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**Key Drivers of "Excellent" Quality of Care in an Academic Pain Clinic**

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**Introduction/Aims**

There is strong clinical evidence that providing patients with positive healthcare experiences can contribute to good patient outcomes<sup>1, 2</sup>. Patients' perceptions have been associated with improved pain relief, better emotional health, and the need for fewer diagnostic tests<sup>3</sup>. In addition, patients who perceive the overall quality of care at a hospital to be excellent are four times more likely to recommend the hospital where they received care than those who rate the quality as very good<sup>4</sup>.

The purpose of this study is to identify key drivers of patient perceived "excellent" quality of care in a chronic pain clinic. Understanding these key drivers may

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give direction to our clinicians to improve patient outcomes by providing better patient experiences, given that patient outcomes and their experiences are correlated<sup>5</sup>.

## **Methods**

Mayo Clinic has contracted with Professional Research Consultants Inc. (Omaha, NB) to conduct patient satisfaction surveys, which consists of more than forty questions regarding the patient's healthcare experience. Patients are asked to rate various aspects of their healthcare as "poor," "fair," "good," "very good," or "excellent."

Discriminant analysis is a statistical tool used to determine which variables differentiate between two or more naturally occurring groups. The groups we selected are patients who rated their overall quality of care as "very good" vs. "excellent." Discriminant Analysis was then used in these groups to determine which variables (i.e. aspects of the patients' healthcare delivery experience) are the key drivers that have the greatest role in moving from a "very good" rating to an "excellent" rating.

## **Results**

Between April 2002 and December 2008, 2062 surveys were completed by pain clinic patients. Analysis of the data identified three key questions, also known as key drivers. These were: (1) Overall Teamwork between Doctors, Nurses, and Staff, (2) Explanations/Instructions Provided About Caring for Self at Home, and (3) Overall Quality of Nursing Care.

## **Discussion**

Our survey results suggest that patients' perceptions of quality of care can potentially be improved by focusing on three strategic areas: improving communication between providers, providing clear home care explanations, and improving nursing care.

At Mayo Clinic Arizona's Pain Clinic, concerted efforts towards effective communication between physicians, nurses, and allied staff have been implemented. In addition, a standardized protocol has been implemented to provide all patients with clear home care instructions. . Future studies will include analyzing and describing the impact of specific practice changes within our pain clinic on patients' perceived quality of care.

**Conclusion:**

Based upon analysis of 2062 patient surveys, key drivers of patients' experiences in our pain clinic have been identified. These drivers may be applicable to other chronic pain clinics seeking to improve patient perceptions of quality of care.

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