The transition from survey-ready to patient-ready

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Real healthcare transformation for the patient's sake

True healthcare transformation is happening, and I'm lucky enough to get to see it happening on a daily basis.

Recently, I had the privilege of spending time at Methodist Dallas Medical Center, one of 10 hospitals in the Methodist Health System. They have transformed clinically, financially and operationally through continual compliance, and are generating impressive results in terms of reporting issues and getting proactive about patient safety. "Survey-ready isn't our challenge or the objective, says Pamela Stoyanoff, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "We need to be patient-ready."

Patient-ready at Methodist Health System means that at the moment a patient arrives in any of their facilities, every system in the hospital works correctly to ensure outstanding clinical care, impeccable service delivery, and a reliably safe encounter. Continuous compliance creates this quality environment and the Methodist executives drive this culture within their health system.

When a nurse starts an IV, the patient notices. It's a bit painful, and slightly annoying, and it signals the beginning of a clinical process that is going to mean more discomfort, fear, and risk. But this process really started months earlier. Specifically, it began this way:

Six months ago, the purchasing and contracting process ensured that the appropriate and best catheter and equipment were bought and stocked in the right place to support patient volume

Four months ago, an experienced nurse was hired and educated on internal systems

Two months ago, the nurse was trained and certified on the appropriate use of topical anesthetics for routine IV starts in the oncology day unit

Routine audit rounds identified any process or environment of care issues and corrective actions were put in place

As part of the organization's accreditation journey, the staff are interviewed by surveyors ensuring the ability to understand and articulate policy and procedure during a routine Mock Survey

For this patient at this facility at this time, the experience of starting an IV occurred in the safest and best manner because the facility was focused on ongoing quality and patient experience, not just checking boxes. It was the result of hundreds of people working together in a complex ecosystem to avoid failure.

Everyone in healthcare knows "survey-ready" means ensuring continuous compliance. We are seeing a transformation towards not just continuous compliance, but continuous improvement that goes well beyond survey readiness. Patient-centric organizations are shifting their culture from checking a box to understanding the importance of compliance to protect patients and establish ongoing quality.

In addition to Methodist, the Medical University of South Carolina is working hard to assure patients are seeing the value of this patient-centered approach. MUSC has performed 7,800 audits across more than 150 areas of the hospital, and conducted 1,800 patient rounds. More audits, more near misses, mean that MUSCI is establishing a learning environment where every issue is an opportunity to do more for the patient.

Other organizations, such as Cleveland Clinic, Atrium Health, and RWJBarnabas are moving from organizing around the audit to organizing around the patient. Their success is public record and it is truly inspiring.

This transformation motivates the team at Verge Health to push our own boundaries. We do this through expanding our platform to include innovative technology like continual surveillance, mock survey functionality and predictive analytics. When this software and strategic consulting services are leveraged across hundreds of systems and thousands of clinical areas we enable excellence on behalf of the patient.

With a focus on staying continually patient-ready, real transformation is possible.