



A Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan have been developed for the Methodist Hospitals Inpatient Rehabilitation Program to demonstrate how Methodist Hospitals will respond to the diversity of our stakeholders, including patients, employees, and outside vendors. We want to enable staff to work effectively cross culturally with each other, as well as, the patients and families we serve by understanding, appreciating and respecting differences and similarities in beliefs, values and practices within and between cultures.

Methodist Hospitals maintains a policy of nondiscrimination with all employees and applicants that apply for employment here at the hospitals. We offer equal employment and advancement opportunities to qualified individuals on the basis of merit, competence and qualifications without regard to race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, disability or genetic information. The Rehabilitation staff receives cultural diversity training at the time of hire and with yearly competencies.

The Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan addresses the following areas: age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, culture, socioeconomic status and language. Cultural Competency and Diversity is part of the orientation process. The Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan is reviewed annually for relevance and updated as needed by the Rehabilitation Leadership Team. This information is shared with our staff and is available on our website for our patients and stakeholders.

Culture

Our patient demographics vary from year to year. The Southlake Campus (Merrillville) was 62% African American, 33% Caucasian, 5% Other. The community of Merrillville has a diverse population which is 45.5% are African American, 32.6% Caucasian and 17.3% Hispanic. Methodist Hospitals ranks #1 in the state and in the top 10 nationwide on racial inclusivity.

The majority of our patients speak English, 99% at the Southlake Campus. In the event that the patient does not speak English, the hospital contracts with *Pacific Interpreters* to assist the patient in their spoken language. Cultural requests related to the patient's diet are considered unless the physician or dietician indicates otherwise. Much of our written materials are available in Spanish and other work sheets and therapeutic tasks are utilized that contain culturally enriching information. Again, interpreters are available to assist with translation.

Our rehabilitation social workers and discharge planner work with external stakeholders such as nursing homes, home health agencies and DME vendors to ensure that patients with different cultural and language needs upon discharge are matched with the appropriate facility to provide continued services.

AGE

Our patient ages were as follows for this past year –Southlake Campus had 7% in the 18-44 age range, 36% in the 45-64 age range, and 57% in the 65 and over age range. Our rehab unit most frequently serves the 65 and over age range. As a result, we provide more of a focus on activities of daily living to return to community/home so the patient(s) can care for themselves with greater independence.

The town of Merrillville 2024 estimated population is 36,456. The age range provided from the US Census Bureau indicated 5.6% of population under 5 years of age, 22.4% under 18 years of age, 52.2% 19-64 years of age and 19.8% 65 years and older.

Our social workers and discharge planners are sensitive to our patients' needs for placement and services needed based on cultural and language awareness. The family is involved along with the patient when additional services are needed after discharge. The goal is to keep the patient in the community and close to their families. In the event that a patient is of a younger age, the social workers would work with the patient and family to identify an age appropriate facility if extended care is needed.

GENDER

Our patient demographics last year at the Southlake Campus last year were 46% female and 54% male. Our staffing gender of therapists, nursing and ancillary staff consists of 87.5% female and 12.5% male.

Care is taken to accommodate all patient requests if a male patient prefers a male staff member to assist them with toileting, bathing, etc. Rarely do we care for traumatic brain injury patients but in the event that we have one, and they are sexually inappropriate behaviors or aggression, staffing will be adjusted. We also have the ability to utilize the male staff from the acute side when necessary.

We do not discriminate in hiring or advancement based on gender.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Here at The Methodist Hospitals we respect patients of all sexual orientation. When we have a patient with a need for additional support or concern regarding sexual orientation, this can be addressed with our social workers and/or consultation with our clinical psychologist or psychiatric providers on staff. We will also assist our patient locating community resources to address this need.

Sexual orientation is not a demographic that is tracked for our patients or staff due to privacy issues. However, patients are able to indicate their preferred pronouns and how they would like to be identified.

SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

We admit patients with a variety of spiritual beliefs and some with no particular spiritual belief. In keeping with the Methodist Hospitals' commitment to provide quality and compassionate care – our Chaplains work to meet the non-medical needs of our patients by offering spiritual and emotional support. The Chapel at each campus is available to our patients 24/7 as a quiet place of prayer and meditation for all patients, families and staff.

If we have patients who need special food related to their spiritual beliefs, we will accommodate the requests as much as possible with our dietary department. Family members are able to bring food in that fit the spiritual beliefs of the patient if it is medically cleared by the physician. Further, on admission the Dietician addresses food insecurities with each patient.

In the event that we have a request from staff related to religious beliefs for clothing, we will make accommodations as long as it does not pose a safety risk. Staff is able to make special requests to work or not to work certain days of the week and/or holidays based on religious beliefs. The leadership team in rehab makes every effort to accommodate these requests while still meeting the needs of our patients.

As an employer, we do not discriminate based on spiritual beliefs or religious preference of our staff. Again, due to privacy issues, this is not a demographic that is tracked for our staff.

Upon admission, patients are asked their religious preference but are free to decline to answer this question. At the Southlake Campus the three most common religions of our patients are: Non-denominational, Baptist, and Catholic.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Patients receive care regardless of their socioeconomic status. Methodist Hospitals have received an "A" grade for outstanding social responsibility which takes into account metrics of health equity, patient outcomes, value of care, and cost efficiency. Services at the Southlake Campus are typically funded by Medicare 28%, Humana Medicare 11% and Blue Cross Medicare Advantage 11% being our main providers. With a percentage of our patients uninsured or underinsured, the Rehabilitation Unit works diligently to make sure the needs of our patients are met after discharge from the program to return successfully back to the community. When a patient is discharged from the program, our case managers assist the patients and family with accessing social services such as disability and social security.

As an employer, we do not discriminate in hiring based on socioeconomic status. Our advancement decisions are based on merit not socioeconomic status. Again, this is a demographic we do not track in our patients or staff due to privacy issues.

LANGUAGE

On occasion, we have a patient who is a non-English speaker. Methodist Hospitals offer interpreter services for our patients when indicated. At the Southlake Campus 100% of our patients were English speaking. We have discharge instructions in both English and Spanish to offer our patients.

Our employees must be able to speak, read and write English. We do have some bilingual employees on staff.

OUR COMMITMENTS

Methodist Hospitals Rehabilitation Unit recognizes and respects the value of a diverse community. We are committed to the people we serve by:

- Providing unbiased, respectful, and meaningful service delivery
- Celebrating and honoring the cultural traditions, values, and beliefs
- Encouraging and promoting an appreciation for a diverse community
- Maintaining a respectful working environment
- Modeling the diversity of our community, especially regarding staffing, volunteers, practicum students, and the board of directors
- Demonstrating policy that ensures zero tolerance towards negative actions and behaviors directed toward unique groups throughout the workplace
- Providing an accessible workplace for those with special needs/requests and provide reasonable accommodations
- Providing communication systems that offer Team Members an opportunity to report acts of harassment and discrimination
- Enhancing cultural competency and improving the employee training and knowledge base content
- Regularly reinforcing its commitment to diversity
- Increasing the use of diverse images in all marketing materials
- Annually assessing the diversity of the staff of the organization
- Conducting ongoing cultural competency education with staff
- Gathering best practices on current rehabilitation and return to community strategies
- Identifying resources to translate key documents, information, and websites into several languages

GOALS

The goals of the Cultural Competency Plan are to:

- (1) Improve communication to and for individuals whom cultural, linguistic, or auditory/verbal barriers are present

- a. Ensure patients have access to video translation services as needed
 - b. Provide equipment/tools to help patients with communicating when they may need additional assistance due to auditory or verbal impairment
 - c. Provide documents that are translated into patients primary language
- (2) Improve employees' understanding and sensitivity to cultural diversity within Methodist Hospital and the persons served
- a. Implement yearly cultural diversity/sensitivity training for all staff
 - b. Create an environment where diverse perspectives are valued
- (3) Improve services, care, and quality outcomes for person served
- a. Pursue grant funding for equipment modernization
 - b. Monthly assessment of program outcomes and continued commitment to improvement
- (4) Maximize the development/delivery of person centered care/service plans for consumers
- a. Early screening of patient barriers upon discharge
 - b. Creation of rehab plans that take meet the individualized need of each patient
- (5) Create/maintain a working environment that respects/embraces cultural diversity
- a. To ensure a diverse workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve
 - b. Seek out opportunities for people to learn about our diverse community within our staff and the community we serve

Reviewed and approved by:

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