



VAPAHCS

Customer Service Initiative for
Exceptional Veteran Experiences



Creating Exceptional Patient Experience Culture

- The Veteran is the most important person in this institution – in person, on the phone or by mail
- Veterans and their families are not dependent on us – we are dependent on them
- Veterans and their families are not an interruption of our work – they are the purpose of it
- Veterans and their families are not outsiders of our business, they are our business
- The Veteran is not someone to argue or match wits with
- The Veteran is a person, not a statistic
- It is our job to help and serve the Veteran and their family



Working with the Veteran knowing what our customer wants

■ Telephone Etiquette

- Standardization on how we answer the phone

■ Walking the Walk-30/15/ 5 rule

- When walking throughout our hospital acknowledge our Veterans and families
- 30 feet away see them
- 15 feet away make eye contact
- 5 feet acknowledge (hello, hi, smile)

Telephone Scripting

Positive Greeting

Eye Contact

Smile

Script

Acknowledgement

FOCUS on the individual

Appreciation of family

Acknowledge those waiting

Follow Through

Ask permission to put on hold and take #

Closure

Give # before transfer- warm transfer – stay on the line

Thank you for your service

Physical Interaction

Positive Greeting

Eye contact

Smile

30/15/10

Acknowledgement

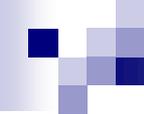
FOCUS on the individual

Appreciation of family

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Aim and Mission

- **Vision**: At VA Palo Alto Health Care System, our goal is to provide excellent customer service when responding to all telephone callers
- **Aim**: Each telephone responder will greet and acknowledge the caller, assist with the request, and thank the caller at the conclusion of the call.
80% of the time by September 30, 2011



Call Tallies from Operators 7 day period

- 3417 Calls from staff request
- 349 Page requests includes transfers to Stanford
- 7321 Total

Data from Secret Shopper Calls

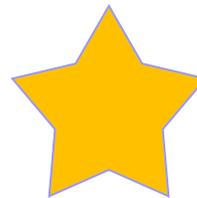
- N=32- random sampling
- When surveyed
- **19%** Answered with stating their Name and Department.
- **43%** Transferred the call stating the number transferred to
- **53%** Said Thank you

Analysis

- Discovered ½ the calls to Operators originate within the hospital
- Large volume of requests to Operators for paging
- Departments did not answer the phone well approximately 80% of the time
- Areas of improvement noted with greeting transfers and closing of call

Telephone Etiquette Best Practice

- Start with a warm greeting: SMILE
 - State your Name and Service
- Make a Warm Transfer of call to someone who can help
 - Tell the caller the Name and extension of whom you will be transferring them to.
 - Then press the transfer button
 - Stay on the line until someone answers the call. Let the receiver know who is on the line.
 - Then press the connect button
- Ask: *Is there anything else I can do for you today?*
- Thank the caller
 - Thank you for your service.



These 4 tenets will be tied to performance evaluations

Timeline for Telephone Customer Service Project.

- Vision/ Analysis/ Team- **Completed**
- Aim and Vision **Completed** (see slide 4)
- Mapping – **Complete by March 10th**- Selection of pilot area completed.- **Completed**
- Pilot area tested- **Completed GMC clinic and ER**
- Measure- By April 1st create a plan to implement and measure the pilot program.- **Completed**
- Change- April – June- develop educational tool and implement plan- Meeting April 22
 - Roll out and education to clerks /AO academy
 - Phase II role out to Nursing Staff and volunteers
 - Phase III role out to ancillary staff
- Sustain June- August – Implement, review and assess sustainability- Partial completion.
 - **HR to tie initiative to performance evaluations. Implementation Oct 2011**
 - Secret shopper to evaluate above plan with initial data
 - Memorandum- draft complete