

FIVE TAKEAWAYS



ENHANCING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE THROUGH EFFICIENT IMAGING WORKFLOWS

Patients have choices of where they receive care, and their loyalty comes at a premium. With the transition to value-based care, patient responses to HCAHPS surveys have significant reimbursement implications. How do you help ensure that every patient has a pleasant experience in the imaging department?

These five takeaways were presented in a webinar on October 13. The entire webinar can be accessed at ModernHealthcare.com/efficientimaging.

1 Standardize quality of care for patients

One of our main objectives was to improve the quality and satisfaction of patients. Nyack Hospital believed this started with prioritizing reads of the cases that came in. "When every single case is labeled STAT, it's very difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish what's important from what's not," said Dr. Evan Kaminer, Chairman of Radiology at Nyack Hospital. The hospital came up with a way to label each case with a priority of 1 to 99, based on certain factors like timing, patient location and exam type, and then color-code them so doctors know which cases are the most critical. This helped ensure cases were read in a timely manner, and that the patient's time wasn't wasted.

2 Incorporate technological tools to advance your processes

The workflow solution also called for some developments in the hospital's technology. Nyack Hospital began implementing more digital tools in their processes, such as notification engines to decrease acquisition time, voice recognition software's for decreased report distribution time, and PACS for quicker distribution of images. "We can get reports out to the hospital floor in 10 to 15 minutes, versus it taking days like it used to," Dr. Kaminer said.

3 Reduce per-capita costs of healthcare by minimizing length of stay

Nyack Hospital leveraged a new workflow to reduce the per-capita cost of healthcare for patients. It focused on minimizing length of stay—without the added costs of hiring staff. Their solution to prioritizing reads accomplished this. It decreased report turnaround time, which overall decreased length of stay for patients in high-demand areas. "At our institution, an average day improvement for length of stay is somewhere around \$1 million in hospital savings. By improving that, we added money to the bottom line for the hospital."

4 Providing better coordinated care with the rest of the hospital

By improving satisfaction among physicians, Nyack Hospital was able to improve relationships between different departments throughout the entire hospital. This, in turn, allowed the entire organization to collaborate effectively on implementing the new workflow solution. "This collaboration allowed a more efficient coordination of care, and optimized physicians to provide better services to patients," Dr. Kaminer said. "An overall performance improvement gave us consistency. And consistency equals quality. Now, we are able to show a better quality of care to our patients and to the entire institution."

5 Increase physician satisfaction

Another objective was to increase physician satisfaction. Nyack Hospital found that physicians' intense focus on their own throughput didn't allow them to understand their place in the bigger picture. Nyack's goal was to remove the physicians from the isolation of their own space and get them to become more integrated and visible around the organization. When you have more satisfied physicians, you're going to have more satisfied patients.

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