

## *The Patient Experience Post*

Healthcare's Resource for  
Service Excellence  
April 2020



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.

## Patient Experience in the Age of COVID-19

by Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA

The term "patient and family-centered care" has taken on new meaning in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of what we, in healthcare, have held up as patient experience standards have taken a back seat to acuity, high census, and infection control.

As an industry, we have worked hard to foster a welcoming and personalized patient & family-centered care (PFCC) model that gives the patient as much control as possible during their hospitalization. That same model also encourages family involvement every step of the way. With the rapid spread of COVID-19, hospitals have had to restrict visitors, leaving patients separated from their support systems.

Day after day, we hear news stories of patients suffering through their hospitalizations without the comfort of family and friends at their bedsides. Doctors and nurses on the frontlines are making valiant efforts to, not only provide medical care, but to provide the emotional support typically provided by loved ones. They are spending long days at the bedsides, some even after their shifts have ended, to be a warm voice, a gentle (but gloved) touch, or even tech support to facilitate facetime chats with family members.

What I've learned about the nurses and doctors on the front lines is this: The landscape has changed, but the compassion and empathy for others is constant. This is the essence of healthcare. To cure sometimes, to comfort often, and to care always.

### Copyright Use

*Want to use this article in your e-zine, newsletter, or on your Web site? You may, as long as you include the following statement:*

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.