MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE

Employee Newsletter Article #1

MedStar Converts to System-Wide Experience Survey for All Patients

MedStar Health hospitals and entities are converting from using Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys to the HCAHPS-style patient experience surveys for the entire system, including all inpatient, outpatient, emergency services, physician office, home health, and nursing home settings. The survey will be conducted by phone rather than by mail.

In October 2006, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) launched HCAHPS (the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) – a national standard survey of acute inpatients, the results of which would be publicly reported and tied to reimbursement. In 2007, MedStar Health senior leadership went into talks about what impact this change would have throughout our organization. After conducting extensive research, the decision was made to cease administering Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys and convert all patient surveys to the HCAHPS style, which measures patient experience. This decision sought to align MedStar's patient survey system with the CMS survey style, to help focus MedStar on survey results linked to reimbursement, and to avoid confusion with MedStar's current patient satisfaction surveys.

MedStar has participated in the HCAHPS survey for acute inpatients since October 2006. Beginning in February 2009, MedStar proactively expanded this survey to all patients.

What drives MedStar Health on our journey from good to great is our strong desire to continually improve the quality of care and service we provide to patients and their families. In keeping with our vision is to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health, MedStar is committed to developing a deeper understanding of customer expectations and measuring the quality of care and service received by our patients. By measuring the patient experience throughout the continuum of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences.

The MedStar Patient Experience is comprised of three components: quality, safety, and service. Patient experience means asking patients how frequently they experienced certain aspects of care, such as whether or not doctors explained things adequately, or whether the room and bathroom were kept clean. On the other hand, patient satisfaction only asks patients whether they were satisfied with the level of aspects of care. Gauging the patient experience is a more valuable measure because it focuses on behaviors and making changes based on those behaviors.

The HCAHPS-style patient experience survey measures what patients tell us is important to them. The survey asks patients how often a certain aspect of care was performed using the scale: Never; Sometimes; Usually; and Always. The MedStar Patient Experience inpatient survey includes seven themes and two overall rating questions:

Seven themes:

- Communication with Nurses
- Communication with Physicians
- Physical Environment
- Responsiveness of Hospital Staff
- Pain Control
- Communication about Medication
- Discharge Information

Two overall rating questions:

- Overall hospital rating
- Likeliness to recommend

The questions asked in all other types of surveys – outpatient, emergency services, physician office, home health, and nursing home settings – cover most of these same themes, but vary according to survey.

The decision to survey patients by phone rather than by mail was made because we are able to reach a broader spectrum of patients by phone. Previously, research has showed that young people and the Medicaid population were under-represented in mail surveys. In addition, this makes provision for the varying literacy levels in MedStar Health's service region. Using the phone approach will allow MedStar to survey many patients that previously have been difficult to reach, ensuring that we understand the needs of as many of our patients as possible.

A trained interviewer affiliated with our survey research partner, NRC Picker, will conduct the patient experience survey phone interviews. NRC Picker is an independent, impartial, nationally recognized research firm.

A phone survey is conducted in approximately six minutes. The goal is to call patients seven to 10 days after their discharge or encounter, so the experience is still fresh in their minds. The call will show up on a person's caller ID as "Discovery Research." As a results, all associates are asked to make patients aware that this is what they will see, and urge them to participate in the survey.

Anyone can access and view data through government Web sites including hospitalcompare.hhs.gov and medicare.gov. You can also check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health Web site at medstarhealth.org, or go to your [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE]'s Web site at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEB SITE HERE].

For more information about the patient experience survey conversion, contact [INSERT ENTITY MEASUREMENT GROUP REPRESENTATIVE NAME/PHONE/EMAIL HERE].

MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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Employee Newsletter Article #2

MedStar Patient Experience Connects Quality, Safety, Service

> The therapist who ignited the human spirit in a stroke patient so he'd find inner strength to eventually learn to walk and talk again.
>
> The doctor who organized a bake sale to help raise money for her needy patients' medication co-pays.
>
> The nurse who stayed by the dying man's side after her shift had ended, because he had no family around to comfort him in his final hours, and she would not let him die alone.

We've all heard stories or personally witnessed these sorts of tremendous acts of professional dedication. Where we work, they're everywhere, and serve as a warm reminder for why we went into health care in the first place. We connect with people during the most important moments of their lives – the birth of a new baby, the loss of a loved one, and everything in between. Providing great service was never something we learned in school, yet, somehow we know saying the right words at the right time is as essential to healing as is giving the right medication at the right time.

Quality. Safety. Service.

As a proud member of MedStar Health, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] is dedicated to a patient-first philosophy that combines quality of care, patient safety, and service excellence – in short, the MedStar Patient Experience. Quality, safety, and service all fall under this umbrella. They are not mutually exclusive, but rather are interdependent and need to be fully integrated. Patient satisfaction is related to good communication, which helps prevent errors and improve outcomes.

Because patients assume their hospital is providing high-quality care in a safe, secure environment, perceptions of the patient experience are often shaped much more by how they are treated as people. While patients assume quality care, excellent service is what differentiates hospitals and creates loyal patients and "wows" our customers. Whether associates are polite, families get the information they need, or how long patients wait to be discharged, all affect their overall experience and satisfaction.

The MedStar Patient Experience means asking real patients how frequently they experienced certain aspects of care, such as whether or not doctors explained things adequately, or whether the room and bathroom were kept clean. It also means looking at our clinical outcomes and how often we follow the recommended care measures for common conditions and procedures, including heart failure and surgical infection prevention.

Measuring Experience to Improve Outcomes

What drives MedStar Health on our journey from good to great is our strong desire to continually improve the quality of care and service we provide to patients and their families. MedStar is committed to developing a deeper understanding of customer expectations and measuring the quality of care received by our patients. By measuring the patient experience across all levels of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences, and further our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

Not only do we collect this data and use it to improve, it is also made available to the public through government Web sites like hospitalcompare.gov and medicare.gov, as well as on our Quality of Care pages on MedStar's Web site at medstarhealth.org. You can also click on our hospital Web site at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEB SITE HERE].

Delivering Our Promise

The MedStar Patient Experience is our promise to patients that we will always do our best to deliver high-quality, safe care and excellent service. This commitment to provide high-quality, safe care with excellent service will help us achieve our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health. We hold ourselves accountable for this promise by providing transparency with our data – whether it's good or bad. Transparency to our patients underscores that we can be trusted as a great place for patients to receive care, physicians to practice and associates to work.

You have the ability to touch patients' lives and make a difference in health care, regardless of your role. As we move forward, talk to your leader and team to learn more about how you fit in to the MedStar Patient Experience. Pay attention to our hospital results, and remember, it's not just a number; it represents a patient's experience. The MedStar Patient Experience is about listening to what our patients need, and delivering. Today, we're becoming more effective than ever, because we're asking the right questions and collecting the right data to improve.

MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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President's Column

Think about the last time you went to a restaurant and ended up having a terrible experience. The food might have tasted fine, but maybe the bathroom was dirty, or you had to wait a long time for your food with no explanation. Or, perhaps your server was rude, and never bothered checking to see if you needed anything.

Afterwards, did you tell any friends, family or co-workers about your negative experience, and vow never to go there again? Chances are, you forewarned more than one person not to eat at that restaurant, and they likely took your advice. Word of mouth can be very powerful, and no amount of advertising could match its impact on an organization's reputation.

Like restaurants, healthcare organizations are subject to the same kind of scrutiny. Because patients assume their hospital is providing high-quality care in a safe, secure environment, patients tend to shape their opinions of hospitals much more by how they are treated. While patients assume quality care, excellent service is what differentiates hospitals and creates loyal patients and customers. Seemingly trivial clues, like an un-emptied wastebasket, one rude remark from a member of staff, a nurse's delayed response to a call light, or a doctor too busy to answer questions, all have a profound effect on patients' overall experience and satisfaction.

MedStar Health is committed to developing a deeper understanding of patient expectations and measuring the quality of care our patients receive. This is demonstrated in the fact that we've been measuring patient satisfaction for years. In 2006, when the government announced plans to require hospitals to publicly report standardized clinical quality data that can be compared against other hospitals, we proactively began reporting our data on the MedStar and hospital Web sites. This effort to provide transparency to our patients underscores that [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] is a great place for patients to receive care, for physicians to practice and for associates to work.

A great benefit to being part of a regional healthcare system like MedStar Health is that we can easily share best practices. If one team figures out a technique for improving care or providing better clinical outcomes and shares this information, it will not only help those communities that one hospital cares for, but the communities of eight hospitals, caring for hundreds of thousands of people. This is "systemness" at its best – MedStar Health, as a whole, is much stronger than the sum of its parts. When you stop to think about the impact a few can have on thousands, it's nothing short of amazing, and a driving force in our journey from good to great.

The MedStar Patient Experience is made up of three components: quality, safety, and service. Service excellence, quality efforts, and patient safety programs all fall under the same umbrella, making up the total patient experience. Quality, safety, and service are not mutually exclusive, but rather are interdependent and need to be fully integrated. Patient service is related to good communication, which helps prevent errors and improve outcomes. By adopting a standard patient experience survey for all the levels of care across MedStar, we're better able to focus on understanding customer perceptions and making improvements based on those perceptions, while furthering our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

Our SPIRIT value of Patient First calls on each of us to deliver the very best to every patient every day, regardless of whether we take care of patients or support those who do. The MedStar Patient Experience is our promise to patients – that we will do our very best to provide high-quality, safe care with excellent service. I urge you to look at the patient experience survey and ask yourself those same questions we're asking our patients to answer. How would *you* rate the care we provide? Would *you* recommend [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] to your family and friends?

The answers to these questions begin and end with *you*. Talk with your team about what quality, safety, and service look like in your department, and opportunities for improvement. Help keep this promise by doing your part to create positive experiences for every patient, every time.

Sincerely,

[INSERT HOSPITAL PRESIDENT NAME HERE]
President, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE]

MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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March Weekly Article/Email/Elevator Board Message

Effective Nurse-Patient Communication Improves Quality, Safety and Service

MedStar is committed to developing a deeper understanding of customer expectations and measuring the quality of care received by our patients. By measuring the patient experience throughout all levels of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences, and further our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health. The survey asks patients how often a certain aspect of care was performed using the scale: never; sometimes; usually; and always.

Patients tell us it's important to them that nurses:

- Treat them with courtesy and respect,
- Listen carefully, and
- Explain things in a way they can understand.

Research shows that effective communication is crucial for safe patient care. Here are five effective ways you can improve communication with patients:

1. Give patients **written resources** in addition to verbal explanations. Involve patients and families when creating these written educational resources, like a white board, to ensure that it is readable and understandable.

2. Only include the most critical information to **reduce information overload**. Be sure to use simple, plain language. Avoid technical or professional jargon. Pictures and graphics also work well to clarify information.

3. Use **key words** to clue the patient in that you're listening by saying things like, "Mr. Jones, we want to make sure we listen to and answer all your questions. Do you have any questions I can answer at this time?"

4. **Show respect** by avoiding names such as "honey" etc., as patients may interpret it as disrespectful and may slow down communication.

5. If the patient doesn't agree with the plan of care, try **negotiating for a win-win outcome**. For example, "I called your doctor and got the medication changed to the one you requested since the other medication upsets your stomach." This clues the patient in that you heard and responded to the request.

To learn more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health Web site at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital Web site at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEB SITE HERE].

MedStar Health

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April Weekly Article/Email/Elevator Board Message

Prompt Response Is Key to Positive Patient Experiences

During a hospital stay, one of the keys to improving a patient's experience is responsiveness of hospital staff. It's very important to patients that:

- after pressing the **call button**, they got help as soon as they wanted, and
- they got help in getting to the **bathroom or in using a bedpan** as soon as they wanted.

When patients are placed in a hospital bed, there is one piece of equipment they feel is their lifeline: the call button. As care providers, we may tell the patient, "If you need anything, just press this button and we'll be there," or "If you start feeling worse, I want you to call me right away!" Response to call lights is not just a patient satisfaction issue; it's also a quality and safety issue because it reduces the potential for an accident or injury.

Research has found that call lights tend to be clustered during meal times, shift changes, and bedtimes. The two most popular reasons a patient presses the call light is to use the toilet, or because he or she is in pain and would like pain medication. These two items alone can account for up to 50% of call lights. How can the nursing care team reduce patients' use of call lights? Anticipating a patient's needs by frequently rounding has been found to significantly reduce call lights. Nursing assistants can round to anticipate toileting and positioning call lights. RNs can help reduce patients using call lights for pain medication needs by adding "as necessary" pain doses on their list of scheduled medication doses.

When answering a patient's call light via the intercom, use your name and use the patient's name. For example, "Hi, Mr. Smith. This is Sherry, the unit secretary. How may I help you? I will let your nurse know. Someone will be with you in just a moment." Discuss these questions with your team and find ways you can continue improving.

When responding to patients, remember:

- Personalize every interaction as much as possible and use good basic customer service behavior: smile, make eye contact, and use direct, focused attention and active listening.
- Call lights are preferably answered in person within one minute.
- Response to the request should ideally occur within five minutes.
- Every call light represents a patient need — and sometimes, a critical one. How well and how fast call lights are answered helps determine our quality of care.

Call light response influences a patient's experience. By focusing on being sensitive to patients' needs, we can see multiple results from one action: improved quality of care and improved communication and responsiveness.

To learn more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health Web site at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital Web site at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEB SITE HERE].

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MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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May Weekly Article/Email/Elevator Board – Cleanliness and Quiet of Physical Environment

Clean, Quiet Environment Is Essential to Healing

What drives MedStar Health on our journey from good to great is our strong desire to continually improve the quality of care and service we provide to patients and their families. MedStar is committed to developing a deeper understanding of customer expectations and measuring the quality of care received by our patients. By measuring the patient experience across all levels of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences, and further our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

During a hospital stay, patients tell us it's important to them that:

- the **room and bathroom are kept clean**, and
- the area around the patient **room is quiet** at night.

The appearance of our hospital speaks volumes to patients and visitors. Seemingly small issues like an un-emptied wastebasket, unclean bathroom, or noisy hallway can lead patients to question the quality and safety of their care. That's why keeping all areas of [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] as clean and quiet as possible is essential to maintaining a safe, healing environment.

To guarantee cleanliness, assure that patient-centered room cleaning is regularly scheduled. Ask the patient if he or she has any personal needs or preferences pertaining to the room cleaning, and ask if the room has been cleaned to the patient's satisfaction. Communicate regularly with the housekeeping team to identify improvement opportunities. These may include equipment or product enhancements and work flow redesign.

To ensure a quiet environment, check noise levels to make sure they are below the recommended decibel levels – for daytime not to exceed 45 decibels; nighttime not to exceed 35 decibels. Use a sound level meter to measure the noise level.

Have closed patient room doors become the standard of practice for your unit. Use key words with the patient by saying things like, "Mrs. Johnson, may I close your door to help cut down on noise disturbance and you can get some rest?" Minimize traffic flow through patient care areas at night. Eliminate overhead paging and instead use cell phones or pagers in the vibrate-only mode. Talk with your team about other ways you can reduce noise on your unit.

To learn more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health website at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital website at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEBSITE HERE].

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MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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June Weekly Article/Email/Elevator Board Message

Communication about Medication, Pain Management Enhances Patient Experience

During a hospital stay, patients tell us it's important that:

- before giving any new medicine, staff **tell them what the medicine is for** and **describe possible side effects** in a way they can understand, and
- their **pain is well controlled** and that staff do everything they can to help them with their pain.

One of the most important ways you can provide an excellent experience is to actively involve patients in their care treatments. When patients and families are treated as respected partners, they are more likely to comply with treatment and have better health outcomes.

Before administering any medication, be sure to explain what the medication is for and any possible side effects. Discharge phone calls are also a good time to follow up on whether the patient understands how to take his or her medications, and answer any questions. Proactively communicating with patients about their medications is a safety best practice that helps to reduce the potential for harm.

By focusing on communication and teamwork, you can actively involve patients in managing their pain. Use a pain scale to help patients communicate their level of pain. The pain scale should be included posted in a visible location to remind patients, family, and staff of our efforts to do everything possible to help with pain.

Use key words with patients to focus on managing expectations of pain. When talking with the patient, communicate your dedication to controlling pain by saying, "We want you to be completely satisfied with your care. We work very hard to help meet your physical comfort needs, which include help with such issues as hygiene, bathing, and getting to the bathroom. We will do everything we can to help you with your pain."

Take this opportunity to "manage up" the doctor: "Your doctor wants you to be as comfortable as possible and has ordered pain medicine to help you manage your pain." This also works with co-workers: "We want you to be very satisfied with our management of your pain. Our team is specifically trained to help manage your pain."

Anticipate a patient's pain management needs by asking about pain medicine during select times, such as before breakfast, before therapy, or while performing care for personal needs. Document the patient's response and be proactive at the next opportunity.

Not only does the patient's perception of how his or her pain is managed strongly improve the patient experience, but there are also clinical and financial benefits to managing pain, including

fewer complications and shorter lengths of stay. Most importantly, managing a patient's comfort, including pain, is a fundamental aspect of high-quality patient care and is directly tied to MedStar's vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

To learn more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health website at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital website at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEBSITE HERE].

MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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July Weekly Article/Email/Elevator Board Message

For Better Outcomes, Arm Patients with Discharge Information

As a proud member of MedStar Health, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] is dedicated to a patient-first philosophy that combines quality of care, patient safety, and service excellence – in short, the MedStar Patient Experience. Quality, safety, and service all fall under the same umbrella making up the total patient experience. They are not mutually exclusive, but rather interdependent and need to be fully integrated. Patient satisfaction is related to good communication, which helps prevent errors and improve outcomes.

It's important that we prepare patients for going home or transitioning to a nursing center after their hospital stay by arming them with critical information about what symptoms or health problems to look out for, as well as making sure they will have the help they need once discharged. Research shows that educating patients about their care directives can help to minimize the likelihood of another hospitalization down the road.

Here are some things you can do to ensure patients get the information they need:

- Determine the type of help the patient has access to post-discharge. Does this match their need?
- For complex patient transition/discharge cases, consult an interdisciplinary team early in the hospitalization.
- Involve the patient's family in the discharge planning process.
- Inform the patient and family of anticipated or common discharge needs or concerns.
- Provide a brief, clearly written plan on how they may address those needs or concerns.
- Put it in writing. Provide written discharge instructions that include symptoms or health problems to look for after discharge.
- Reinforce all written instructions/materials with verbal discussion. Providing both verbal and written instructions will help patients better understand.

To learn more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health website at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital website at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEBSITE HERE].

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Physician Short Article – Communication with Doctors

Effective Communication Is Just What Your Patients Ordered

Patients tell us it's important to them that doctors:

- treat them with courtesy and respect;
- listen carefully; and
- explain things in a way they understand.

Communicate respect when greeting patients by introducing yourself using your first and last name as well as your role in their care. Use the patient's first and last name as well. For example, "Good morning, Mrs. Paula Lander, I'm Dr. Terry Hobbs, your cardiologist. I'm in charge of your care." Shake hands with the patient (after washing your hands), but be sensitive to nonverbal cues signaling the patient's receptiveness to a handshake. Always ask permission before examining the patient.

Every patient encounter provides the opportunity for a physician to teach and engage. Reinforce the major points you want the patient to learn. With the patient's permission, tape record important conversations so that patients may share them with family members and then develop questions they may have. Teach patients to be able to answer three simple questions:

- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do?
- Why is it important for me to do this?

Convey to the patient that you are listening carefully by giving the patient your undivided attention and minimize interruptions. Research shows that when a physician sits down at the bedside, patients perceive that the doctor is spending more time with them and have a better experience. When the patient or family member stops speaking, ask a question related to their last thought to demonstrate you heard them and to validate or seek clarification. To confirm clear communication, use key phrases such as:

- "I will listen carefully to what you say to me."
- "Let me see if I have this right. You…"
- "I want to make sure that I explained that procedure in a way that you could understand. Do you have any questions?"

Hospital or office staff should "manage up" doctors to patients and families by using key phrases like, "Dr. Smith is an excellent listener. You are fortunate to have him as your doctor."

To find out more, check out the Quality of Care pages on the MedStar Health website at medstarhealth.org, or go to your hospital website at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEBSITE HERE].

MedStar Health

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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Community Newsletter Article

Connecting Quality, Safety, and Service to Provide the Best Care

As a proud member of MedStar Health, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] is dedicated to developing a deeper understanding of patient expectations and measuring the quality of care we provide our patients. By measuring the patient experience throughout all levels of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences, and further our vision to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

Not only do we collect this data and use it to improve, we also make it available to the public through our Quality of Care pages on MedStar's website at medstarhealth.org. You can also click on our hospital website at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEBSITE HERE].

If you recently stayed at [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] as an inpatient, or made a recent trip to our Emergency Room, had an outpatient procedure or physician office visit, you may receive a phone call from Discovery Research asking you to complete a brief telephone survey. The survey will ask you about the experiences you and/or your family had while here. Please take a few minutes to honestly answer the questions. Your feedback helps us to identify ways we can continually improve our patients' experiences and the quality of care we provide, as well as recognize team members who did an outstanding job.

The MedStar Patient Experience is our promise to patients that we will always do our best to deliver high-quality, safe care and excellent service. When you choose MedStar as your partner in health care, you can trust you're making the right decision.

For more information, go to medstarhealth.org/quality.

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MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
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On-Hold Message

Thank you for choosing [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE]. As a proud member of MedStar Health, [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] is dedicated to developing a deeper understanding of patient expectations and measuring the quality of care we provide our patients.

If you recently stayed at [INSERT HOSPITAL NAME HERE] as an inpatient, or made a recent trip to our Emergency Room, had an outpatient procedure or physician office visit, you may receive a phone call from Discovery Research asking you to complete a brief telephone survey. The survey will ask you about the experiences you and/or your family had while here. Please take a few minutes to honestly answer the questions. Your feedback helps us to identify ways we can continually improve our patients' experiences and the quality of care we provide, as well as recognize team members who did an outstanding job.

Not only do we collect this data and use it to improve, we also make it available to the public through our Quality of Care pages on MedStar's Web site at medstarhealth.org. You can also click on our hospital Web site at [INSERT HOSPITAL WEB SITE HERE].

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Q: What is changing?

A: MedStar Health hospitals and entities are converting from using patient satisfaction surveys to the HCAHPS-style patient experience surveys for the entire system, including all **inpatient, outpatient, emergency services, physician office, home health** and **nursing home settings.** MedStar has been fielding the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) HCAHPS survey for acute inpatients since October 2006. In February 2009, MedStar also began fielding HCAHPS-style surveys for all other patients. In addition, MedStar is moving from a mail survey to a **phone survey.**

Q: Why is this survey conversion important?

A: In October 2006, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) launched HCAHPS (the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) – a **national standard survey** of acute inpatients, the results of which would be **publicly reported** and **tied to reimbursement**. In 2007, MedStar Health senior leadership went into talks about what impact this change would have throughout our organization. After conducting extensive research, the decision was made to cease administering Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys and convert all patient surveys to the HCAHPS style, which measures patient experience. This decision sought to align MedStar's patient survey system with the CMS survey style, to help focus MedStar on survey results linked to reimbursement, and to avoid confusion with MedStar's current patient satisfaction surveys.

MedStar has participated in the HCAHPS survey for acute inpatients since October 2006. Beginning in February 2009, MedStar proactively expanded this survey to all patients.

In keeping with our vision is to be the trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health, MedStar is committed to developing a deeper understanding of customer expectations and measuring the quality of care and service received by our patients. The HCAHPS survey has become the national standard for surveying inpatients about their hospital experience. Its methodology and behavior-based questions were developed through patient focus group testing and have been thoroughly tested by CMS. HCAHPS results are now publicly reported and directly linked to Medicare reimbursement. For these reasons, MedStar is aligning its surveys with the HCAHPS style for all settings, not just inpatient. By measuring the patient experience throughout the continuum of care, we can identify ways to continually improve those experiences.

Q: How does measuring a patient's experience differ from patient satisfaction?

A: The patient experience is comprised of three components: **quality, safety** and **service.** Patient experience means asking patients how frequently they experienced certain aspects of care, like whether or not doctors explained things adequately, or whether their rooms and bathrooms were kept clean. On the other hand, patient satisfaction only asks patients whether they were satisfied with the level of aspects of care. Gauging the patient experience is a more valuable measure because it focuses on behaviors and making changes based on those behaviors. Improving the patient experience propels us forward on our journey from good to great.

Q: What types of questions will be asked?

A: The HCAHPS-style patient experience survey measures what patients tell us is important. The survey asks patients how often a certain aspect of care was performed using the scale: **Never; Sometimes; Usually;** and **Always.** The MedStar Patient Experience inpatient survey includes seven themes and two overall rating questions:

Seven themes:

- Communication with Nurses
- Communication with Physicians
- Physical Environment
- Responsiveness of Hospital Staff
- Pain Control
- Communication about Medication
- Discharge Information

Two overall rating questions:

- Overall hospital rating
- Likeliness to recommend

The questions asked in all other types of surveys – outpatient, emergency services, physician office, home health, and nursing home settings – cover most of these same themes, but vary according to survey.

Q: Will patients still be surveyed by mail as well as by phone?

A: No. MedStar is moving to the **phone methodology** entirely. The decision to survey patients by phone rather than by mail was made because we are able to reach a broader spectrum of patients by phone. Previously, research has showed that young people and the Medicaid population were under-represented in mail surveys. In addition, this makes provision for the varying literacy levels in MedStar Health's service region. Using the phone approach will allow MedStar to survey many patients that previously have been difficult to reach, ensuring that we understand the needs of as many of our patients as possible.

Q: Who conducts the phone surveys?

A: A trained interviewer affiliated with our survey research partner, NRC Picker, will conduct the patient experience survey phone interviews. NRC Picker is an **independent, impartial, nationally recognized** research firm.

Q: How soon will a patient be called after their discharge or encounter?

A: The goal is to call patients **seven to 10 days after their discharge or encounter**, so the experience is still fresh in their minds.

Q: How long does a phone survey take?

A: A patient experience phone survey is conducted in approximately **six minutes**.

Q: How many attempts will be made to contact a patient?

A: The interviewer will attempt to contact a person up to five times. After the fifth call, the patient is marked as "no response" and the interviewer will not attempt to contact the patient again.

Q: If a patient is not able to answer, will a caregiver's response be solicited on the patient's behalf?

A: No. CMS requires that an inpatient experience survey interview be conducted with the actual patient only. However, if the patient needs assistance, other individuals may help the patient by repeating the questions, but only the patient may provide answers.

Q: What if a patient has caller ID?

A: A patient experience survey call will show up on a person's Caller ID as **"Discovery Research."** All associates are asked to make patients aware that this is what they will see, and urge them to participate in the survey.

Q: Where can I get a transcript of the kinds of questions asked during the phone survey?

A: You can obtain a generic CMS inpatient phone survey by imputting the following link into your web browser: http://www.hcahpsonline.org/Files/Telephone%20Script_English.pdf. To obtain your team's specific survey, contact your Work Group representative listed on the right.

Q: Can we tell our patients that they might receive a phone survey, and ask them to give us a good score?

A: We absolutely should be communicating to our patients that they may receive a phone survey asking them about their care experience and that you encourage them to participate. However, CMS discourages using any kind of patient training or coaching for positive survey responses because it could potentially make the results biased. Please let the experience you provide speak for itself.

For more information about the patient experience survey conversion, contact your Work Group representative listed below.

MedStar Patient Experience Measurement Work Group

Vanessa Aburn
Union Memorial Hospital
410-554-4308

Molly Billingsley
Georgetown University Hospital
202-444-4701

Robert Bunker
Harbor Hospital
410-350-2254

Carole Hayward
RadAmerica
410-682-6805

Cynthia Jasko
MedStar Physician Partners
443-725-8714

Hasnain Photowala
Franklin Square Hospital Center
443-777-7446

Paul Rao
National Rehabilitation Hospital
202-877-1438

Bonnie Sakallaris
Washington Hospital Center
202-877-7475

Budd Selby
White Oak Data Center
301-680-7783

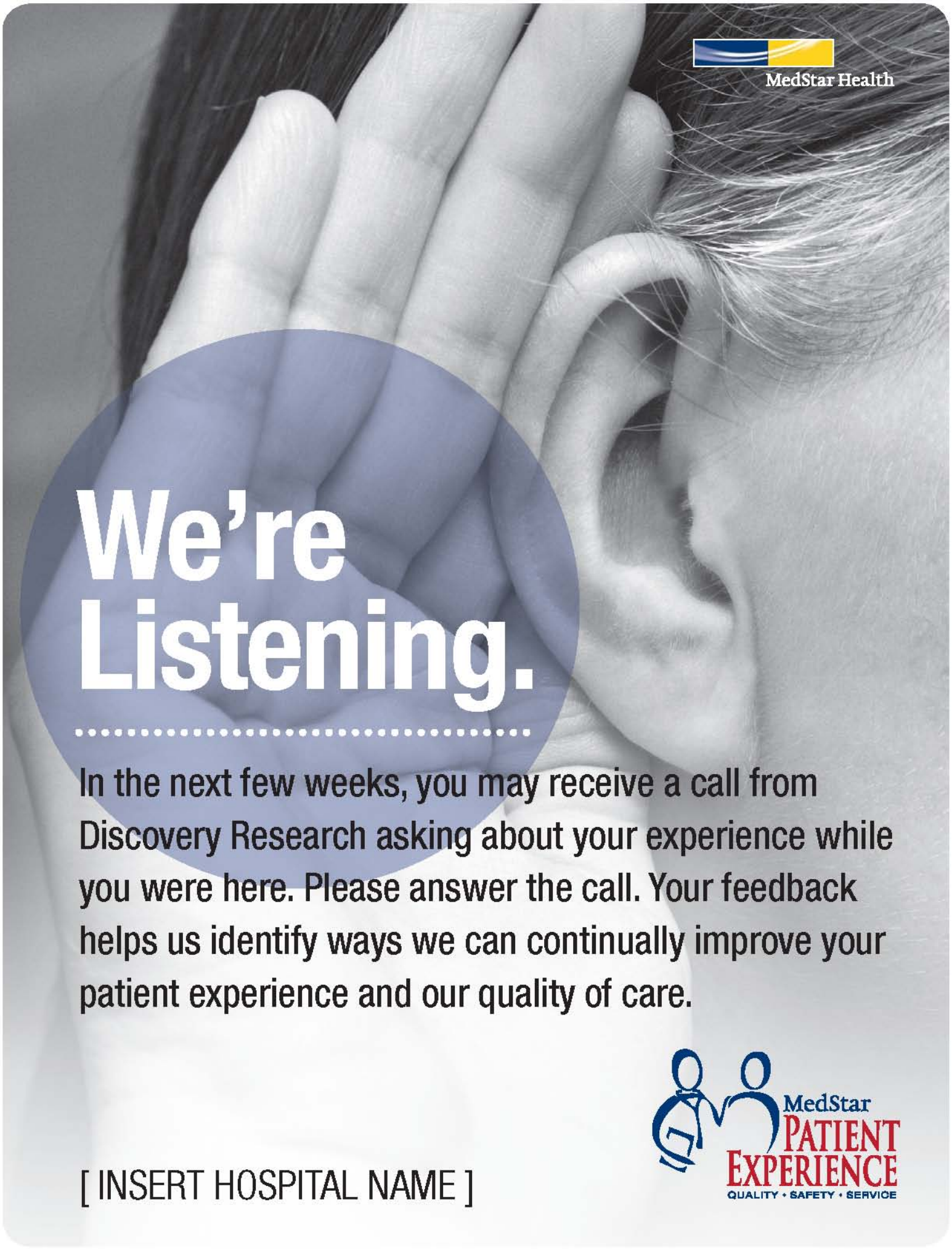
Margaret Terry
Visiting Nurse Association
240-965-2929

Jennifer Wilkerson
Good Samaritan Hospital
443-444-4628

Nikki Yeager
Montgomery General Hospital
301-774-8725

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE


MedStar Health
We're Listening.
In the next few weeks, you may receive a call from Discovery Research asking about your experience while you were here. Please answer the call. Your feedback helps us identify ways we can continually improve your patient experience and our quality of care.
MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE
[INSERT HOSPITAL NAME]

MedStar Health

Speak Up.

In the next few weeks, you may receive a call from Discovery Research asking about your experience while you were here. Please answer the call. Your feedback helps us identify ways we can continually improve your patient experience and our quality of care.

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE

[INSERT HOSPITAL NAME]

MedStar Health
Wide Open.
In the next few weeks, you may receive a call from Discovery Research asking about your experience while you were here. Please answer the call. Your feedback helps us identify ways we can continually improve your patient experience and our quality of care.
MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE
[INSERT HOSPITAL NAME]

MedStar Health

In Touch.

In the next few weeks, you may receive a call from Discovery Research asking about your experience while you were here. Please answer the call. Your feedback helps us identify ways we can continually improve your patient experience and our quality of care.

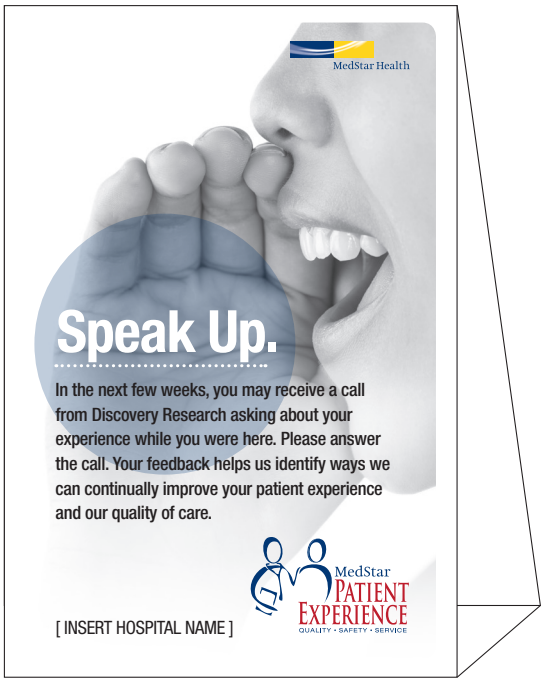
[INSERT HOSPITAL NAME]

MedStar PATIENT EXPERIENCE
QUALITY • SAFETY • SERVICE

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Table Tent**

front



back

The art for this table tent is provided on the CD. Be sure to insert your hospital's name in the indicated area. When assembled, actual size of each side is 4" x 6". Total flat size of the table tent is 4" x 16".

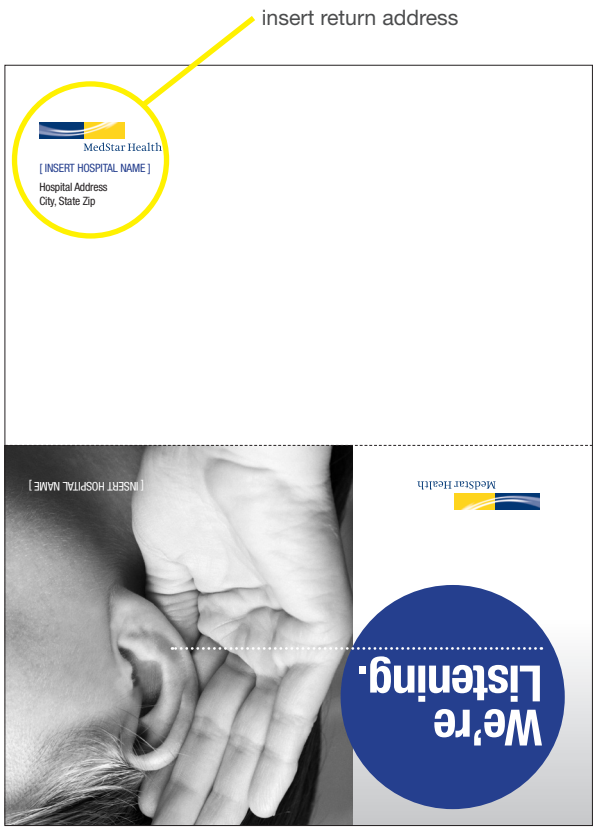
MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Meal Tray Card**

The art for this meal tray card is provided on the CD. Be sure to insert your hospital's name in the indicated area. Print on card stock and trim. Actual size is 4.25" x 5.5".

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Self-Mailer Card**



front

back

The art for this Patient Notification self-mailer card is provided on the CD. Be sure to insert your hospital's name and return address in the indicated areas. When folded, actual size is 8.5" x 5.5". Mailer should be closed with wafer seals. Consult your printer for mailing regulations.

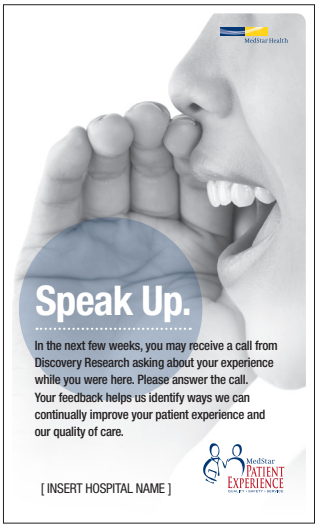
MedStar Health

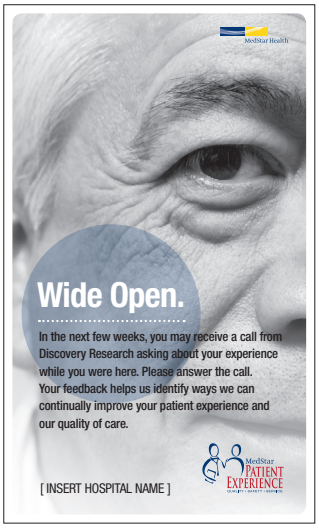
MedStar Patient Experience **Discharge Panel Card**

The art for this discharge packet panel card is provided on the CD. This card goes in the Patient Discharge Packet and serves as a final reminder of the phone survey. Be sure to insert your hospital's name in the indicated area. Print on card stock and trim. Actual size is 7" x 5.125".

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Posters & Flyers**





The art for these posters is provided on the CD. Be sure to insert your hospital's name in the indicated area. Actual size is 18" x 30".

The art for companion flyers is also provided on the CD. Actual size of the flyer is 8.5" x 11".

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Logo Guidelines** — 1 of 2

Logo

The MedStar Patient Experience logo is comprised of three primary elements:

- The doctor and patient symbol
- Typographic "MedStar Patient Experience" Name
- Typographic descriptor

Each entity logo is supplied on the enclosed CD to be used as necessary. All logo guidelines apply to the original and entity logos.

Color

Black/White

Reverse

Entity Logo

Minimum Size & Clear Space

The size of the logo should always achieve legibility and impact.

In general, minimum print reproduction size of the logos is 1.43" wide. The final size of the logos should be appropriate to the application in which it is used. If the legibility of the logo is impaired in any way, the logo is too small.

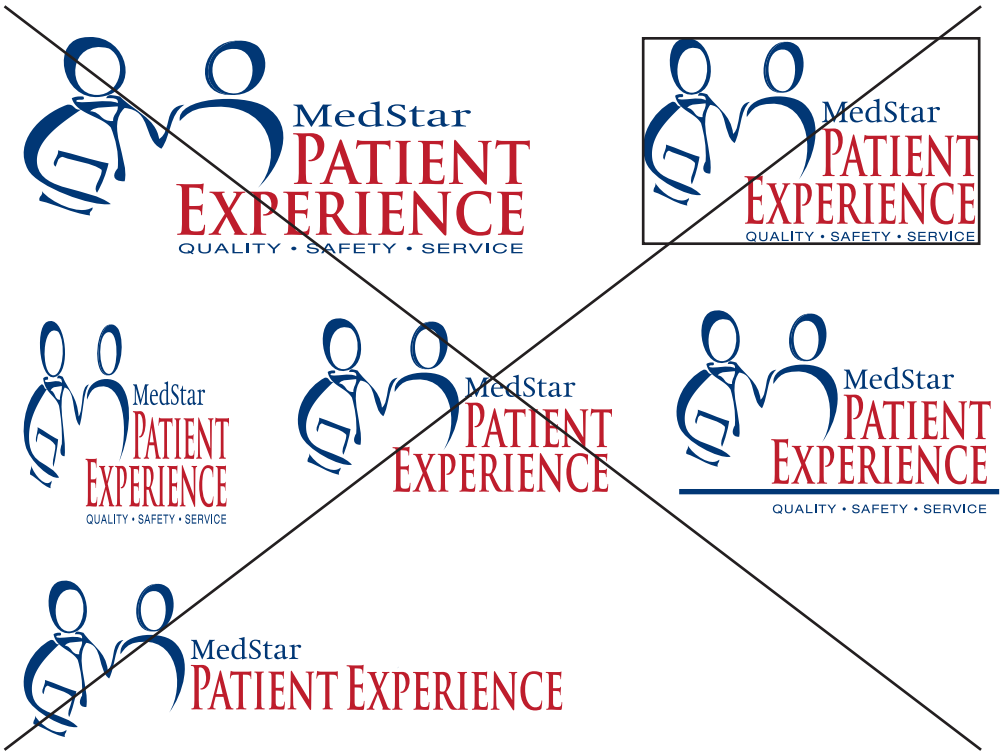
To help achieve the greatest possible visual impact, the logo must be shown with a defined area of clear space separating it from other elements. Use the height of "N" in "PATIENT EXPERIENCE" as a rule of thumb.

MedStar Health

MedStar Patient Experience **Logo Guidelines** — 2 of 2

Incorrect Usage

The logo should never be altered or redrawn in any way. It should only be reproduced from original artwork contained in a vector (e.g., Illustrator EPS) digital file.



Colors

Using the logo colors provides a consistent look for all of our materials. The logo should appear in PMS 294 (blue) and PMS 1797 (red) only; or all black only; or all white (reversed) only.

PMS 294

C - 100
M - 72
Y - 0
K - 38

PMS 1797

C - 15
M - 100
Y - 90
K - 10