MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSIVENESS TO SUGGESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Improvement Recommendations

1. Use the MIV drill-down survey for “responsiveness of management” to understand who residents and family perceive as management (administrator, DON, supervisor, charge nurse, corporate, other.)

2. Create an understanding among the management team that responsiveness to family and resident suggestions and concerns is everyone’s responsibility:
   - Staff is taught to be aware of non-verbal communication (eye contact, facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.)
   - Empower staff to resolve concerns—whomever hears the complaint owns it.
     - Protocols are established and taught to staff regarding how they should deal with a complaint.
     - Parameters are established for how frontline staff can respond to complaints frequently voiced. For example:
       - Lost dentures - “We will check with the laundry and get back to you.”
       - Lost sweater - “We will replace the sweater.”
   - Openly discuss issues at the QA&A Committee that have been raised at family and resident councils, are told to staff or management, appear in the comments from satisfaction surveys, or are heard through other means (e.g. suggestion box.)
     - Discuss solutions which will address the systemic issues of the problem.
     - Test the solutions to determine if the issue has been resolved.
   - Inform those who have made the complaint of the things that you have done to resolve the issue.
     - Talk with the person who brought up the complaint.
     - Announce the changes made at resident and family council meeting.
     - Use the language of the question...”In an effort to be responsive to your suggestions, management (or we) has (have) made the following changes...”
     - Indicate in your newsletter or other form of communication, what changes you are making in “response” to the recent satisfaction survey.
   - If the complaint was brought to you from a member of the staff, be sure to get back to them so they too can follow up with the person who raised the issue.
     - They will also know what has been done if another person brings up the same issue.
     - This is a VERY important part of showing “responsiveness of management.”

3. Proactively communicate expectations:
   - Problems can be solved before they arise by communicating appropriate expectations on day one.
   - During the admissions process, explain to the resident and their family the differences between life in a hospital and in a post-acute setting (e.g. short stay, SNF, ALF.)
     - Frequency of physician visits
     - Meals - how and when they are served - “ordering out” - family meals etc.
4. Families and residents want to receive feedback when they submit a complaint or concern, so it is essential to provide such information to them:
   - Action(s) to be taken.
   - Solutions to be offered.
   - Reinforcement of commitment to care of their resident.
   - Timely responses from management (within 24-48 hours.)
   - Individual personalized attention.
   - An apology when mistakes were made.
   - Value for the money they are paying for services.
   - No concern over possible retribution.
   - Appreciation for bringing suggestion to management.
   - The preferred communication method of responding to families (phone, email, text, social media.)

5. Make management accessible to residents/families by:
   - Being in the areas where residents and families are found.
   - Having an approachable attitude.
   - Reach out to the residents and families and do not wait for them to approach you:
     - “How are you doing today? Is there anything more we could be doing for you?”
   - Creating a culture which encourages listening to families and residents.
   - Being available (evenings, weekends.)

6. Conduct management rounding on resident:
   - Develop training for management on rounding expectations, tracking feedback and role playing of resident rounding.
   - Establish management expectations for rounding.
   - Establish a standard process for managers to follow to prepare them for rounds including mental, emotional, and physical preparation. (e.g. smiling, making eye contact with resident, introducing themselves to resident and family member).
     - Managers need to schedule time in their day to conduct resident rounds when families are present.
     - It is recommended that leaders ask nurses on which residents they should conduct rounds.
     - Ask open ended questions:
       - “How are things going?”
       - “What can we do to make you more comfortable?”
       - “How can we improve our care and services?”
• Have managers visit resident rooms in order to speak to residents or observe the interactions between residents and staff and/or family. It is helpful if managers are given suggestions for how to introduce themselves, possible questions to ask the residents and family members, and ideas for closing comments. Using their own words will help to make these ideas sincere when speaking to residents.
• Develop a tracking system so that managers can track the rounding they completed and any information needed for follow-up with residents or staff.
  o Follow up with staff, residents, and families about concerns raised by residents to ensure they are satisfied with the solution.
• Reward and recognize staff who are observed actively listening to residents and families or whose residents have indicated they have really understood their concerns.

7. Utilize survey data to proactively identify areas for improvement - this will demonstrate your responsiveness.
  • Use comments to supplement data.
  • Identify trends and patterns in the comments.

DID YOU KNOW?

• Most people will not complain, they will just find someone else to provide the service
• 50% of people with complaints do not complain, 45% complain to the frontline and 5% complain to management.
• TARP surveys have revealed a decline in complaint rates, even for serious problems, due to growing cynicism that complaining doesn’t do any good.
• Problems due to mistreatment, quality or incompetence evoke between 5-30% complaint rates because of a belief that nothing will be done.
• Mistreatment and incompetence result in 5x more damage to loyalty than do monetary concerns.
• 4x as many angry customers post negative comments on websites as those with positive comment.
• A customer who complains and is satisfied is 30% more loyal than a non-complainant and 50% more loyal than a dissatisfied complainant.
• A friendly 90-second interaction creates an emotional connection that cemented the relationship with the customer.
• Someone who goes to the effort to complain but remains dissatisfied is 50% less loyal than someone who did not bother to complain.
• Why don’t people complain?
  o It won’t do any good.
  o It’s not worth the trouble.
  o I don’t know where to complain.
  o I am afraid of retribution.

All of these barriers can be reduced or eliminated via effective communication

Findings come from the:
  Technical Assistance Research Programs’ (TARP’s) first study for the White House Office of Consumer Affairs