

Customer Service That Grows Your Patient Base

“You had me at hello”

Mississippi Primary Health Care Association

29th Annual Conference

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Gold Strike Casino and Conference Center

Tunica, MS.

Goal

Grow
patient
base

Food for thought:

- **“When dealing with patients/customers, your goal is to put yourself in their shoes”!**

Objectives

- Identify and define primary goals of customer service.
- Identify challenges in customer service
- Identify practical tools and strategies needed to provide quality service.

First thing first

- Who are you?
- What services do you offer?
- Why do you open your business doors every day?
- What is your mission statement?
- Do you believe in the services you offer?

Mission statement

- Mississippi Primary Health Care Association (MPHCA) is a member organization, which supports its members in their collaborative efforts and advocates for the provision of equal access to quality, comprehensive health care services and the elimination of health disparities in the state.

- Information from MPHCA website

- What population do you serve?
- Why should potential patients come to you for care and services?
- How many charts do you have in your file cabinet?
- Was there follow-up in any way on the “one-time” patients?
- How does the community know about the care you provide and about the quality of care you provide?

MPHCA

- 21 community health centers
- 300,000+ patients served
- ¼ billion dollars per capita generated in the State's economy
- 30+ years strong
- Nonprofit organization = care before profit

- Information from MPHCA website

Fact:

- Patients who feel like they matter and who feel as if their needs are met will become regular patients.
- Patients tell others about the care or lack thereof they receive while in your care.
- Poor service is the number one reason American companies lose business.
- A dissatisfied customer tells approximately 20 people while a satisfied customer tells approximately 5 people.

Customer service is...

- Having a fresh approach to each of your patients and co-workers.
- Finding new ways to do things better all the time.
- Working to solve problems as soon as they come up.
- Keeping a positive attitude, even when you are having a bad day.
- Treating your customers like you would want to be treated.

Customer service

Who are your customers?

- Patients
- Patient families
- Visitors
- Anyone you talk to about your company is a potential customer
- Your co-workers

Customer Service

- How would you rate your workplace right now for its customer service?
- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Fact:

- 90% of unhappy customers will move on quietly to a new health care organization.
- It cost up to 10 times more to attract a new patient than it does to keep an existing patient.

Solution oriented and time management

- Address the healthcare issue at hand.
- Listen to the patient.
- Take the information correctly/clearly.
- Let them see that you are striving to find a solution
- Effective yet time conscious.

Food for thought:

- **People do not forget bad customer service!**

Challenges in customer service

- Healthcare is a people-oriented business.
- Every day we spend a lot of time with patients, their family members, co-workers and vendors.
- Getting along with people is part of the job.
- When we know what to expect, we can better prepare to serve.

Giving 100% on the job?

- **10% on Mondays**
- **25% on Tuesdays**
- **25% on Wednesdays**
- **25% on Thursdays**
- **15% on Fridays**

Challenging patients/family members

- Demanding
- Irritable
- Nasty rude
- Aggressive
- Critical
- Depressed
- Abusive
- Scary
- Sarcastic
- Hostile
- Uncooperative
- Angry
- Complaining
- Ungrateful
- Pushy
- Mean
- Argumentative

Food for thought:

- **“Difficult people are trying to grab your power from you...because they feel powerless.”**

Why are some people difficult?

- Recovering from stress or tragedy in their lives
- Suffering from illness
- Dealing with a disability
- Experiencing pain – all day every day.
- Feeling lonely or depressed
- Taking medication that makes them act differently than normal

Food for thought:

- **Don't forget to keep the “*care*” in healthcare”!**

Self awareness

- What makes you easy to work with?
- List 3
- What makes you a challenge to work with sometimes?
- List 3

Food for thought:

- **“Would you want to change places with any of your patients?”**

Opportunities

- Identify practical tools/strategies needed
- Try hard NOT to take their comments or behaviors personal.
- Try hard NOT to overreact when dealing with a difficult person.
- Tell the person what you are going to do and why before you do it.
- Offer another place in the business for them to “vent” if possible.
- Be patient.
- Don’t allow other people to control your moods, actions, behavior.
- Give praise, compliments.
- Watch your body language. Smile.
- Speak slowly and calmly.
- Listen to what the person is saying or not saying.
- Don’t waste your time trying to change people who behave in a difficult manner. Change the way you react. Be the role model.

Food for thought:

- You will have days when you feel as if you do not have the best of your supervisor, the best of your work tools/supplies, the best of pay, the best of co-workers, the best (fill in the blank).
- But, can you say that you gave the best of you today?
- “I didn’t snap, crackle and pop without milk!”

The Golden Rule

- Quotes used throughout history: Standard known as the Golden Rule
- ***“What you do not want done to yourself, do not do unto others.”***
Confucius, 500 BC
- ***“We should behave to others as we wish others to behave to us.”***
Aristotle, 325 BC
- ***“As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”*** Jesus Christ

Wrap-up and review

- Know your company and know your job.
- Be polite and helpful.
- Have a positive attitude.
- Show an interest in your patients.
- Be creative.
- Be on time.
- Work well as a team.
- Have a sense of responsibility.
- Look and act professional.
- You do not get a second chance to make a first impression.

Food for thought:

- **“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”**

References - Credits

- A Professional Growth Module: “Understanding Customer Service”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- A Professional Growth Module: “Working with Difficult & Combative People”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- A Professional Growth Module: “Professionalism & Work Ethic”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- 15 Customer Service Skills that Every Employee Needs. Help Scout – www.helpscout.net

Thank You!!!

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