



Patient Satisfaction = Patient Safety

We are in an exciting and changing time in healthcare history. Never before have there been publicly reported quality measures or scores as there are now. Keeping residents and patients free from harm in a healthcare setting is widely becoming one of the biggest healthcare issues in our nation. Along with this new focus on care is a focus on satisfaction. If you will need to receive healthcare services within the near future you can almost guarantee that you will be asked about how satisfied you were with your care.

The good news for healthcare providers is that the data from resident and patient satisfaction scores can be of real value in determining how to better satisfy consumers. For instance, almost every satisfaction survey will have a question regarding safety. "I feel safe when receiving care in this institution" is an example of the type of safety question that might be asked. There is strong evidence of a correlation between how safe a person feels in the hospital or nursing home and how satisfied overall the patient or resident was with his or her care. Understanding that relationship can help a facility create an environment of safety that also ensures satisfaction. Some things you need to remember when looking at satisfaction questions:

- Don't assume the definition of the question. Safety can mean different things to different people. Ask patients and residents what it means to them to feel safe, and then provide measures to create that feeling.
- When a patient or resident identifies that feeling safe is related to clinical interventions such as not falling or not having any medication errors, include what the patient or resident is saying in his/her care plan. This will help everyone who is responsible for delivering services be aware of the needs and desires of the patient or resident.
- Communicate with the patient or resident what you are doing to meet his or her needs.
- Encourage your patients or residents to give feedback about how he or she is feeling regarding his or her safety, don't wait until the satisfaction survey to know how someone is feeling about your services.

What is important to remember is that a pressure issue begins with a Stage 1, a general reddened area, usually over a bony prominence. Identification is very important upon the admission MDS and any future assessments. For years, skilled nursing facilities have admitted patients from acute care with pressure areas, and have healed them quickly. A skilled nursing facility's risk is when a pressure area is acquired after the resident has been admitted. Identification of the risk, Evaluation of potential treatment, Implementation of that treatment and Modification of that treatment as necessary is critical to a successful pressure prevention program. Products that help to map or identify where a person is at risk to increase the likelihood of a pressure ulcer be extremely effective in solving this issue.