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Expanding the dialogue on patient experience: Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Patient Experience Journal*

Jason A. Wolf, PhD, *Editor, Patient Experience Journal, President, The Beryl Institute*

Welcome

It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the inaugural issue of *Patient Experience Journal (PXJ)*. This publication in so many ways epitomizes all that is right and good about the patient experience movement itself. That being: no one individual or organization owns this conversation or can claim to have every answer, but rather it is a true effort of a community of voices from research to practice, from caregivers to patients and family members, across the care continuum and into the reaches of resources provided and concepts yet unknown.

This journal is a product of and works to exemplify this powerful patchwork of people and ideas that offers such significant possibility in impacting the lives of all those engaging in healthcare systems around the globe. From this concept it was our intent to produce a publication that would pull together these various voices in one central place, to build on new thinking together and to engage in investigation and debate.

Formally, we describe *PXJ* as an international, multidisciplinary, and multi-method, open-access, peer-reviewed journal focused on the research and proven practices around understanding and improving patient experience. It is designed to share ideas and research, and reinforce key concepts that impact the delivery of service, safety and quality and their influence on the experience of patients and families across healthcare settings.

Our commitment is simple, yet bold: to positively impact healthcare globally through dialogue and the sharing of ideas. To do this we will work to bring both scholars and healthcare professionals together to engage in the latest discussion of efforts to improve the patient experience. The journal will provide scholars the best in research, theory, and methodology, while also informing professionals on issues that will impact their work along the healthcare continuum and across the range of healthcare settings from primary to acute care, long term care to home health, outpatient efforts to surgery centers, and more.

The unifying concept for all articles in *PXJ* will be a focus on patient experience, broadly defined. Specifically, *PXJ* is focused on four related audiences:

- Researchers exploring patient, organizational and process issues that impact the delivery of service, quality and safety
- Healthcare professionals from a range of backgrounds and settings who want to base their practice on relevant knowledge and best practices
- Patients and family members who actively engage and/or by default are impacted by systemic and organizational healthcare decisions in their need for care
- Policymakers and other leaders examining the impact organizational, societal and policy decisions can have on the actions of patients and those working on the delivery of healthcare services.

With this diverse healthcare audience in mind, *Patient Experience Journal* will publish a variety of articles designed to help individuals and organizations enact positive, successful patient experience actions and efforts. The specific objectives of the journal are to:

- Present a range of conceptual frameworks that can be used in addressing patient experience challenges
- Describe and document intervention techniques, consultation activities, emergent innovations, and educational practices that can influence and impact healthcare organizational decisions
- Employ a full range of research science – from pure survey-based qualitative and quantitative investigations to observation and ethnographic exploration that provide insights to patient experience
- Uncover new processes, programs and other opportunities for patient experience improvement

In addition, our core principles stand strong and will guide us as we move forward. They include:

- **Maintaining an Independent Perspective.** *Patient Experience Journal* is a non-affiliated publication – meaning not directly vendor or provider related. As such, the journal is free to explore various areas, push boundaries and challenge conventions free of restrictions, considerations or organizational bias that impact patient experience.
- **Ensuring Comprehensive Coverage.** *Patient Experience Journal's* articles will keep up with the evolution of the field, providing the best and latest analyses on the spectrum of patient experience efforts

encompassing service, quality and safety and include the voice of leaders, caregivers, patients and family members. Each volume will include a wide range of insightful and thought-provoking scholarship.

- **Reinforcing an Interdisciplinary Scope.** *Patient Experience Journal* will approach its content from a multidisciplinary perspective. Acknowledging that thoughts impacting patient experience may come from management, quality, safety, clinical, or a variety of other disciplines from organizations around the world.

From this framing of purpose, commitments, and principles, *Patient Experience Journal* is guided by an incredible group of healthcare leaders and researchers that comprise our Editorial Board. Accompanying that board is a growing community of reviewers that immediately engaged in reviewing for this inaugural issue and who remain committed to ensuring the best in content for issues to come.

In the end, this journal exemplifies the work of so many who conducted new research, tested new ideas, wrote, read, edited, commented and will continue to support the work of so many who are just discovering this publication now. If you are committed to patient experience improvement, consider this your home to contribute, learn and grow as we push forward on this important issue together.

Our Inaugural Issue

These ideas are no better exemplified than in this inaugural issue – Volume 1, Issue 1. This publication brings together the contributions of physicians and nurses, patients and families and practitioners. It includes students, seasoned researchers, and passionate advocates.

In reinforcing the global nature of the patient experience dialogue, contributions in this issue come from 4 continents. In understanding the expansive nature of the dialogue, articles represent the voices of those in academia and practice, from governmental efforts to personal encounters and across settings from clinics and outpatient to acute hospital and pediatrics.

This issue opens with a wonderful guest editorial from Dr. Irwin Press, whose belief in our need to listen to, understand and act on the voice of patients over 30 years ago set a course for much of what drive patient experience efforts today. The sections that follow encompass broad thematic issues impacting patient experience understanding and performance.

The first - framing the conversation on patient experience – brings together a collection of articles provided by members of the Editorial Board and provides an overview

of the concept of patient experience including defining patient experience, how patient experience fits into the healthcare picture and how we evaluate and measure experience.

The next section – patient- and family-centeredness brings together cases from the perspectives of patient and family members themselves as well as explores how these ideas play out in practice. This is followed by a series of articles exploring the theme – physician impact on patient experience. From programs in practice to studies exploring patient-provider relationships, these contributions expand the voice of physicians in this dialogue and push on ways to ensure and reinforce physician engagement as central to patient experience excellence.

The final two sections start with measuring patient experience efforts, which explores not only what measurement can look like and the means to move it forward, but also the perspectives on what matters most to patients themselves. This is followed global perspectives. These pieces, while not the totality of articles authored by individuals from various countries, represent the important point that patient experience is truly a shared global dialogue and while systems may be different in various locations around the world and cultural influences may impact certain behavioral styles or personal needs, the fundamentals that drive the best in experience are tightly aligned regardless of geography.

The comprehensive nature of this inaugural issue only stands as the beginning of an expanding collection of research, writing and exploration on this topic. While it reaches far and works to bring together many ideas, we will continue to be stretched in positive ways by all the interest that continues to show up in submissions we receive weekly. We hope you too will find this issue a strong jumping off point for how you and or your organization might contribute.

Looking forward

As we look beyond issue 1, the field is open for significant investigation and gaps remain in research that we hope to support being filled. From how we frame the issue of patient experience, to the very term itself are all items now up for debate. Measurement continues to push the boundaries of exploration and more so what moves people to act, what drives outcomes, what sustains efforts?

In launching this journal we believe the process is just underway to expand the dialogue on patient experience by bringing voices together. Its publication becomes a cornerstone in developing a true field of practice framed by academic rigor and research, a formal and expanding body of knowledge, a standardized and widely accepted

certification process and a vibrant and growing community of practice in which ideas can be nurtured and shared.

Our intent is now to produce and publish *Patient Experience Journal* on a bi-annual basis. We hope its existence will support a flourishing of research and investigation and more so serve as a gathering place for thinkers and questions to come together and push the boundaries of exploration together.

I speak humbly when I share again what an incredible job all those that contributed to this launch have done to make it possible. If we consider this just the first step in a long and important journey, I am proud to say it is a solid and shared step forward. What enables us to take the next one is you, your ideas, your contributions, your questions, your hopes, your practices, your passion and your purpose.

As we all have been or will be that patient or that family member experiencing the care system one day, we will all hopefully remember this is more than just an exercise. The work we do here touches lives, perhaps our very own. What we do here together can only lead to good things for all seeking or delivering care. It is a cause for which we should remain relentless.

Welcome again to the inaugural issue of *Patient Experience Journal*. Here is to the start of a great journey together.

Jason A. Wolf, Ph.D.

Editor

April 30, 2014