

## The Patient Experience Post

Healthcare's Resource for  
Service Excellence  
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## Are Your \$100 Bills Going to Sacred Items?

by Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA

If it's good enough for millionaires, it should be more than good enough for healthcare professionals! Whether you call it the "Power Hour," the "Sacred 60," or something else, [as this Forbes piece points out](#), being steadfast in committing your time to a specific important endeavor can yield exceptional results.

In healthcare that important endeavor is often patient rounding. Some great examples are emerging of how healthcare organizations are embedding not only the expectation—but the *requirement*—of the Sacred 60 into their cultures.

The Sacred 60 sets aside 60 minutes of time committed to some important task, in this case rounding, that cannot be used for any other purpose. I've been talking to healthcare leaders a lot about the importance of reserving this time. Its power lies in our tendency to think that we just "don't have time." But, when I talk to healthcare professionals who tell me "I don't have time to round," I tell them: "You don't have time *not* to."

Years ago I took a stress management class where we were asked to assign a hypothetical dollar value to problems and commitments. I caught myself giving \$100 to a ten cent issue and only ten cents to a \$100 issue. In other words, my priorities were misaligned. Are you spending too much time on the minutiae and not enough time on the things that really matter—like rounding? You may not only be disappointing your patients and staff, you may be denying yourself the joy that comes from connecting with others.

I recently attended the Beryl Patient Experience Conference 2017 where I took advantage of the opportunity to seek feedback from attendees about what they wished their CEOs would do that could positively impact the patient experience. Their response? Rounding! They really want to see their senior leaders out there rounding and staying connected to both patients and employees. The act of rounding sends a strong message to staff that they, and their patients, are a priority.

Bob Dent is the Senior Vice President, Chief Operating and Chief Nursing Officer at Midland Memorial Hospital in Texas. Midland Memorial has put the Sacred 60 into practice; a block of time is reserved every day where staff know that they shouldn't be doing anything else except rounding. They're not the only facility doing this. Another organization I visited recently also had a sacred rounding time—during that time nobody was supposed to be doing *anything* else and that included sending emails or picking up phone calls. If the CEO sees that any emails are going out from leaders during that time he calls them on it. They're being held accountable to leader rounding by ensuring that time is devoted exclusively to that purpose. Why? Because it's a priority, and smart leaders (like those mentioned in the Forbes article) devote their time to top priorities.

You don't have time? Sure, you do! We each have 24 hours a day; no more, no less. It's what we do with those hours that counts. But you must guard your time—nobody else



Transforming culture. Shaping patient experience.

is going to do it. Too often we complain about other people "wasting our time" or being the reason we can't focus on our top priorities. But, the onus is on you! You've got to take charge and what that means is blocking out that time on your schedule. Start respecting yourself, and your own time, as much as you would respect others. If you put a block on your calendar for rounding, anyone trying to schedule you for a call or meeting will see that time as unavailable.

What steps have you taken to make sure you're spending \$100 on \$100 items?

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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). The Baird Group provides consulting, mystery shopping, and training services for improving the patient experience. To learn more, please visit <http://baird-group.com> or call 920-563-4684.