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Patient Experience Case Study

REDUCING HOSPITAL NOISE AND IMPROVING THE PATIENT
EXPERIENCE USING RELAXATION PROGRAMMING FOR
PATIENT TELEVISION



This case study originally appeared on The Beryl Institute's website, as part of a case study series that offers an exclusive look into current healthcare efforts -- presented as both an opportunity to learn from others, as well as a spark for further ideas on how to improve the patient experience.

For more information, please visit www.theberylinstitute.org.

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What was the challenge, opportunity, or issue faced?

Like many hospitals, Tuality Healthcare had very low satisfaction scores related to noise. The increasing use of technology and alarms contributed to noise, and we were having limited success reducing the noise experienced by patients while in their hospital rooms.

What did you do to address it?

Beyond working on the traditional methods for reducing noise (quieter wheels on housekeeping and lab carts, signs in the corridors reminding staff and visitors to be quiet, etc.), we wanted to explore the use of music and guided imagery to help patients relax while hospitalized, aiding in the healing process. We instituted **C.A.R.E. (Continuous Ambient Relaxation Environment) Channel Relaxation Programming**. This programming features nature imagery with soothing landscapes and panoramas along with original, instrumental music. Nurses are encouraged to turn The C.A.R.E. Channel on when they are admitting patients to help mask extraneous noise and provide a healing environment.

In addition, we put a large television in our main lobby, which plays the programming for patients and visitors as they enter the hospital for medical care or to visit a friend or family member. We refer to it as our “living art” wall. The programming is played in our Emergency Department lobby as well

What were the outcomes?

Implementation of this programming has been a success, and providing this peaceful welcome to what can be a very intimidating or anxiety-producing visit has been well received. Though we cannot say all of the improvement in our HCAHPS scores related to noise have been due to the introduction of The C.A.R.E. Channel, we are proud to report that our noise satisfaction score has increased from well below average to consistently exceeding the national average of 58.

Our most recent quarterly data demonstrates a satisfaction score of 65 for October-December 2013. All departments were involved in noise and cleanliness initiatives during 2012 and 2013, and we are pleased to see continued progress.

Another area we have utilized The C.A.R.E. Channel is in our day surgery department. Nurses set the television to The C.A.R.E. Channel so patients awake from surgery to the calming music and nature images.

About Tuality Healthcare

Tuality Healthcare has approximately 1,300 employees and 200 physicians. They are located in Hillsboro, OR, a town of 92,000 people that is located between two state highways, so there is a constant challenge to reduce both external and internal noise for our patients. Tuality Healthcare is the only local, independent, community-governed healthcare system in the area, offering inpatient and outpatient treatment, specialty services, health education and more.

For more information on Tuality Healthcare, please visit www.tuality.org.

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