

Pathway to Excellence® Case Study: Meridian Sub-Acute Rehabilitation at Wall

Meridian Sub-Acute Rehabilitation at Wall provides complex medical care and rehabilitation programs to people of all ages. Part of Meridian Health in New Jersey, the inpatient facility offers an alternative to prolonged hospital care. Nurses share a commitment to high quality, collaborative, personalized care that promotes the maximum level of patient independence.

When nursing leaders sought ways to improve nursing practice, job satisfaction and retention, they turned to ANCC's Pathway to Excellence Program® as a roadmap. They pursued Pathway designation to set themselves apart, attract and keep the best and brightest nursing talent, and build an organizational culture where nurses would flourish and patients would heal.

Improved Retention and Satisfaction

Pursuing and achieving Pathway designation produced striking retention and satisfaction improvements throughout the organization. Nurse and certified nurse assistant (CNA) retention rates went from the lowest among Meridian's five rehabilitation facilities to the highest. Giving employees a voice in shared governance improved job satisfaction from 78% in 2013 to 96% just two years later. Higher nurse and CNA satisfaction led to higher patient satisfaction, rising from 86% to 93% in three years. For the first time in its history, Meridian Sub-Acute Rehabilitation Center at Wall has waiting lists for both patient admissions and nursing positions.

Reduced Readmission Rates

As part of its Pathway experience, the organization implemented two new patient care protocols that impact hospital readmission rates: a monthly interdisciplinary collaborative root cause analysis to review patients' transitions of care across the continuum, and a weekly Home Care Collaborative with nurse-to-nurse handoffs. Patients benefit from improved provider relationships, and a faster recovery and return to the quality of life they desire. The current overall readmission rate for Medicare patients at Meridian Sub-Acute at Wall is 11%, outpacing the state of New Jersey at 19%, and the nation at 17.5%. In addition, the organization continues to earn CMS five-star ratings for survey, staffing and quality measures. It is the only post-acute care facility in the United States to hold both CARF certification and Pathway to Excellence designation.

A Bonding Experience

Pathway to Excellence created a bond among all disciplines and members of the healthcare team. It helped to formalize and recognize work that was often overlooked. The Pathway standards provide education and evidence of high quality care and a stronger shared governance structure supports and promotes further collaboration and growth.

"Pathway designation sends a message to the nursing community that this is a facility that supports nurses, gives them a voice, and helps them develop and flourish professionally," says Patricia Worth, RN, MS, ANP-BC, NEA-BC, Chief Nurse Executive and Vice President of Clinical Services. "Our culture brings job satisfaction, which results in patient satisfaction and improved clinical outcomes."

At a Glance

Meridian Sub-Acute Rehabilitation at Wall provides high quality, personalized medical care and rehabilitation to people with neurological, speech and orthopedic disorders, cancer, complex wounds, amputations, nerve injuries, and more. The inpatient facility is part of Meridian Health, a multi-hospital system serving patients throughout central New Jersey and the Jersey Shore. Physicians, nurses, CNAs, and therapists work together to facilitate the most successful recovery possible for each patient.

Results

- Improved employee job satisfaction from 78% to 96%
- Improved nurse and CNA retention rates from 93% to 98%
- Improved patient satisfaction from 86% to 93%
- Reduced readmission rates to 11% - lower than state and national rates
- Achieved CMS five-star ratings in survey, staffing and quality measures

About the Pathway to Excellence® Program

The Pathway to Excellence® Program recognizes a healthcare organization's commitment to creating a positive nursing practice environment. The Pathway to Excellence in Long Term Care® program is the first to recognize this type of supportive work setting specifically in long-term care facilities. Pathway organizations focus on collaboration, career development, and accountable leadership to empower nurses.