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## **MT. SINAI QUEENS HOSPITAL**

### **Improving Response to Call Lights through Performance Improvement**

*The Labor Management Project supported Mt. Sinai Queens' work to improve staff responsiveness by helping to establish and facilitate a successful performance improvement initiative.*

**The Challenge:** Patients' experience in the hospital is influenced by their perception of receiving the help they need when they ask for it. Mt. Sinai Queens was interested in improving response to patient call lights. The hospital identified a unit, 3 East, with which to initiate joint labor/management work to improve the patient experience and document the results.

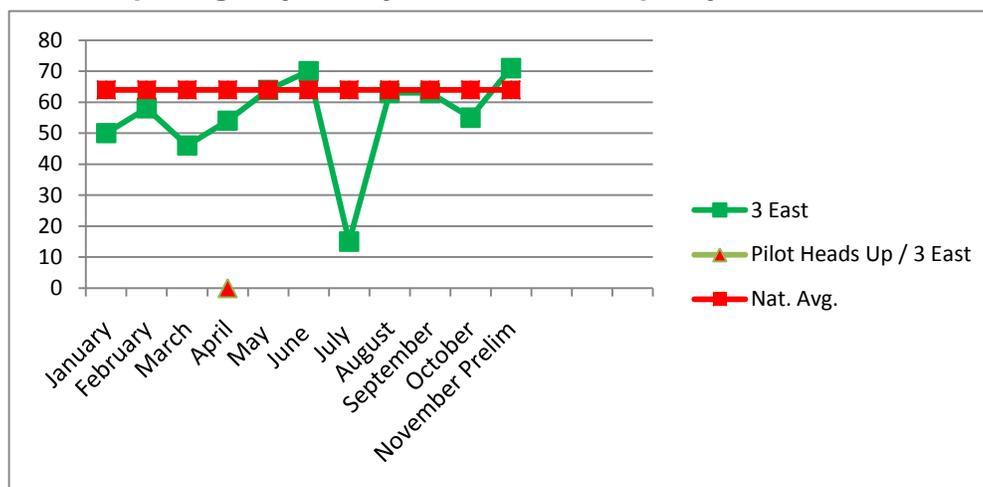
**The Solution:** The Labor Management Project provided facilitation and training to help establish a multi-disciplinary team with 50% membership from 1199SEIU and 50% from hospital management. The team collected data through focus groups, an employee survey, and by measuring the response time to call lights in order to understand the issues and explore solutions. The team then developed a curriculum and training program called "**HEADS UP**," an acronym that provides guidance to all staff to respond to call lights: **H** = **H**eads up! Look up when you are in patient areas and be aware if call lights are lit; **E** = **E**nter the room and introduce yourself if call light is on; **A** = **A**ttend to the patient – ask what the patient needs; **D** = **D**etermine what you can or cannot do; **S** = **S**afety first! Make sure never to put the patient at risk; **U** = **U**nderstand what the patient needs and provide assistance if you can; **P** = **P**ass it on if you cannot fill the need yourself. Staff received training, including those in housekeeping, engineering, food and nutrition, laboratory, and transport.

**The Results:** Patients' perception of responsiveness of staff increased substantially over several months following the implementation of HEADS UP. Success in the unit led the hospital to expand the initiative throughout the hospital, including *Adopt a Unit*: members of the labor/management team conduct observations and provide support and feedback to staff on other units. The aim is to help with implementation of the Heads Up initiative and to reinforce Heads Up behavior. The team is also developing an award to be presented to the unit with the highest responsiveness score monthly.

Sustaining the gain has been a challenge, especially with new competing priorities. The team is in the process of reviewing the program and generating ideas to revisit the in-service training, implementing monthly activities around HEADS UP, and marketing. A group of Labor and Management Sponsors are working on a reward and recognition program to further engage staff.

#### **Responsiveness Scores: 3 East (Pilot Unit), 2012**

**Percent of Patients Reporting they "Always" received the help they needed as soon as they wanted it**



**Positive Feedback:**

Labor and management sponsors attributed the success to the strong engagement and valuing of all performance improvement team members. **“This is the best team I’ve ever worked with,”** stated Ilyssa Decasperis, a key union sponsor. **“Everybody’s voice was recognized.”** In addition, she stated, the diverse labor/management team was able to communicate well with the rest of the hospital. **“We got a lot of buy-in.”**