



Temecula Valley
HOSPITAL

Temecula Valley Hospital
31700 Temecula Parkway
Temecula, CA 92592
temeculavalleyhospital.com

Darlene Wetton, Chief Executive Officer

Darlene.Wetton@uhsinc.com

951.331.2216

Improving Patient Safety through Leadership Engagement
Focus Area: Patient Safety

At Temecula Valley Hospital, we pride ourselves on providing patient-centered care. One of our focus areas is patient safety and we make continuous improvements to ensure the safety of every patient that enters our facility. Our application for the 2016 Vanguard Award is based on our mutual commitment with the Hospital Quality Institute to improve patient safety and quality of care for all patients.

— **Darlene Wetton, Chief Executive Officer, Temecula Valley Hospital**



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II. Executive Summary

As a new hospital, establishing a culture of patient safety and compassion was paramount to success. The mission of Temecula Valley Hospital is to deliver exceptional and compassionate patient care. The hospital delivers on this mission through strong and innovative leadership. Temecula Valley Hospital utilizes Leadership huddles and patient rounding as an integral part of daily operations. Leaders are highly engaged in every aspect of the organization and understand that the most important focus is the patient. Leadership patient safety huddles occur twice a day; each morning to immediately address any patient safety issues from the previous 24 hours and again at 3:00 p.m. to address feedback directly received from patients and visitors. Leadership rounding occurs when members of the leadership team (executives and department heads) perform patient visits similar to those performed by clinical staff. The purpose of leadership rounding is to make contact with patients and their families/visitors to check that the hospital's standards of safety are being upheld, ensure that patient needs are being met and to gather feedback.

In addition to rounding on the patient, the nursing staff assigned to each patient is also rounded on to gather feedback, discuss barriers to care or any patient safety concerns. This helps to promote a culture of teamwork in which everyone works together to provide exceptional care. The benefit of leadership rounding is twofold: leaders can address patient issues and work to provide immediate resolutions; and safety standards are reinforced among staff as they are encouraged to discuss issues with leaders and propose solutions to improve patient safety.

Leadership huddles and rounding add yet another touchpoint to address the needs and safety of each patient. Performing additional visits to patient rooms helps ensure that all safety precautions are being met and that quick resolutions can be made should issues arise.

III. Background

Temecula Valley Hospital opened in October of 2013 as a 140 bed acute care hospital. Every leader in the organization was focused on the patient's safety and experience from opening day. Huddles of the leadership team were conducted every four hours around-the-clock for the first month and then tapered down to every eight hours. Within six months, patient safety huddles were adjusted to twice a day. These huddles were proven to be effective in addressing issues in real time to ensure patient safety, so after three years there are no plans to eliminate them and they will continue to be held twice a day.

In addition to huddles, the leadership team also performs rounding and every leader, including executives, is engaged. Rounding allows the leadership team to identify and address patient satisfaction and safety issues while also demonstrating a culture of care to be replicated by all staff. Feedback and issues from rounding are discussed at huddles and the team works collaboratively to find solutions and make necessary improvements. By participating in both huddles and rounding, the leadership team is continuously engaged in a team environment where all members assist another and information is disseminated equally to all departments.





IV. Process

Two leadership huddles are held during the day with the first occurring at 8:30 a.m. All aspects of patient care are open for discussion at this time. Issues occurring within the hospital are presented and department leaders work collaboratively to identify and implement solutions. If an immediate resolution cannot be found or requires additional follow-up, a breakout team is assembled and tasked with identifying a solution. The statuses of issues from previous days are reported on and are either updated or closed.

Leadership convenes for the second huddle at 3:00 pm. In this huddle, the focus is on the overall patient experience, including patient safety. It is during this time that each member of the leadership team, including executives, is assigned to a nurse and their patients for rounding. Feedback and issues from the previous day's rounds are discussed and unresolved issues are elevated to the appropriate contact person for resolution.

During patient rounds, the leadership team engages with both the nurse and the patients. Discussions with the nurse allow for the exchange of information about assigned patients and also allows for open dialogue regarding concerns, suggestions and questions. This allows for leadership to hear about any challenges the clinical staff is facing as well as ideas that may help increase patient safety and overall patient care.

When entering patient rooms, each leadership team member visually surveys the room to check for patient safety issues, cleanliness and overall comfort of the patient. They also check that the patient's in-room whiteboard is completed with correct information and that the call button is within reach. After a brief visual survey, the team member then engages the patient and any family/visitors that are present. A general script is as follows:

- Is someone coming by to check on you every hour?
- When was the last time you saw the doctor?
- Do you feel you are being properly cared for?
- Is there anything you need?
- What can we do better?

Having this discussion allows for the leadership team to assess the patient's overall experience and discover any gaps in care that need to be attended to, including safety risks. The responsibility is on the leadership team to resolve any issues or elevate concerns to the appropriate department if they cannot provide immediate resolution.





V. Results

The experience and feedback gathered from leadership huddles and rounding has resulted in the implementation of several patient safety initiatives:

- **Department Huddles:** With leadership huddles as the model, each department has implemented their own huddle to discuss issues and share ideas and feedback.
- **Culture of Care:** The hospital has established a culture that focuses on collaboration and teamwork as part of providing patient-centered care. All departments work together to resolve issues and maintain a focused effort to promote patient safety and exceptional care. A *Hospital Survey on Patient Safety Culture* showed that staff rated teamwork within units, communication openness and management support as the hospital's main strengths in the area of patient safety.
- **Fall Protocols:** Fall kits (yellow blankets and yellow slippers that help identify fall-risk patient from the hallway) are now provided. Chair alarms are provided and clinical supervisors perform rounds to ensure that bed alarms are engaged for all fall-risk patients. These measures have resulted in a significant decrease in patient falls.
- **Access to Call Buttons:** All staff members are mandated to ensure that call buttons are within patient reach when performing rounds.
- **Medication Instruction:** Nurses utilize a medication education tool to help patients better understand the medications that they are being given.
- **Coordination of Meals and Insulin for Diabetics:** Improved communication between the dietary office and nursing staff allows for a diabetic patient's nurse to be instantly notified when a food tray has been delivered.

VI. Demonstration of Achievement

At Temecula Valley Hospital, there is a deep-rooted culture that focuses on the tenets of teamwork, compassion and patient safety. This culture has been perpetuated by a leadership team that demonstrates a commitment to patient care through huddles and rounding. Leadership huddles and rounding have resulted in shared accountability as all department leaders must collaborate to resolve issues and continuously improve patient safety and care.

The leadership team has developed a model of teamwork that is reflected throughout the hospital. All staff members work together towards achieving shared goals. Departments work together to resolve issues and no department works independently of the others.





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This shared commitment is best demonstrated through the many safety initiatives that have been proposed, implemented and executed throughout the hospital.

Leadership huddles and rounding have also affected the patient experience as patients see that every staff member in the hospital, including executives, greatly cares about their safety and wellbeing. Several patients have expressed appreciation that they are visited by leaders and have the platform to share their feedback, as well as for leadership's commitment to resolve issues.

VII. Sustainability

Leadership huddles and rounding will continue to play a significant role at Temecula Valley Hospital as they have been effective in addressing issues and ensuring patient safety. In addition, these practices have become engrained in the hospital's culture. All departments have embraced huddling and the value of rounding has resulted in significant patient safety improvements. Leaders within the organization are expected to embrace the culture and this includes engaging in efforts to improve patient safety and care through huddles and rounding.

VIII. Key Takeaways

- Get leadership staff engaged and consistently reinforce a patient-centered culture.
- Provide shadowing opportunities for new leadership employees so that they learn expectations and protocols for rounding.
- Develop a generalized script that all members of the team will follow to ensure a consistent patient experience.
- Ensure that leadership team members are engaging with clinical staff on the floor in order to create open dialogue about concerns and suggestions for improvement. This is most effectively coordinated through the assignment of a leader to an individual nurse. The leader rounds on every patient within that nurse's assignment and then provides immediate feedback to that nurse.
- Track information from patient safety huddles and leadership rounding in order to monitor for trends.
- Provide the opportunity for all team members to provide feedback following patient rounds and ensure that all open issues have been resolved.

