

# BMG Service

NEWS

January 2018

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Shared by a patient from BMC Pediatrics, Southgate

## Embracing change

Look at change from different perspectives



Recently we visited a practice that was, like many, concerned about change. In this example, we heard about reservations regarding the new myBeaumontChart result release policy changing from three days to one. The doctors had a low percentage of patients that used myBeaumontChart and were concerned about the potential volume of telephone calls asking, for example, "What does it mean if my BUN is 18?"

In contrast, many practices have seen the inherent benefits from this information being available for patients and, conversely, a decrease in phone calls and more MA availability because staff is not calling or sending letters to patients.

I work with great doctors who practice in all different ways, from billing to results to screening to Epic. As we begin 2018, I hope each of you tries new ways of doing things, watching and talking to each other, and learning from each other. The BMG Service team hopes to make suggestions for change and visit practices to help you - and to learn ourselves.

Sincerely,

Michael Barnes, M.D.  
BMG Medical Director of Service  
Co-Director, Integrated Medical Unit, Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak

## January focus: proactive approaches to patient's complaints and grievances

Beaumont Health's service model outlines how we impact the patient and family experience through standard service behaviors. These behaviors identify our commitment to how we will treat each other and those with whom we interact.

Service recovery and complaint resolution is a practice that demonstrates our commitment to caring for patients and their families whose expectations have not been met. Know your patient's needs. Not all patients have the same needs but there are several things all patients and their families value as important.

Often times, a complaint or grievance can be prevented by using the following proactive approaches to patient interactions.

### **Make access to care flow smoothly by:**

- ease of getting through to the office on the telephone
- convenience of office hours
- ease of scheduling an appointment
- a friendly greeting for all patients by using their proper name and title until asked to do otherwise
- the courtesy of staff in registration area

### **Moving through a patient visit:**

- Keep patients informed about any delays. Share how long is it expected to be and what other options they may have (e.g. rescheduling appointments).
- Monitoring the wait time at your office from arrival to completion. Total wait time has an important



influence on the overall medical practice patient experience.

- Check out should be efficient and thorough. Be sure to review any follow-up instructions with the patient and family. Watch for patient and family cues that indicate lack of understanding.

### **Clinical staff:**

- Be friendly and courteous.
- Introduce yourself and your role in the patient's visit.
- Show concern in responding to problems presented by each patient.
- Make sure your words match your body language. Sit at eye level and look the patient in the eye while talking.
- Respond empathically to patient expressions of emotion. Acknowledge that patients are suffering and show them that you understand.
- Never dismiss patient concerns.
- Return telephone calls.
- Follow-up on test results.

### **Care provider:**

- Display friendliness and courtesy.
- Explain care in patient's terms. Watch for cues that indicate lack of understanding.
- Show concern for the patient's questions or worries.
- Include both patient and their family in decisions about treatment options.
- Take time to answer all questions.
- Clearly explain pertinent information about medications and follow-up care.

Recognize that these items are just a start to greater patient satisfaction.

Patient and family complaints are inevitable. They can be reduced and handled quickly, however, when everyone knows what is expected of them and what the patient wants or is expecting.

## CGCAHPS: Physician Communication domain

How well do your providers communicate?



When scoring the Physician Communication domain, Press Ganey generates a number based off six questions. This month, the question highlighted is, “During this visit, did the provider give you easy-to-understand information about these health questions or concerns?”

This question asks patients to recall, from their most recent visit, the extent to which a physician provided comprehensible instructions about health questions. Patients are asked whether they understood the provider’s instructions, which includes both written material and verbal instructions.

### Essential behaviors

- Confirm that the patient understands the information before they leave the office. The anxiety a patient feels when unable to recall information or when confused after a visit is unnecessary and may be minimized if providers confirm that the patient understands follow-up care.
- Go over any educational materials you provide while the patient is with you in the office. This is both a teaching opportunity and a chance to answer any questions.
- During your discussion with the patient, refer back to the educational materials you have provided to help patients connect what you are saying to the educational materials.
- Recording the care provider’s explanation, medical advice and instructions for treatment or therapy, and then give this record to the patient. This gives the patient a resource to review in the event of additional questions and facilitates sharing information with family members.
- With the patient’s consent, allow family members or friends to play an active role in the patient’s educational process. Family and friends help remember what was said during the visit and may help care for the patient at home. This support team may have questions for the care provider that the patient may not think to ask. Also keep in mind that a family member or friend may be the person who completes the survey.
- Use teach-back questions to assess the patient’s level of understanding when communicating important information. For example, “That is a lot of information about your treatment. I want to be sure I did a good job explaining it to you. Can you tell me which two lifestyle changes are important to managing your health?” This technique helps the physician or clinician assess comprehension and repeat anything the patient missed. It also gives the patient a voice and, as a result, the patient is more likely to engage with the provider.

## This month's patient comment

Shared by a patient from BMC Pediatrics, Southgate

I love Dr. Dagnew. We have been going to her for 16 years. My son has lots of medical issues and Dr. Dagnew has always listened and given him the best medical treatment. She talks to my son and makes him feel like he's a part of the decision. My three children love Dr. Dagnew. We look forward to seeing her.

There was a time in my son and daughter lives when we were in Dr. Dagnew's office every week. She saved my son's life when he was three months old. He had RSV virus and I had taken him in two times that week and saw other doctors in the office that are not there anymore. Dr. Dagnew had to send him by ambulance to Children's Hospital. We spent five days there. She called us every day to see how he was. The asthma continued till he was seven.

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**"My three children love Dr. Dagnew.  
We look forward to seeing her."**

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My youngest daughter had shingles at the age of two. Dr. Dagnew knew what it was and acted quickly. My daughter also has asthma. Dr. Dagnew spent the time to figure out what works for her. My son and daughter had ROTO virus when he was 18 months and she was 3 years. I called Dr. Dagnew with what was going on she said take them to the doctor. This also saved my son's life because when he got to the hospital, he was badly dehydrated and so was my daughter. Then my son had learning issues and she helped me when I didn't know where to go. He had a seizure last summer and she has helped me with the neurologist. She takes the time to explain and talk with me mom to mom. Then, in September, he was having heart issues and she is helping me with the cardiologist.

My only wish is that Dr. Dagnew would be my doctor. My oldest daughter is going to be 18 next year. I am sad that she will have to go to a different doctor. I won't take my younger daughter and son to any other doctor. We love Dr. Dagnew.

Everyone in this office listens to my children's needs and concerns. They make them feel safe, happy and like they are part of the family.

