



Linking Patient Experience to Organizational Outcomes

Departments and areas across VUMC continuously engage in specific efforts to positively affect the patient experience. While the existing system for measuring patient feedback was intuitive, there was room to expand visibility into important details and incorporate key insights in survey data points. These refinements could, in turn, alleviate constraints in determining the effectiveness of improvement projects.

CHALLENGE

The standard survey vendor tool provided 1) narrow visibility for VUMC team members into deeper data points and 2) limited ability to track relationship between organizational initiatives/activity and their impact on patient experience

SOLUTION

Establish curated data model that joins patient experience information with clinical and operational data in eStar, and then enables department- or organization-led activities or initiatives to be evaluated alongside patient experience metrics

OUTCOMES

Identification of specific areas for improvement, insight into efficacy of current programs, and improved experience for Press Ganey users

Operational leaders asked HealthIT to help leverage source data within Press Ganey and improve the system’s reporting and analytics to create more powerful and useful insights. HealthIT experts examined the Press Ganey system and identified several opportunities for improvement:

- Linking of patient feedback to specific visits
- Added detail for “top box” metrics for units/departments
- Inclusion of aggregated metrics for patient feedback on individual encounters
- Insight into percentage of patients who complete surveys

Because Press Ganey is a vendor-supported tool, there was little opportunity to make changes within the system itself.

HealthIT determined that it could bolster the utility of the solution by constructing a “survey” data model to examine the patient experience metrics and link them to clinical data within eStar. In this respect, the model connected the all-important lines between a patient’s clinical visit, their health outcomes, and the patient’s reported experience following the visit. It could also now provide previously unavailable insights into what percentage of patients complete a survey.

The data model designed by HealthIT reviews the full text of a patient’s comments and augments it with critical “top box” metrics to give a high-level, user-friendly view of patient experience scores of specific units/departments. Leaders can use this information to determine the efficacy of ongoing initiatives aimed at improving the patient experience. They could likewise use these insights to determine additional areas for improvement and identify future programs. Finally, specific comments could be relayed back to individual care team members—an important tool for providing positive feedback.

The development of the data model resulted in numerous benefits:

- Ability to compare operational data (e.g., length of stay, provider teams, etc.) to patient experience scores
- Improved visibility into patient feedback to help identify both specific areas for improvement and efficacy of current programs
- Increased morale among staff, nurses and providers who could see direct feedback from patients for whom they provided care
- Better data to drive department- or area-specific efforts to increase completion of patient satisfaction surveys

“Not every patient has the same experience at VUMC, and we want to make sure we are meeting our organizational mission. Being able to connect patient feedback to other operational data has given us a deeper insight into our opportunities and allows us to focus our improvement efforts.”

— Lara Mead