



EMPLOYEE AND PATIENT

By Karen Ellery-Jones

For a community-based hospital just miles away from some of the best healthcare facilities in the country, Winchester Hospital remains the premier choice for thousands of patients each year. Named by *Fortune*, the *Boston Business Journal*, and the *Boston Globe* as one of the top places to work, Winchester Hospital's commitment to both its patients and employees is central to its core mission of providing exceptional care to the community.

Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of Medical Affairs Richard J. Mazandi Iseke, M.D. believes that Winchester Hospital's success in the shadows of Boston's legendary healthcare giants rests on its focus on improving outcomes and ensuring that all employees take a proactive role in reaching these goals.

"Our success factors are built around the commitment of our employees, the tracking of outcomes, and making the results available to patients as a way of engaging them and encouraging them to use all available resources to improve their own outcomes," he says.

Dr. Iseke believes that both physicians and patients make better decisions when outcomes are used to evaluate the effectiveness and risks of a particular procedure. But he notes that patients using outcomes as a measuring tool is still in its infancy.

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INVOLVEMENT KEY TO HOSPITAL'S IMPROVED OUTCOMES

"Without outcomes, you don't know if what you are doing is working, and there would be no way for us to organize and focus on improving outcomes for our patients," says Dr. Iseke.

"It's very difficult for patients if they are directing their healthcare when they don't have tangible results to help them make the decision about what type of care they want based on how effective it is. Not only do you need to have outcomes, but they have to be easily shown to patients."

Improving outcomes throughout the hospital involved examining existing outcomes and procedures and comparing those results to other organizations.

"We set some lofty goals to improve our results in certain areas and to put those results in front of physicians, employees, and patients. Then, in order to improve these results, we needed a methodology and used the Model of Improvement from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)," he adds.

The methodology behind the Model of Improvement relies on identifying and testing areas of change and implementing these improvements in an accelerated manner. More than 200 leaders throughout the organization were trained to use this methodology with the goal of teaching it to the people whom they led.

"Ideally, everyone who works at Winchester will have been trained," says Dr. Iseke, noting that all employees need to have the tools to achieve the best results. He says that keeping communication open is critical to developing and processing change.

"We have Friday huddles where we

meet and listen to team leaders. Are they running into barriers? How do we collectively help them to move their project forward?"

But Dr. Iseke also recognizes that not all changes are initiated from the top down. He advises team leaders to seek out employees who are achieving results that may otherwise be overlooked.

"They may be on the night shift. They may not be a direct caregiver, but they have figured out a way to do the job on their own," he suggests. "We need to go and listen to them, figure it out, and build that change from the ground up.

"Our style of leadership is to support the folks on the front line with patients and support the folks who are supporting those at the front line. It's not normal for us to lead and ask them to follow. It's a collective consensus."

Dr. Iseke says that the hospital often joins outside collaboratives, but also will initiate them in-house if an external collaborative cannot be identified.

In 2009, the hospital formed the WinCollaborative, which focuses on improving quality and patient safety with the chief goal of eliminating hospital-based harm events by 2012. With a team-based approach supported by team leadership, four distinct inpatient units targeted specific areas where they could reduce and ultimately eliminate the possibility of

hospital-acquired infections.

Improving hand hygiene was the initial phase and, through education and collaboration on an inpatient unit, hand washing compliance increased to 100 percent in fewer than four months, removing one path of hospital-based infections. Monthly compliance rates continue to hover at 90 percent.

It's clear that the emphasis on improving outcomes and encouraging all employees to become part of the process and system-wide success has resulted in measurable and positive outcomes across the board. Press Ganey ranks Winchester Hospital above the 90th percentile for patient satisfaction. Named by *Boston Business Journal* as the No. 1 place to work in Massachusetts in both 2008 and 2009, Winchester Hospital's employee satisfaction rate ranks above the 90th percentile as well.



Dr. Richard J. Mazandi Iseke, Chief Medical Officer and VP of Medical Affairs at Winchester Hospital, accepting the 2009 Premier Award for Quality. Winchester Hospital was one of only 23 hospitals nationwide to receive this honor.