

# In the Patient's Words

## - What patients say

- 1 Welcome me.** Be calming. Treat me well. Alleviate my fears and worries. Don't scare me. Be courteous in your processes.
- 2 Help me, anywhere. Make it easy to fit in.** Have everyone know how they can help, be ready and willing. Help me find my way, find a place, find a person, tell a concern. Eliminate barriers to access, like free parking. One call does it.
- 3 Know who I am – as a whole person.** Have my info. Know why I am here, my key contacts, my Physician, my history, the plan. Have accurate data and verify. Use my name. Share your name clearly – don't hide it. Be ready for my arrival. Remember me from previous visits – esp. repetitive lab, therapy, wound care. Treat me and my family as The Customer.
- 4 Care to listen.** Show empathy, discuss, and explain. Don't have me feel forgotten. Be attentive, responsive, and courteous. Listen to understand. Have someone be connected to me, giving me the feeling they've focused on me, remember me. Don't tell me how I ought to think or feel without knowing me.
- 5 Help me know the system.** What is available? What is the process, the plan? How long it takes? When will we start? If I am not a priority, why not? What can keep me informed about my wait (i.e. "Now calling number X...")? What info. do I need to provide? Let me email my doctor, nurse, billing, or administration. Have things easy to access (my medical record, schedule, doctor, food, etc.)
- 6 Anticipate what I need,** everything: preregistration, schedule, how to find way (easy directions), park, arrive, check-in, follow-up. Don't make me guess or sweat. Provide: date, time, where, what to bring, length of stay, arrival, useful information, physician background. Have me tour before complex procedures (baby delivery, joint replacement, etc.). Help me know where my Family, friends go and how to contact them – and the impact and role of my Family. Define my team: Who I discuss symptoms with, potential needs, options, second opinion? What should I do with my usual medication routine (eat with medicine, before procedure)? Describe medications or therapies needed, available. How much to pay, when, what is my insurance coverage. Warn me what's coming, and why.
- 7 Assure my understanding.** Realize I may be under stress, or medication, and may have difficulty grasping. What am I signing? What is my problem? What is the treatment? Options? Have easy wayfinding and remind me where to go so I don't get lost. Estimate length of stay, expectations, and cost. Schedule, timing, what to bring. Answer last minute questions. Explain my financial responsibility and help me understand whys and what will be covered by insurance. Confirm my information. Give me confidence. Let me know what I should expect, what will happen, what it means.
- 8 Recognize when you're "on-stage".** Don't ever have me overhear your personal or other patient concerns, or conflicts within your team. Keep the negatives away: attitude, clutter, noise, and strong smells.
- 9 Help me learn and gain confidence.** What it will be and feel like, what will happen next? How can I learn more about my diagnosis, treatment, or outcomes? What are consequences? What if I lost the instructions? How will I communicate (bilingual, multicultural, hearing impaired)? What if I can't read or interpret? Do I understand what to do to continue and complete the healing process? Help me remember.
- 10 Bring comfort to interactions.** Keep it calm. Care to explain, follow-up. Don't make me sweat, wonder, or worry. Reduce physical and emotional discomfort of unknown, delays. No unexpected surprises, unknown waits, distractions, embarrassment, pain. Avoid: long waits, repetition, not caring what I brought. Manage fear, grief, denial, anger, depression, and acceptance. Have courtesy, be efficient and competent, be well-coordinated and empowered, be extra safe, explain, talk to me. Recognize worries that I have. How can I keep from catching something? How do you maintain cleanliness, what we can do to reduce risk? What do I do if I'm hungry, thirsty, cold, etc.? Be sure I am not forgotten. Recognize and address discomforts: Hard surfaces, cold, delays, coordinate family. Reduce clutter, improve clarity: visual, sound, and information. Give me all the predictability you can.
- 11 Coordinate with my whole team, my Physician.** Have me see that people are competent and well coordinated. I need to know that staff is coordinated with Physicians, Nurses, labs, other staff, housekeeping, foodservice. Let me talk with my Physician. Be attentive and responsive. Be checked-on. Get an explanation of the procedure. Help me not forget my questions (or those of my Family). Give me timely, predictable access to my answers. Give me the sense that all info is well-coordinated.
- 12 What should I do if ... ?** What if I have a problem, a question, a deviation? Who to call? Am I going to be able to control my pain? How? Help me imagine how I'll get around, do what I need to do, and take care of my situations. Help me understand, in reality, how to comply with the rules.
- 13 Make it clear when I am ready.** When will I go home, have my next procedure? Coordinate with others and get what I need – meds, equipment, helpers, instructions, Family. Am I really OK to go to next level of care? Am I confident to heal in mind, body, spirit?
- 14 Provide what I will need.** Get needed materials, meds. Are supplies available and understood. Escort me or my family. Offer how to get there. Assure who to talk to, who will know me.
- 15 Follow-up.** Call so I am not forgotten, give contact info. Check how I feel, if it's working, anything needed? Listen, be sure.

Study conducted by Clearpath, LLC – Seattle.

Original study using the Patient Experience Design Storyboard and over 180 diverse Patient experiences, Austin, TX in 2007-08.

Since then, updated with over 300 Patients and their Families from interviews and "immersion session" focus groups.

