Service Recovery at MGH

MGH/MGPO PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT
Service Excellence
Things go wrong ...
... but how do we recover?
Patient Experience

“When things go wrong, we own making things right.

It’s about how we respond and recover that makes the difference!”
If Left Unresolved ...

Expectation

Something Happens

MHG/MGPO PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT
Service Excellence
"They frustrated me, but when I told them, their response was impressive. They cared, they gave me alternatives, they acted, and they kept their promises. What more could I expect?"
What is Service Recovery?

“What patient complaints are inevitable and are a gift – they give us a second chance to make things right.”

1. Chance to rectify our mistake
2. Chance to improve patient’s perception of our care
3. Opportunity to earn more loyalty than if the mistake never happened!
Whose Job is Service Recovery?

Everybody! ALWAYS!

We are all Stewards of the MGH Reputation

MGH/MGPO PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT
Service Excellence
Every interaction of a patient’s visit makes an impression...
When something goes wrong ... 

... what do you do?
First, we don’t let things get worse ...
Then, we respond:
Service Recovery Steps – “L.E.A.D.”

L = LISTEN
Listen to what the patient has to say to understand problem

E = EMPATHIZE
Notice and acknowledge feelings

A = APOLOGIZE
Apologize for the error without placing blame

D = DO THE RIGHT THING
Ask how you can help and offer a solution
L = LISTEN

- Defuse the situation with active listening.
  - Establish eye contact
  - Use silence to let them vent
  - Use key words:
    - “I hear you saying…”
    - “I can hear you are frustrated…”
  - Repeat what they said
  - Ask open-ended questions
- Control your responses
  - Breathe deeply
  - Lower your voice
  - Speak slowly and clearly
E = EMPATHIZE

- Notice and acknowledge their feelings
- Make the patient/family member feel valued from the start and establish the impression that you are there to help
  - Use key words:
    - “I can understand why you are upset…”
A = APOLOGIZE

- Apologize for the inconvenience on behalf of the hospital (*Blameless Apology*).
  - “I apologize for the wait. I realize that waiting is inconvenient. I will keep you informed. Is there anything I can do to make you more comfortable?”
  - “I apologize for the noise in the hallways; I understand why it startled you.”
  - “I’m sorry there was some confusion about who you were scheduled to see today.”
The “Blameless” Apology...

• Does not assign blame to anyone or any department.
• Does not blame the patient or family even if they made a mistake.
• Saying “I am sorry this happened to you” as a representative of MGH.
• A sincere acknowledgement sets the stage for the entire patient experience by creating a positive rapport.

You are the MGH!
Apologizing Tips

• Apologize no matter what the situation. An apology is not about guilt, it’s about not meeting expectations.
• Apologize even if you didn’t cause the problem.
• An apology conveys your concern, which is what the patient wants to hear.
• Don’t shift the blame to the customer, another employee or department.
• Always say I’m sorry not we’re sorry.
• You’re heart needs to be engaged. An apology cannot be a canned response. Say it like you mean it.
D = DO THE RIGHT THING

- Solve the problem quickly if possible
- Offer options if possible and ask the patient how they would like the problem resolved
- If you cannot solve, connect to those that can
- Most people just want a “fair fix”
Storytelling...

• Share an example of when you observed a coworker that did a superb job recovering a challenging situation.

• Share an example of when someone didn’t do a good job turning a situation into a positive outcome.
Recap Service Recovery Goals

“Guided by the needs of our patients and their families…”

- Support a culture of service at MGH.
- Restore patient and family trust despite a service breakdown.
- Protect our reputation and well being.
Questions
Resources

• *The HCAHPS Handbook* (by Quint Studer, Brian C. Robinson & Karen Cook, RN)