

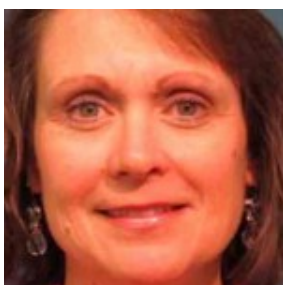
Opinion: Barton paying attention to what patients want

By Christine O'Farrell

Hospitals can be scary places for many. Patients are usually in pain or scared and friends or family members worried. You are also putting your care (and sometimes your life) in the hands of experts who are unfamiliar to you.

Except in an emergency, people have a choice of where they trust their health care. In a consumer perception survey done in the region in 2009, over 90 percent of respondents said they would travel over 40 miles for care if they felt it was better elsewhere. Barton recognizes this and has taken it to heart by making significant investments in patient safety, quality of care, and patient satisfaction.

Barton Memorial Hospital was recently recognized as one of the most improved hospitals in California in patient safety by the California Hospital Engagement Network. Focusing on 10 clinical areas of improvement against 174 other hospitals in the state, Barton showed a 75 percent improvement in patient safety over the last three years and has won three awards that recognize these great efforts. The benchmark for California hospitals was 40 percent, so we are proud of our great progress.



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Barton is a learning organization that takes a critical look at adverse events in order to identify opportunities for improvement so we can significantly reduce the risk of harm to future patients. We do this by implementing evidence based best practices. To promote our transparency and to learn more, Barton has dedicated a section of our website to quality measures.

Barton utilizes a nationwide patient satisfaction survey to gain feedback on a number of patient experience factors including communication, pain, food, quietness and cleanliness. The hospital has made significant strides in patient perception, improving from 53.4 percent of patients rating Barton a 9 or 10 out of 10 in late 2009, to 78.5 percent of patients rating Barton a 9 or 10 out of 10 as of March 31, 2013.

The latest score brings Barton into the top 17 percent of all hospitals in the United States and well above the California state average for patient experience.

Patient satisfaction improvement initiatives continue and we are proud of our achievements that have gained attention from several hospitals nationally and internationally who have come to visit us to learn best practices.

Last year, Barton Memorial Hospital once again earned the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for accreditation by demonstrating compliance with the Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety in hospitals. This voluntary process and accreditation award recognizes Barton's dedication to continuous compliance with the Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards.

A team of Joint Commission expert surveyors arrived

unannounced and evaluated Barton Memorial Hospital for compliance with standards of care specific to the needs of patients. In achieving Joint Commission accreditation, Barton has demonstrated its commitment to the highest level of care for its patients.

Barton is making a significant investment in quality on a daily basis and continues to put an emphasis on maintaining excellence and continually improving the care we provide. Barton is proud to be a leader in initiatives that improve patient care. While I hope that you will never have to come to Barton in an emergency, I wanted to share the good work and positive steps so you can feel comfortable and proud of your hometown hospital.

Christine O'Farrell is director of quality for Barton Health.