Happy Staff Make Happy Patients: Environmental Services at Mount Sinai Queens
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MISSION
To provide quality environmental services to Mount Sinai Queens by creating a clean and friendly patient environment.

AIM
To increase Press Ganey HCAHPS scores for “Cleanliness of hospital environment” to 70th percentile by year end 2017 and to be a Mount Sinai Health System leader in this metric.

BACKGROUND
Mount Sinai Queens is a small community hospital located in Astoria, New York, one of seven Mount Sinai Health System hospitals in the city. Our ambulatory pavilion was completed in 2016, but our inpatient units remain as they have for decades, with 3- and 4-bedded rooms as well as community hallway bathrooms. As a result of this we face a unique challenge in making sure that our rooms and facilities are as clean as possible for our patients, as well as ensuring that the hard work we put in leaves a positive impression on our patients.

ACTIONS TAKEN
- Identifying issues on our low performing units: Issues identified were based on before noon discharges which created challenges for the day shift staff to complete their daily cleaning routine. This directly resulted in the negative impression on our patients that their rooms were not being cleaned every day because the staff were being redirected to clean rooms from which patients were being discharged. We started using staff from less busy areas to assist with discharge cleaning in order to allow the housekeeper assigned to the unit to complete his or her workload.
- Simulation Training: In 2017 the Environmental Services management team sacrificed office space to create a simulation training room for staff to not only learn their practical duties but to practice their interpersonal skills with hands-on training. It also allowed our managers to identify staff who may need additional help with communication, interaction and cleaning skills. The program was so successful it was recognized thought the system and made into a best practice.
- Staff Recognition: each month an Employee of the Month was recognized by meeting certain criteria including appearance, attendance, most recognized by their peers, most recognized by patients, team player, and willingness to go above and beyond. The department also had a year-end week long celebration dedicated to recognizing the staff’s great work throughout the year. This included a breakfast, a luncheon, a scavenger hunt, a bingo game, giveaways and a raffle, and a catered party with a DJ and announcement of award winners.

RESULTS

COMMENTS
By enhancing our already robust training program, recognizing and celebrating staff, and creating an environment of inclusion, we have managed to make the Environmental Services department at Mount Sinai Queens one of the hospital’s most successful. By taking a grassroots approach to our aim statement, we were able to not only meet our goal of 70th percentile for the year 2017, but exceed it by four percentage points. We have distinguished ourselves as a model among the Mount Sinai Health System hospitals and look forward to sharing our knowledge with our sister hospitals so that we can become a national example of best practice.