

SERVICE RECOVERY

UNDERSTANDING THE “WHY”

We can all relate to times we have been disappointed by a service, restaurant, travel, or product experience. Chances are, there are instances when that individual or organization stepped in to recover your disappointment, as well as times when no one addressed your concern. How did their action (or inaction) influence your loyalty to that organization?

The reality in healthcare is that recovering disappointments is profound to shaping the memories, referrals, loyalty, quality, and service outcomes. We are a high-risk, high-emotion industry and despite our calls to serve and missions, we can make mistakes. According to research, 55% of individuals are already worried something might go wrong during their hospital stay¹. Knowing that we must work harder and harder to meet the demands of patients and consumers across our diverse continuum of care settings, evaluating the effectiveness of your service recovery process can pay dividends in creating patient and family loyalty.

WHAT IS SERVICE RECOVERY?

Service Recovery is a communication practice and process (including a set of tools and techniques) that can be used to make things right after something has gone wrong with the healthcare experience.

Service Recovery activates the instant we identify we have not met the patient or their loved one’s expectations.

WHEN DOES IT MATTER THE MOST?

- When a patient or a loved one is upset
- Failure to follow up on a request
- Wrong dietary order or something is missing
- Inappropriate or rude behavior from staff
- Lost or misplaced belongings
- Long waits without providing updates

Service Recovery is critical to any situation that embarrasses, inconveniences, angers, or disappoints a patient or their loved ones.

When it comes to service recovery, there are three rules to keep in mind:

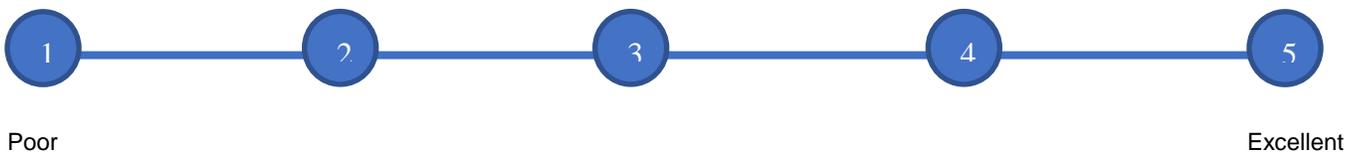


1. Do it right the first time.
2. Fix it properly if it ever fails.
3. Remember: There are no third chances."
 - Berry L. Discovering the soul of service: The nine drivers of sustainable business success. New York: Free Press; 1999.

1 Health Pulse of America Center for Survey Research – State University of New York, Stonybrook

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

- What is your current practice for responding to patient and family concerns?
- Who is involved? What is the process?
- Are frontline team members equipped and engaged to perceive service recovery situations and act with confidence to recover?
- What are the expectations for responding to concerns?
- How do you formally manage complaints?
- Rate the effectiveness of your service recovery process being used today



KEY SERVICE RECOVERY BEHAVIORS AND PROCESSES

- Create a culture of responsiveness to patient and family needs and expectations
- Equip all employees to address a service failure
- Turn a negative situation into a positive one
- Prevent a negative situation before it occurs
- Have the practice, policy, and procedure to address a situation
- Monitor trends and opportunities to improve



Build a Plan

Process: Steps employees should follow when practicing Service Recovery Tracking and Trending

Train and Develop

Why does this matter?
Communication Skills
Ways to Identify
Process and Resources

Learn and Validate

Monitor reasons for service recovery
Trend data for opportunities
Validate service recovery as a competency
Share successes and mistakes

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Through PRC's Excellence Accelerator, we work with organizations to establish and/or elevate Service Recovery Programs where leaders, staff, and physicians are trained, equipped, and given resources to succeed.

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