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CHA Convenes Hospital Leaders to Improve Quality, Patient Safety, and Patient Experience

Hospital leaders from across the state gathered at CHA on Monday, May 14, for a Patient Safety Learning Network educational session on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS). The program is held in partnership with the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET) and the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Presenter Carrie Brady, JD, MA, consulting for HRET, provided expertise, research, and practical tools for improving scores on the standardized survey of inpatients. She told the participants, "I know how passionate you are about the care you provide your patients, and Connecticut can be a leader in HCAHPS. HCAHPS is about relationships."

HCAHPS was developed to provide objective and meaningful comparisons of domains of hospital care that are important to patients (including cleanliness, quiet at night, doctor and nurse communication, pain management, etc.), to create incentives for hospitals to improve, and to enhance public accountability. Twenty-two Connecticut hospitals are participating in the HCAHPS Patient Safety Learning Network to improve quality, patient safety, and patient experience.

Several hospitals provided case studies, including Middlesex Hospital, Hartford Hospital, and The Hospital of Central Connecticut. Kate Betancourt, RN, MPH, CPHQ, Senior Director of Patient Outcomes at The Hospital of Central Connecticut, discussed how they have begun to ask all staff to complete an HCAHPS survey from the point of view of when either they or a loved one was last a patient. "When they realize how difficult it is to answer 'always,' they begin to link their work to the patient experience. Everyone – parking attendants, admitting clerks, caregivers, and billing specialists – contributes to a positive, or sometimes negative patient experience."

"We want to connect the work of every employee and provider to the patient. We want staff thinking about how they would want their loved ones to be treated. We try to make it personal," added Aimee Sturmer, Patient Relations Manager at The Hospital of Central Connecticut.

Hospitals discussed how they have implemented programs to improve the patient experience, including rounding by senior leaders, regular reviews of survey data and observations, active volunteer service groups, and programs to involve patients' families in care.

Gina Calder, Director of Geriatric Services and Patient Relations at Bridgeport Hospital, said they make calls to patients within 48 hours of discharge. "This has a positive impact on patient experience, and has been a great success for us," she said. "We currently review this information weekly, but in the future we hope to review the patient experience in real time."

Ms. Brady, a former Vice President at CHA, is the author of HCAHPS Basics: A Resource Guide for Healthcare Managers (HCPro, 2009) and co-author of book chapters on patient-centered quality and safety, and breaking down the barriers to patient-centered care.

The learning session is part of CHA's Patient Safety Learning Network. The program runs through June 6, 2012.





Connecticut Best Representation at National Safety Fellowship Program

In collaboration with CHA, 43 champions of quality improvement from 26 Connecticut hospitals (the highest per capita state representation) participated in the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET) Improvement Leader Fellowship Program held in Chicago from April 30 to May 1. HRET is the non-profit research and educational arm of the American Hospital Association.

The fellowship program faculty included instructors from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement who taught participants the science of improvement, data measurement, and performance improvement. Fellowship participants had the opportunity to network with other fellows from across the country.

The HRET Improvement Leader Fellowship Program is part of [Partnership for Patients](#), a national initiative designed to reduce preventable inpatient harm by 40 percent and readmissions by 20 percent over a three-year period. Partnership for Patients is being conducted by CHA in partnership with HRET. All 30 Connecticut acute care hospitals are involved in this program.

The front-line improvement leaders who participated in the Improvement Leader Fellowship Program will engage their hospital teams to spread sustainable improvement strategies.



Middlesex Hospital CEO Addresses Human Resources Leadership



Vincent Capece, President and CEO of Middlesex Hospital, addressed Connecticut hospital human resources leadership on May 9 at CHA.

Mr. Capece saluted human resources professionals, calling them key advisors during tumultuous times. He encouraged them to be flexible about approaching the future, as healthcare changes due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

"The government has challenged us to build a Mercedes at the cost of a Toyota," Mr. Capece said. "Together, we will figure out how to keep expenses lower than revenue."

Mr. Capece also discussed his philosophy of developing synergistic teams with complementary skills, encouraging transparency and open discussion, and developing leaders from within an organization.

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center Surgeon Featured on National HRET Panel

On May 3, Scott Ellner, DO, FACS, a surgeon at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, and a 2010-2011 AHA-National Patient Safety Foundation

Leadership Fellow, presented alongside national patient safety leaders as part of a week-long set of improvement programs from HRET's Hospital Engagement Network.

Dr. Ellner spoke about [surgical site infections](#) and the safe surgery initiative that is one of 10 key target areas for improvement through the Partnership for Patients initiative. Dr. Ellner, a leading voice for improved surgical safety, instituted a safe surgery checklist project at Saint Francis that has demonstrated excellent results.

He also helped initiate the CHA-supported Connecticut Surgical Quality Collaborative. Through the collaborative, participating hospitals will share best practices, provide education and outreach, and participate in statewide performance initiatives.



Scott Ellner, DO, FACS, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, left, spoke on HRET panel with Charles Edminston, Jr., PhD, CIC, and E. Patchen Dellinger, MD

Education Updates

Accountability: Building and Sustaining a Patient Safety Environment
June 12, 2012 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Healthcare organization leaders and individual caregivers are accountable for identifying and eliminating barriers to safe practices. In this intensive full-day program, participants will examine adverse event case studies and use an accountability analysis tool to explore the relationship between organizational and personal accountability, to ensure a shared accountability system is in place and that the right actions are taken following an adverse event or potentially serious safety incident.

The keynote speaker is Patrice Spath. She is a teacher, author, and quality improvement expert who has presented more than 300 training programs on quality and patient safety for healthcare providers.

For more information, click [here](#). Click [here](#) to register.

