

5 Steps to Improved Patient Experience

1. Adopting a Provider-Patient Communication Framework

First, construct a guideline for communication that works for your facility, like Cleveland Clinic's START program:

- Smile and greet patient and their family warmly
- Tell them your name, role and what they can expect from you
- Active listening in order to assist them in the best way
- Rapport/Relationship building to extend beyond the bare minimum and prove dedication to their care
- Thank the patient for choosing your location for their care and express that in return you will promise to provide the best care possible.

This will allow your staff's professionalism and personality to become evident, making your patients more comfortable and confident that they are in capable hands.

2. Create a Culture of Care Reflective of Your Center's Mission

Hospitals are focusing more on creating a patient-centered culture due to the weight of HCAHPS scores, which requires independent physician practices to do the same. By focusing on the mission of a center, which is most likely wellness and quality care, and expressing to patients that the mission is of utmost importance, over revenue generation, the mantra will become second-nature.

3. Include Leaders in Communication Plan

Take the creation of your Culture of Care a step further by getting the leaders of your center involved. For this to be successful, commitment from the top to the bottom of the staff is imperative. For diagnostic imaging centers, this means the Radiologists making more of an effort when it comes to communication with referring physicians and the patients themselves. Follow-ups from patient coordinators are nice, but getting a follow up from your actual physician speaks volumes.

4. Lead Quality Meetings to Improve Inter-Office Communication

It is important for facilities to gather together for brief, yet effective meetings to preserve a united front against practices that influence poor patient experiences. This can be a 15-minute "huddle" on a weekly basis to exchange some success stories or positive patient interactions or a quick meeting every few days to discuss goals and steps everyone is taking to achieve those goals.

5. Utilize Transparency to Learn From Patients

By advertising your center's metrics for success and implementing the previously mentioned steps, patients will have an understanding for your mission and why their care is important. Our client, Advanced Imaging Centers, implemented a plan to "Strive for Five," allowing patients to grade their visit on a scale of 0-5. By gathering feedback, the center is able to improve the patient experience and learn more about what is important to each and every patient.