

Clinical CONNECTIONS

INFORMATION ON
MEDICAL TRENDS
THAT DIRECTLY IMPACT YOU
AND YOUR PRACTICE

Satisfaction: Does it matter?

By Erik Swensson, MD, FACS
Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer



Satisfaction surveys and ratings websites are everywhere and they are used to judge businesses, including physician practices, on the public stage. The individual consumer (or patient) has more power than ever before and it is essential physicians recognize the impact of their voices.

While providing quality care leading to excellent outcomes must be our overall goal vs. making our patients “happy,” now that the government has decided to base our pay – at least in part – on our satisfaction survey performance, the very survival of our practices may depend on a new perspective. Both

medical practice excellence and service excellence are required to obtain the outcomes we not only want, but in the new world order, must deliver.

Superior service and good medical practice are not mutually exclusive, In fact, they depend on each other. Medical and service excellence must be practiced with all constituents we encounter. Whether it is our patient who is not able to pay their bill, the nurse that calls us at night or the chief quality officer who reminds us about a core measure we forgot to chart, the physician must be able to see beyond the moment. It’s imperative we understand the ripple effect that our actions have, good or bad, on the entire medical community. Poor service – whether it’s in impatiently brushing off questions or using intimidation that alienates staff – is not good service and will lead to inferior outcomes, both medical and financial.

PHYSICIAN SATISFACTION

When you are upset about something in your practice or at the hospital, it is likely impossible for all of your energy to be focused on the care of the patient and having good communication with the hospital staff. Physicians are at the center of most of the interactions and should always consider themselves “on stage” when working.

There have been many studies on how dissatisfaction on the job leads to poor work habits and a poor work environment. Healthcare is no different and recent healthcare studies have shown this. Dissatisfied physicians have worse relationships with their patients, staff, and colleagues. Behavioral issues are more common as physicians feel (and act) more stressed. Patient care quality is diminished, generally ends up costing more, and patients are less loyal. All of this leads to more complaints and more malpractice suits filed against these physicians, thereby further increasing dissatisfaction.

Unfortunately, sometimes physicians are unaware of their own dissatisfaction or how we are allowing it to drive our behavior. We often say things like: “things don’t work around here.” If you feel this way a lot of the time, you could be dissatisfied and should take action to understand how and why you feel that way. More importantly, that feeling should lead you to evaluate what you can do so that your patients can receive the best care and you can have a more satisfying practice.

When physicians are unhappy, the hospital culture becomes one of dissatisfaction which then is self-perpetuating. Nursing turnover is due in large part to an unfriendly or an unsupportive environment. This high turnover rate leads to more temporary workers, which becomes a source of frustration for the doctors and patients as these workers do not know the preferences of

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IMPROVING YOUR ONLINE REPUTATION

Online ratings for products and services are here to stay. With the growing popularity of online physician review sites, patients can post their satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels about providers for the world to see. And, with at least 75% of all online adults searching for health care information on line, and mobile device access growing exponentially, physicians must establish a positive online presence.

Supporters tout the benefits of such online reviews, applauding increased transparency and accountability. Physicians, however, including the American Medical Association, have long argued that such online reviews are biased, worrying that a small minority of disgruntled patients voice their opinions the loudest online. While research shows that this is likely correct, the reality is that online ratings are here to stay.

With the support of Capella's National Physician Leadership Group, as a service for our medical staff members, Capella Healthcare is partnering with Avvo – a leading consumer rating site – to claim and update the profiles of medical staff members. Avvo is unique in their fundamental purpose of creating a win-win resource for both patients and physicians.

- Unlike other sites that rate and review physicians, peer endorsements and patient reviews are just a piece of the puzzle.
- The Avvo rating (simple 1-10 scale) is algorithmic and accounts for more than just industry recognition as it also includes and scores deep resumé.
- Because the Avvo Rating is derived from information in a physician's Avvo profile, it is important each profile is complete and up to date.
- They've already done this for a number of hospitals and health systems nationally including Mayo Clinic. They have also been responsible for powering a number of Top Doctor lists with the selection process based on the doctor's Avvo Rating.

To learn more about what you can do to improve your online reputation or about Avvo, and the timetable for your hospital's medical staff, visit the "For Physicians" section of www.CapellaHealthcare.com

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the doctors. It has been shown that where there is a higher turnover of nurses, there is a higher patient mortality. Patients who are dissatisfied are less compliant, less likely to return to the doctor whom they are dissatisfied with, and often become a significant source of poor community perception of your practice and hospital.

Because the delivery of healthcare will always be full of significant challenges, the path to satisfaction is paved by our efforts to provide excellent medical care and service to our patients. Seeing how positively you can affect just one person's life – whether it's a patient, a family member, or a nurse – is one of the greatest rewards of our work. Everyone around you will respond in kind to your compassion, caring, and focus for better outcomes. Superior patient, staff and physician satisfaction will be both the cause and the result of superior patient outcomes.

CAPELLA, SAINT THOMAS HEALTH CREATE INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

It's a landmark partnership that's being called a "sign" of the times.

With its four middle Tennessee hospitals, Capella Healthcare has created a new partnership with Saint Thomas Health, the region's recognized quality leader. Based in Nashville, Saint Thomas Health includes five hospitals that are all a part of Ascension Health, a Catholic Ministry that is the largest non-profit health system in the United States.

The partnership results in the joint ownership and operation of Capella's four Middle Tennessee hospitals: River Park Hospital (McMinnville), DeKalb Community Hospital (Smithville), Stones River Hospital (Woodbury) and Highlands Medical Center (formerly White County Community Hospital, Sparta). These hospitals now operate as part of the Saint Thomas Health Network, which holds an equity interest. Capella is the managing member and the majority partner in the new venture, and is also the exclusive development partner for Saint Thomas Health across a 60-county area of Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky.

Celebrations of the new partnership were held at each of the four hospitals, with new logos being unveiled. And – at one – a new name and a million dollar renovation project were also announced. White County Community Hospital is now Highlands Medical Center.

Family Practitioner Alan Drake, MD, spoke at the celebration event in Sparta, during which the hospital announced its name change as well as a million dollar renovation project. "Several years ago when Capella purchased this facility and came to us and said we want to create a partnership (with you), the feeling among the medical staff was 'prove it.' And to put it succinctly, they did. They proved it to us with their transparency, their willingness to commit dollars and time to developing the quality that's necessary to make the facility successful not only financially but reputationally, and to be able to meet the needs of the community. Now we're looking forward to this next step and this partnership with Saint Thomas Health."



Alan Drake, MD

To hear Dr. Drake's speech, visit Capella's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/CapellaHealthcare



501 Corporate Centre Drive, Suite 200
Franklin, TN 37067
(615) 764-3000
Connections@CapellaHealth.com
CapellaHealthcare.com