

“IT STARTS AT THE DOOR”

CUSTOMER SERVICE

CHCAMS 35th Annual Conference
Thursday, August 11, 2022

“IT STARTS AT THE DOOR”

- This presentation will review how leadership, business excellence and compassion ensures a positive patient experience.

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- This presentation will identify primary goals of customer service, identify challenges in customer service, identify practical tools and strategies needed to provide quality service.

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- This presentation will explore the role that common courtesy, cultural competency and patience play as vital role in growing your business.

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- **CHCAM:**
- Community Health Centers have been an integral part of Mississippi for over 50 years. As the place where the health center movement began, our health centers have been devoted to improving access and providing Mississippians with quality care. The need is great, and health centers have responded by expanding a presence in over 70 of the Magnolia State’s 82 counties.

- Mission Statement The Community Health Center Association of Mississippi supports its members in their collaborative efforts, and advocates for the provision of equal access to quality, comprehensive health care services and for the elimination of health disparities in the state.

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- Serving 71 counties
- Patients served 305,000
- 50+ years strong
- Primary care includes medical, dental, vision and behavioral health

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- Patients who feel like they matter and who feel as if their needs are met will become regular patients.
- Patients tell others about the care or lack thereof they receive while in your care.
- Poor service is the number one reason American companies lose business.
- A dissatisfied customer tell approximately 20 people while a satisfied customer tells approximately 7 people.

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- Food for thought:
- **You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.**

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- Question: Is customer service at risk of becoming an endangered species? Extinct?

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- **Customer service is:**
- Having a fresh approach to each of your patients and coworkers.
- Finding new ways to do things better all the time.
- Working to solve problems as soon as they come up.
- Keeping a positive attitude even when you are having a bad day.
- Treating your customers like you would want to be treated as a customer.

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- Food for thought:
- **People do not forget bad customer service.**

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- **Who are your customers?**
- Patients
- Patients’ families
- Visitors
- Anyone you talk to about your company.
- Your co-workers.

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- **Food for thought:**
- 90% of unhappy patients will move on quietly to a new health care organization.
- It cost up to 10 more to attract a new patient than it does to keep an existing patient.

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- **Solution oriented and time management:**
- Address the healthcare issue at hand.
- Listen to the patient.
- Take the information correctly/clearly.
- Let them see that you are striving to find a solution.
- Effective yet time conscious.

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- **Challenges in customer service:**
- Healthcare is a people-oriented business.
- Every day we spend a lot of time with patients, their family members, co-workers and vendors.
- Getting along with people is part of the job.
- When we know what to expect we can better prepare to serve.

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- Don't forget to keep the “*care*” in healthcare!

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- **Challenging patients/family members:**
- Demanding
- Irritable
- Aggressive
- Critical
- Depressed
- Abusive
- Scary
- Sarcastic
- Hostile
- Angry
- Argumentative

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- **Reasons some patients are difficult:**
- Suffering from illness.
- Dealing with a disability.
- Experiencing pain – all day every day.
- Feeling lonely or depressed.
- Taking medication that makes them act differently than normal.

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- **“Difficult people are trying to grab your power from you...because they feel powerless.”**

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- Culture – “characteristics of a particular group of people defined by everything from a language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.
- **Patient’s/Family’s views regarding:**
- Health and suffering
- Healthcare, healthcare providers, end of life decisions
- Religious and spiritual beliefs, practices, rituals

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- **Consider:**
- Language
- Time orientation
- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Personal space
- Touching

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- **Tools/Strategies:**
- Try hard NOT to take their comments/behaviors personal.
- Try hard NOT to overreact when dealing with a difficult person.
- Tell the person what you are going to do and why before you do it.
- Offer another place in the business for the person to “vent” if possible/
- Don’t allow other people to control your moods, actions, behavior.
- Be patient.

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- **Tools/Strategies:**
- Give praise, compliments
- Watch your body language. Smile
- Speak slowly and calmly.
- Listen to what the person is saying or not saying.
- Don't waste your time trying to change people who behave in a difficult manner. Change the way you react. Be the role model.
- First step is to understand your own feelings about “different”.

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- Question: Would you want to change places with any of your patients?

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- **WRAP UP AND REVIEW:**
- Know your company and know your job.
- Be polite and helpful.
- Have a positive attitude.
- Show an interest in your patients.
- Be creative.
- Be on time.
- Work well as a team.
- Have a sense of responsibility.
- Look and act professional.

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- REFERENCES – CREDITS:
- A Professional Growth Module: “Understanding Customer Service”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- A Professional Growth Module: “Working with Difficult & Combative People”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- A Professional Growth Module: “Professionalism & Work Ethic”: In the Know, Inc. Inservice Club – www.knowingmore.com
- 15 Customer Service Skill that Every Employee Needs. Help Scout – www.helpscout.net

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- Thank You!!!!
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