during rounding, ensuring clear communication and active listening, which directly impacted patient perceptions of care quality.
- **Compliance with Purposeful Rounding for Patient Satisfaction:** New protocols and intervention strategies were introduced to ensure compliance with evidence-based practices, including the use of near real-time data tracking to monitor outcomes.

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Results

The Purposeful Rounding Project delivered measurable improvements:

- **Increased Patient Satisfaction:** HCAHPS scores for willingness to recommend the hospital rose seven points during the evaluation period, driven by better communication and patient care during rounds.
- **Improved Nurse Communication Perception:** The percentage of patients who reported that nurses “always” communicated well jumped from 61.78% to 70% in the units where rounding was fully hardwired.
- **Enhanced Net Promoter Score (NPS):** The hospital’s NPS increased from 56.5 to 62.8, a rise of over 6 full points, demonstrating improved patient loyalty and satisfaction.

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Additional Qualitative Benefits

- **Staff:** Improved communication between team members, enriched data for documenting responsiveness, and decreased patient call volume.
- **Patients/Family:** Increased confidence in patient care resulting from hourly rounding activities addressing needs.
- **Leaders:** Increased the ability to have targeted staff conversations regarding their capacity to meet rounding expectations and patient/family needs.

Conclusion

As demonstrated by this Quality Improvement Project, purposeful rounding is a positive intervention in patient satisfaction and safety. The effectiveness of purposeful rounding is influenced by external factors, including unit and hospital leadership, education, workload, and level of technology adoption. Additional research into the dosing of each of these factors would be helpful for others working to implement a successful purposeful rounding program in their unit, hospital, or health system.

References:

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