

Peninsula Regional Medical Center

KNEW They Would Succeed

Peninsula Regional Medical Center, Salisbury, MD

A physics professor once demonstrated the difference between *believing* and *knowing*. Stand in front of a pendulum with a razor-sharp spiked ball at the end, bring the spike to your nose, and let go. *Believing* in the laws physics will tell you that the ball can never swing back beyond the spot where you let go. *Knowing* this, on the other hand, will allow you to stand still confidently while the spiked ball is flying towards your face. Likewise, believing that your hospital can achieve excellence can produce some impressive results, but Peninsula Regional Medical Center has shown us what can happen when a hospital *knows* it can succeed.

HealthStream Research

HealthStream Research is a national leader in the measurement of physician, employee, patient, and community satisfaction for healthcare organizations. We currently work with more than 1,100 facilities nationwide, including many of the nation's largest for-profit and not-for-profit health systems and specialty healthcare companies.

Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC) has partnered with HealthStream Research to perform employee, patient, and medical staff satisfaction programs of research since 2001. "HealthStream Research's Employee Insights Survey was incredibly powerful for us. Their action plans and recommendations helped us establish a roadmap to success," said Timothy Feist, Vice President of Process Improvement for Peninsula Regional Medical Center.

The following is a sample of the Action Blueprint items HealthStream Research provided PRMC in a collaborative effort to help them measure, improve, and thrive:

1. Share survey results with employees and inform them of the strategies being implemented based on their input
2. Celebrate ratings for employee retention and job satisfaction
3. Celebrate the results of the employee survey
4. Focus on key items that are drivers of employee job satisfaction
 - At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day
 - I trust my supervisor
 - In my department, we take time to reflect on and discuss how we can do things better
5. Work to improve communication throughout the Medical Center
6. Address issues relating to physicians

7. Consider management-training courses for managers in departments scoring low on the management theme
8. Hold managers and supervisors accountable for improvement
9. Address nursing services issues by unit
10. Develop a management Action Plan using physician feedback

Next Step: Taking Action

Until the previous year, PRMC's Stroke Center had consistently low employee satisfaction scores. "These patients and their families are under a lot of stress with complex medical needs. HealthStream Research's research took us from guessing what the problems were to *knowing* what the problems were. The first step was defining the problem. The next step was taking ownership of the results and fixing them," said Timothy Feist. PRMC put the following initiatives in action:

- Instituted a family-centric approach to patient care
- Focused on making (and leaving) a positive impression
- Built a culture of "Going Above and Beyond"—families are kept fully informed throughout the process.
- Established protocols on how to deliver and explain treatment. Talk to families in direct, simple layman's terms.

"Ownership of these issues used to fall to the Nurse Manager. Now *we* take ownership as a team. That has made all the difference," said Timothy Feist. "We learned the powerful impact nurses have on patient satisfaction, and HealthStream Research's recommendations helped us focus on the individual unit level. We began developing our staff's focus on their approach and commitment to the patients and their families. We have our Nurse Manager networking with other hospitals in the area in an effort to find best practices. This knowledge is shared and spread through our regular staff meetings."

To get the best staff, PRMC implemented a science and research-based approach to hiring. "We strive to be at the top, so we offer lots of incentives," said Timothy Feist. The new incentives include:

- Continuing education
- Tuition reimbursement
- Career development
- Leadership Academy to develop key skill sets

The Results

PRMC has consistently improved from one survey to the next. The Emergency Department is just one of many units that has risen to amazing levels. The following are some key areas where the PRMC Emergency Department has excelled:

Attributes that have scored well Nationally (August – December 2004):

- ❑ The kindness shown by the patient care staff (91st)
- ❑ How well the staff kept family informed about your care and treatment (91st)

Attributes that have scored statistically above the competitor composite (August – December 2004):

- ❑ How well the staff kept family informed about your care and treatment (PRMC 3.77; competitor 3.51)
- ❑ The total amount of time spent in the Emergency Room from arrival to discharge (PRMC 4.02; competitor 3.07)

Attributes that have scored well Nationally (Annual – Nov. '03 – Oct. '04):

- ❑ The registration process (95th)
- ❑ The kindness shown by the patient care staff (88th)
- ❑ The doctor's willingness to involve you in decisions about your care (88th)
- ❑ How well the staff kept family informed about your care and treatment (91st)

Timothy Feist has full confidence that PRMC will continue to maintain and build upon their success. “Now, it’s all about the team. Taking ownership is more than acknowledging the negative—it means celebrating together as well. We have BBQs, sundae bars—anything we can do to celebrate excellence. At every monthly executive meeting, the first thing we do is actively look for things we can celebrate.”

But real success comes from always knowing you can do more. Says Timothy Feist: “We are very proud of our satisfaction levels now, but until we get to the very top . . .”