



Sutter Medical Center,
Sacramento

A Sutter Health Affiliate

SMCS Physician

Message from Tom Gagen, CEO

September 2009

Additional Patient Safety Roundings Lead to Increase in Patient Satisfaction

Here at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento, keeping patients involved and informed in their treatment is a very important aspect of the care we provide. As we strive to build a culture of patient safety, we have been busily enhancing our patient safety rounding at all levels of the organization over the past few months.

What is patient safety rounding? Every weekday, the case manager, nursing director, staff nurse and clinical nurse specialist conduct "rapid rounds" on each patient to discuss the treatment plan for the day and for the stay. In addition, our registered nurses visit with each patient every hour to talk with newly admitted and current patients. During the rounds, the nurses make sure the patient's pain is under control, the patient's position is comfortable in bed, the patient's bathroom needs are taken care of, their physical environment (*i.e.*, phone, call button, bedside table, water) is within reach, and that core measures have been met.

While registered nurses on our patient care units have been rounding on patients for some time, this spring SMCS managers and administrators set out to enhance the process and fully commit our organization to this culture of patient safety by instituting rounding by our assistant nurse managers, nursing directors and Administration. The nursing directors and ANMs show their support by rounding on the staff RNs, and the SMCS administrative team rounds on the nursing directors and ANMs. This multi-layer approach to rounding assures that the safety rounds are occurring.

The purpose of these regular visits with patients is to surface and resolve patient safety issues, with the goal of preventing harm to patients, visitors or co-workers. In just a short time, the results we've seen in our patient satisfaction scores are remarkable! Since April when we first began validating the rounding process, our overall inpatient satisfaction has climbed from the 77th to the 99th percentile. We have seen a tremendous increase in patient satisfaction on several specific questions on the Press Ganey survey:

- Are your concerns being answered?
- Is staff involving you in decisions about your care?
- Are your emotional needs being addressed?

While patient satisfaction scores have risen, we are also beginning to track some of the real benefits to our patients. I don't have those numbers yet to share with you, but in a Studer Group research study of 27 nursing units in 14 hospitals across the nation, hourly patient rounding has shown that consistently checking on patient needs reduces monthly call-light use by 38 percent, patient falls by 50 percent, and skin breakdowns by 14 percent. We are experiencing the same successes at SMCS and hope to share our numbers with you next quarter.

Hourly patient rounding is a win-win-win for staff, doctors and patients. Patients know someone is there to care for them and nurses are more capable of meeting their patients' needs, making the care of these patients easier for you, as a physician. By adding the supportive layers of rounding, we are all reminded to ask the right questions of our patients and increase their safety and satisfaction.

SMCS Welcomes New Medical Staff Members

Rinki Agarwal, M.D.
4860 Y St., Suite 2500
Sacramento, CA 95817
(916) 734-6930
Specialty: Obstetrics and
Gynecology, Gynecologic
Oncology

Keri L. Azuar, M.D.
1500 Expo Parkway
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 646-8300
Specialty: Radiology, Diagnostic

Ashis V. Barad, M.D.
5301 F St., Suite 308
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 739-1604
Specialty: Pediatric
Gastroenterology

Kamaljeet Boora, M.D.
2180 Harvard St., Suite 210
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 567-3500
Specialty: Psychiatry

David Crippen, D.D.S.
920 29th St.
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 476-3972
Specialty: Pediatric Dentistry

Matthew W. Guile, M.D.
1201 Alhambra Blvd., Suite 320
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 455-2229
Specialty: Obstetrics and
Gynecology

Mark J. Heller, M.D.
1020 29th St., Suite 480
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 733-3777
Specialty: Internal Medicine

Hieu Huynh, M.D.
5301 F St., Suite 117
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 733-1788
Specialty: Cardiology

Physician Satisfaction Survey Ready for Your Input

This year's Press Ganey Physician Satisfaction Survey is being mailed this week to all medical staffs throughout the Sacramento Sierra Region. The physician survey is an important tool for the SMCS Administrative Team to improve patient care and medical staff satisfaction at our hospitals. SMCS Director of Medical Affairs Cecilia Hernandez, M.D., details some of the improvements made this year that were based on last year's survey in her column on Page 3 of this newsletter.

With your survey, you will receive a pin number and instructions on completing the survey either by mail or on the Internet. If you did not receive a survey or pin number, please contact Grange Fife at (916) 733-3097 or e-mail her at FifeK@sutterhealth.org.

Please return your completed survey by Nov. 15. All physicians who complete the survey and contact Grange will receive a gift certificate for a car wash and will be entered into a raffle for one of five \$100 gift certificates to Biba restaurant.

SMCS Receives CHART Certificate of Excellence

Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento received a California Hospital Assessment Reporting Taskforce Certificate of Excellence based on its achievement in several quality measures. CHART prepares the hospital performance ratings that are publicized on the CalHospitalCompare.org hospital report card.

CHART recognized 36 of the 218 participating California hospital campuses for excellent outcomes. Thirteen of the 36 hospital campuses are Sutter Health affiliates, with five located in the Sutter Health Sacramento Sierra Region: both Sutter General and Sutter Memorial hospital campuses, Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, Sutter Davis Hospital and Sutter Roseville Medical Center.

"I want to extend personal congratulations to every employee, physician, manager and leader who contributes daily to the excellent care of our patients and their families," said John Mesic, M.D., Chief Medical Officer for SHSSR.

The Certificate of Excellence means the recognized hospitals achieved above average or superior scores in five of the eight CHART measurements and did not receive any "below average" or "poor" scores.

Sutter Resource Library Gathers Titles on Healthy Aging

September is Healthy Aging Month, and the Sutter Resource Library has a number of book titles available on the topic. Visit suttermedicalcenter.org/library/monthly_topics.html for a list. Physicians may borrow books and audios from the library – up to three items for two weeks. You can also search the online catalog anytime at suttermedicalcenter.org/library.

Physician Satisfaction Surveys Lead to Improvements

By **Cecilia M. Hernandez, M.D.**, *SMCS Director of Medical Affairs*

Ahhh, September. Labor Day, Back to School and, yes, Physician Satisfaction Survey time. We are just beginning this year's survey, which will continue through Nov. 15. For those of us who work with and support you, our medical staff, this is a time to reflect back on our efforts over the last year and to consider how we can best serve you in the year to come.

When I came on as Director of Medical Affairs in January, Tom Gagen and I analyzed the results of the 2008 survey and, together, drafted an action plan. We began by addressing the quality, quantity and presentation of food in the doctors' lounges. We added fresh carrots, more fruit choices, trail mix bars, improved sandwiches, and more eggs and bread. Maintenance of the coffee machine was boosted, and we increased the frequency of the upkeep of the food space by dietary and EVS staff. The response of the dietary and EVS staff has been great; please make it a point to thank them.

With respect to responsiveness and confidence in hospital administration, we made some changes to how we communicate with you, augmenting previous efforts by asking for, listening to and understanding pertinent issues, discussing them as an administrative team and reporting back with actions at monthly medical staff department meetings, MEC, Credentials Committee, etc. We beefed up our monthly newsletter, and Tom has distributed a video to the medical staff detailing the strategic direction and tactical efforts of our organization. One of the most rewarding efforts we have made is the Voice of the Doctor interviews. Each member of the administrative team has a one-on-one interview with a different member of the medical staff each month to get to know you and your concerns. I look forward to seeing the fruits of this effort in improved relationships, and an increased sense of community for all of us, in addition to improvements in the way we work together.

In order to make patient care easier for you, we have made improvements from bedside procedures to the way we bring patients into our facility. We expanded R.N.-M.D. rounding, as well as rapid rounding and hourly safety rounding by nursing. Patients are reporting improved satisfaction as we focus attention on these efforts with weekly validation rounds by administrative team members. Our patient flow team has worked tirelessly to reduce choke points throughout our hospital and continues to look at ways to improve processes. Two additional services – our medical and surgical hospitalist programs – have dramatically improved the quality of life of our physicians and continue to drive changes that provide value and improve our performance on many fronts. Granted, I am a medical hospitalist and may be a little biased, but I hear over and over again from our doctors that these two services have made marked improvement in the ease of practice at our hospital. And, while we have continued to hold Surgeon Forums, we recently began Medicine/E.D. Forums to partner with you in addressing your operational concerns. As we close out the year, look for the implementation of our regional Patient Transfer Center, whose goal is to facilitate transfers within our region with ease and predictability. It is the result of two years of work, listening to you and our communities, as we look to improve the way we deliver care.

As we practice medicine in the 21st century, information technology is a cornerstone of our healthcare delivery system. Despite the economic downturn and the subsequent financial restrictions, we have focused efforts to improve how we deliver IS services to our medical staff. We have added computer terminals to the physician lounges at Sutter General Hospital, as well as Navicare terminals to the surgery lounges. We are implementing the Physician IS Orientation, Training and Support Project, which, I have to tell you, is a massive endeavor. Kudos to the IS staff, which has been working on this project all year. Look for more improvements in this area as we continue to roll this out.

In closing, I am struck by the depth and breadth of the efforts our hospital administration is taking to make your experience at SMCS the very best it can be. The door of Buhler 420 is always open to you. Your ability to provide the highest quality care to your patients is our utmost concern. We remain committed to do everything in our power to make SMCS the very best place to practice medicine. I'm looking forward to learning more from you on this year's Physician Satisfaction Survey.