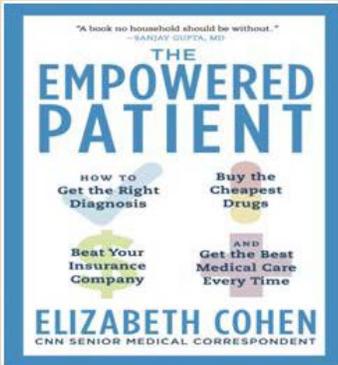


The Patient Experience Post

Healthcare's Resource for
Service Excellence
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Since the mid-1990s, Baird has helped healthcare organizations nationwide improve the patient experience and enhance organizational culture. Baird's culture assessment and diagnosis include experience mapping, medical mystery shopping, and focus groups to reveal the real customer experiences within your organization. Using your patients' experiences, Baird and her team prescribe critical next steps for improving patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores.

Good Read: *The Empowered Patient*

by Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA

There is absolutely no doubt that we are in an era of consumer-driven healthcare. Now, more than any other time in history, consumers have access to vital medical information and are using it to actively engage in their care. Healthcare consumers are internet savvy, connected, and asking questions. My question to the healthcare organizations of the world is are you ready for this? Are your providers?

Author Elizabeth Cohen is a medical correspondent for CNN. In her work, Cohen embraces the empowered patient by encouraging them to know more, ask more, and take more responsibility by playing an active role in their care. My conclusion: it's about time.

As a fellow advocate for patient empowerment, I was hooked in the first few paragraphs of this book. Then, after a few chapters, I started to have some concerns (albeit fleeting) that Cohen's stories might be construed as doctor-bashing and fall on deaf ears in the medical community. She tells of misdiagnosis, unnecessary treatments, and how patient persistence for more answers can save their lives. But the reality is that these are real stories, and, unfortunately, they are happening every day.

There are three good reasons that healthcare professionals should read this book:

1. It reminds us that a medical diagnosis and the subsequent treatment can be wrong, and that we are human and cannot let ego stand in the way of patient safety and positive outcomes.
2. It demonstrates that when providers listen to their customers and engage them as partners in their care, great things can happen (Notice that I use the word "customer" and not "patient." This is because using the word "patient" implies a more submissive relationship. A customer holds the power to vote with her feet and is savvy about where she brings her business and to whom she grants loyalty.).
3. It illustrates that today's consumers have information and are using it to actively engage in their care as equal partners rather than passive recipients. They are coming to appointments better prepared than ever and asking more questions. They are in chat rooms discussing symptoms, treatment, and providers. They expect quality, service, and respect for their opinions. And, if you don't believe this, buckle in because the next decade will be taking you on the ride of your professional life!

Learn more about ways you can ensure that all of your customer interactions, including over-the-phone interactions, support your healthcare organization's brand, as in [Living Your Brand Promise](#), featuring Kent Seltman, co-author of Management Lessons From Mayo Clinic. As the former Director of Marketing at Mayo Clinic, Seltman was charged with managing the brand for this world-renowned organization. During this 90-minute presentation, you'll hear about crucial elements in aligning the brand promise with the patient experience in order to build trust and



Transforming culture. Shaping patient experience.

credibility with customers. For only \$89, you'll receive all this: pre-session worksheets, a session workbook, webinar slides, and an audio CD of the 90-minute webinar, complete with the Q&A session.

Invite Baird to speak at your next leadership development event! To learn more about the [Baird Model for Service Excellence](#), employee engagement workshops, or to sign up for her FREE newsletter, write to info@baird-group.com.

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Nurse, author, and consultant Kristin Baird, "Healthcare's Customer Service Guru," is the author of *Raising the Bar on Service Excellence: The Health Care Leader's Guide to Putting Passion into Practice* (Golden Lamp Press, 2008), *Reclaiming the Passion: Stories that Celebrate the Essence of Nursing* (Golden Lamp Press, 2004), and *Customer Service In Healthcare: A Grassroots Approach to Creating a Culture of Service Excellence* (Jossey Bass, 2000).