

How do I use Voices[®] effectively?

For studies using Voices, PRC asks two open-ended questions:

1. ***“During your visit, was there anything that you felt was outstanding?”*** (Probe for specifics.)
2. ***“What could have been done to improve your visit?”*** (Probe for specifics.)

The ability to listen to patient comments allows hospital employees to hear the gratitude that patients have for their doctors and nurses, and to hear suggestions directly from patients. To get the most out of these comments, there are some useful guidelines to follow.

Using Voices on PRCEasyView.com[®]

Filter for “Excellent.” When attempting to move the Very Good and Good responses to Excellent, your focus should be on those patients who are happy with the care they are receiving. Add a filter for the Overall Quality of Care question and choose just the patients who responded Excellent, Very Good, or Good. Read their positive comments to help you and your staff brainstorm ways to wow all of your patients.

Take advantage of EasyViewtoYou. Use the EasyViewtoYou automated delivery service to ensure that you receive patient comments in a timely manner. It’s easy to think, “I’ll pull those comments when I have time.” It’s much harder to find that time. Using EasyViewtoYou guarantees that you’ll receive the comments on a regular basis.

Understanding Results

Don’t focus on the Nth case. When you read patient comments, look for trends. Don’t assume that all patients feel the way that one patient feels. It’s important to look for similar comments and themes. Finding those areas, interactions, and services that are mentioned by many patients will help you set priorities rather than put out each individual spark every time a negative comment is made.

Using Voices to Drive Improvement

Don’t argue with or discount a respondent’s comment. While a patient’s comment may not represent your reality, it is that patient’s reality and therefore valid. Rather than trying to prove that the patient is wrong, work with your team so that each patient would never feel that way again. Everyone views things from a different perspective; working to ensure that the perspective is as positive as possible will do far more than trying to convince others that the comment was wrong.

Share the recognition. Excerpts from the comments can be used as positive reinforcement on a bulletin board or played in a staff meeting to celebrate a specific employee, unit, or the hospital in general. These sound bites are great



for motivating staff and becoming examples of the types of experiences the hospital should be providing all of the time.

Give extra focus to the positive comments. It's easy to focus on the problems that patients mention in Voices. These problems are often stone-in-shoe type of problems, meaning they are clear (e.g., If the problem was noise, we need to reduce noise. If the problem was one rude nurse, we need to address that one rude nurse.). While the improvement comments are important – you want to ensure nothing bad is happening within the patient experience – they aren't the only area worthy of attention.

Best practicing organizations spend far more time focusing on what went right, than what went wrong. These organizations focus on using the positive comments to recognize staff, learn what's working, motivate employees, and improve staff morale. Employees will be more likely to come up with creative solutions that wow patients when they are in a positive frame of mind.

Use Voices as a part of your strategy for understanding patient experiences. While patient comments help provide more color to the survey results, your survey results using response scales asking about key areas of the patient experience are still the best way to understand the types of experiences you are delivering to your patients.

Patient comments do not contain silver bullets, but they are powerful when used appropriately. Following these best practice tips will help you get the most out of your patient comments. The comments are a powerful way to help you improve as an employee, as a department, and as a facility. Use them in a way that will help you become an organization that patients would recommend.

If you want to further discuss how best you can utilize Voices on PRCEasyView.com, please contact an EasyView® support specialist at 800-547-9584.

