

What should I focus on if I don't have a Key Driver®?

Key Drivers are determined through statistical analysis using survey responses from patients discharged from the survey area; they tell you what aspects of care are most influential in creating excellent patient experiences. By helping narrow your focus on what is most important to your patients, Key Drivers serve as an appropriate starting point when you design action plans and strategies to improve the patient experience. Unfortunately, many areas of your hospital that impact the patient experience are not “survey areas.” For example, patients are not discharged from registration or environmental services, but these areas still need to know where to focus their patient experience improvement efforts. For areas like these that don't have Key Drivers, consider these options:

- **Pick the question on the survey that appropriately represents your area.** Many hospitals ask specific questions about registration, food, cleanliness, safety, etc. Investigate whether your respective question is a Key Driver for another unit or service line. If it is, offer your services to that respective manager.
- **Look at the Hospital-Level Key Drivers.** Hospital-Level Key Drivers tell you what is most influential to your patients' excellent experience. Aspects of care such as “Staff's Courtesy and Friendliness” and “Teamwork between Doctors, Nurses and Staff” are common Hospital-Level Key Drivers and are influenced by everyone involved in patient interactions.
- **Ask your staff what they believe is most important to delivering an excellent patient experience – they are a wealth of knowledge about your department and the patients it serves.** Talking with staff may give you new perspective on the area of focus, help clarify where and when the service quality is inconsistent, as well as generate new ideas for how to enhance the patient experience. Questions to help start the conversation include, “What are some ways we can show patients that we care about them?” or “What makes our services memorable to patients?” Use the information gathered to help determine which survey questions should be tracked.

Even without Key Drivers helping you narrow your focus, you can still move forward with strategies that increase patient perceptions. Remember to focus not simply on problems that lead to dissatisfaction, but on opportunities to wow. A lack of Key Drivers should not mean a lack of action. The important thing is to do something. The sooner we begin testing new processes and ways of interacting, the sooner we give more patients excellent experiences.

