

A Look Outside The Lines from Strategy Advantage

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# OUTSIDE **THE** LINES

## ALL ABOUT THE CARE EXPERIENCE

September 19, 2017

*This is the 4th issue in a 4-part series titled: [Pushing the Boundaries: Healthcare's Front Doors](#). This series features healthcare leaders who are making progress toward the goals of addressing the healthcare consumer, access, care coordination and care experiences. Click [here](#) to access the entire series or to review other Outside the Lines series we've published.*

In 2013, the [Harvard Business Review wrote](#) that improving the patient experience was “rapidly becoming a top priority in healthcare.” Six recommendations, based on a survey of hospital CEOs and COOs in 2012, were listed as necessary for improving the patient experience: new facilities, private rooms, food on demand, bedside-interactive computers, unrestricted visiting hours, and more quiet time so patients could rest.

Today, patient – and the broader orientation of “care” – experience across the continuum has become widely significant for all of healthcare, so much so that experience is now integrated into many health systems' quality definitions, and Chief Experience Officers are leading system-wide platforms for change and continuous improvement. That said, there is still much to do. [Forbes wrote](#) in early 2017, “It has been years since the healthcare industry started talking about the ‘patient experience,’ but it still has a long way to go to catch up to what most people want and expect from them. The problem is that healthcare companies should design patient experiences like companies design customer experiences, but they're not.”

This *Outside the Lines* issue continues a series titled “[Pushing the Boundaries: Healthcare's Front Doors](#).” This week, we cover the topic of care experiences. When we started this series just a couple of months ago, we featured [a Wall Street Journal article](#) that listed four recommendations based on a survey of consumers. Top of the list was a personalized experience with doctors and other healthcare providers, different from the

inpatient-centric, brick-and-mortar-like patient experience recommendations of the CEOs and COOs listed above. With today's hyper-sensitized priority to ensure that patients and consumers are at the center of all they do, many health systems, providers and others are on a journey of change to focus on patient relationships and improve experience. The following features a handful of healthcare leaders who are making progress toward this goal.

- [According to MultiCare](#) Health System – a statewide health system based in Tacoma, Washington – when a patient or person seeks healthcare services, who they first connect with influences how that person's care will proceed. That "first contact" with the healthcare delivery system is the "first touch point." MultiCare's "First-Touch" approach encompasses retail-like access, many different options for consumer and patient touch points, and a more highly engaged patient/consumer experience provided via virtual care, e-visits, new urgent care options and other access channels.
- [At Dignity Health](#) based in San Francisco, it is believed that providers who want to improve the patient experience must examine the full "journey" of care, including a careful look at a variety of moments along that journey. As an example, Dignity Health partnered with [Docent Health](#), a patient experience company, to build an end-to-end care journey for maternity services. The system is planning to expand the effort to include oncology, orthopedics and other services lines. Data collected so far shows positive results. Yelp responses at four Dignity facilities in Arizona showed that more than 60% of maternity patients who posted reviews had a favorable view of the experience.
- Atlanta based Piedmont Healthcare is adding other twists to the patient/care experience. According to Piedmont's Chief Consumer Officer, "Healthcare is the ultimate consumer business. With our goal of 'Exceptional Care,' consumers are at the center of our enterprise strategy, and the consumer is the lens through which every decision we make is being run. For every decision, we are looking at both the clinical workflow and the consumer workflow." With this as a priority, Piedmont added a [mobile wayfinding platform](#) that provides patients, families and others step-by-step directions to any destination within Piedmont's hospitals and related points of interest, such as urgent care locations or doctors' offices. Developed in collaboration with Atlanta-based [Gozio Health](#), the PiedmontNow app is available on all Android and iPhone mobile devices and can be downloaded for free via the App Store. Katie Logan, Vice President of Experience at Piedmont Healthcare, says "We are always striving to perfect the patient experience at our hospitals and across our health system. With Gozio's new wayfinding platform, guests can feel confident that they can arrive at their destination on time, unstressed and at the right location." Various companies specialize in health system wayfinding including the integration of very cool, mobile and digital app-based tools. [The GNU Group](#) in the Bay Area has been doing this for years, for clients including Kaiser, Sutter Health, Dignity, John Muir Health, One Medical Group and others. I toured GNU Group's corporate office just a few weeks ago and was blown away by [the possibilities](#) of a very new,

fresh and different experience for patients, families and others in our care settings.

Increasingly, experience will be more important as patients in your hospitals gauge your quality, and as health systems earn reimbursement and incentive revenue based on metrics such as HCAHPS. Also, it will be that much more imperative as you build loyalty with consumers who may never touch your hospitals, but who are very central to your brand in the community. But mostly, providing the best patient/consumer/customer experience that best serves them and their needs is at the heart of the health system mission. What could be more important?

Always looking ahead,



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## DO YOU KNOW...

The title of Chief Experience Officer (or CXO) in health systems is catching on and evolving fast. [According to Becker's Hospital Review](#), CXOs mostly report directly to their health system CEOs or CNOs. Also, more than 50% of CXOs oversee performance improvement, quality improvement and compliments/complaints management. The size of their teams has doubled since 2015. In addition, more and more health system executives are being evaluated and incentivized based on patient experience scores.

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## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...

Culture in healthcare organizations can be especially challenging and can be a barrier to changing the organization's thinking on patient experience. According to respondents in the 2017 *HealthLeaders* Patient Experience Survey, 31% of respondents noted that organizational culture is the biggest stumbling block to creating an effective patient experience program at their organizations. Also challenging for the experience agenda is that patient care is increasingly taking place outside the four walls of hospitals. Care today includes the full range of the continuum—primary care offices, ambulatory and outpatient locations, convenient care clinics, skilled nursing facilities and home health — which often places it outside the reach of direct management control. *HealthLeaders* published a detailed piece on these challenges and how to overcome them in an August 2017 article titled, "Patient Experience Excellence." You can read more [here](#).

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## A "LEADING" LEADER IN HEALTHCARE ...

[At Kaiser Permanente](#) in Southern California, Nirav Shah, MD is working with the non-profit Health Leads organization (one of the many disruptor companies featured in our [ZIGZAG Healthcare library](#)) to "fundamentally redefine what counts as healthcare." Together, they are coordinating social needs that hospitals and health systems don't typically focus on as they think about the broadest definition of the care experience. Dr. Shah, a former New York Secretary of Health, now serves as the Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for clinical operations for Kaiser Permanente Southern California. He says Kaiser Permanente decided to look at healthcare "as a math problem to determine how to maximize total health by looking at all parts of the equation." For example, 65% of U.S. residents have their high blood pressure under control, while 90% have it under control at Kaiser Permanente. The last 10% consists of some of the highest-cost and difficult to help patients. Kaiser, Shah says, is failing these people somehow, so now employees call these patients at home to see if they need help with food, housing, transportation or paying their utility bills. "The answer was a resounding yes," he says.

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