Keeping Patients Satisfied

Problem

Patient satisfaction has become an established indicator of the quality of healthcare. However, nurses may experience difficulty creating a satisfying environment with their patients when they themselves are not satisfied with their own role. A nurse’s job satisfaction has a direct impact on the quality of healthcare and the satisfaction of patients.

Consequence

Studies show that patients cared for on units with nurses that felt they had adequate staff, good administrative support and good relations between doctors and nurses, were more than twice as likely as other patients to report high satisfaction with their care.

Solution

Here are some considerations related to nursing / patient satisfaction.

- Many nurses do not feel appreciated; all they hear is the negative and rarely are told that they are doing a good job.

- Nursing supervisors / managers need to create a positive climate, to show appreciation for the hard work nurses do, and to compliment them … often!

- It is important to set and communicate clear standards and expectations regarding care of patients in the unit or facility.

- Nursing staff should not be left to guess if they are supporting the vision of the institution or if their goals are in alignment with the rest of the team.

- Another key indicator of staff job satisfaction is the quality of nurse-physician relationship and the atmosphere this creates.

- Daily interactions between nurses and physicians strongly influence the nurses’ morale and retention rates.

- Another significant factor in patient and staff satisfaction is the nurse to patient ratio.
• A major job dissatisfaction for nurses is being so busy with a patient assignment that is prevents them from providing the care they would like to provide.

• While it is useful to have data to support adequate ratios, it is also essential to query staff on the appropriateness of their workload.

• Improved nurse work environments in hospitals have the potential to simultaneously increase nurses’ job satisfaction and increase patients’ satisfaction with their care.

References

*Avoiding Common Nursing Errors*, Lisa Marcucci, MD, Editor, Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2010