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Vision, mission, and values: From concept to execution at Mayo Clinic

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Vision, mission, and values: From concept to execution at Mayo Clinic

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Abstract

Mayo Clinic displays steadfast commitment to patient care, referral relations, and health care quality through institutional examples of unique, value-add endeavors that are under way with the Mayo Clinic Patient Experience Subcommittee and the Referring Physician Office. In this article, we share the Mayo Model of Care and patient stories that embody the 8 Mayo Clinic values of respect, compassion, integrity, healing, teamwork, excellence, innovation, and stewardship. The Mayo founders imparted to their staff the passion for patient care by encouraging a fair and just culture for its employees. This culture allows the creation, maintenance, and improvement of clinical care, research studies, and educational curricula, which in turn propagate the mission—“To inspire hope and contribute to health and well-being by providing the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education, and research.”

Keywords

Compassion; culture; excellence; health care; patient experience; values

Abbreviations

PES, Patient Experience Subcommittee

RPO, Referring Physician Office

Introduction

For 150 years, Mayo Clinic's primary charge, to care for patients who need hope and healing, has been steadfast. The Mayo brothers' inspiration in serving the patient was boldly conveyed in the quotation, “the best interest of the patient is the only interest to be considered.”¹ This commitment requires the utmost quality and safety of patient care and also leading-edge research and medical education. This platform of patient care, research, and education has cultivated the most trusted partner for health care due to world-class expertise and knowledge, both at the bedside and in laboratories. Mayo Clinic's success results from engaging and energizing its staff around the values and culture that make the Mayo Clinic patient experience unique.

The founders of Mayo Clinic built it on 3 dimensions: 1) to provide the best possible patient care, 2) to pursue further knowledge through research, and 3) to learn better

techniques and teach others whenever possible.¹ The 3 interlocking shields of the Mayo Clinic logo symbolize the multifaceted mission, with the center, and larger, shield representing patient care. This mission is further conveyed in the Mayo Clinic primary value, “The needs of the patient come first,” and is accomplished by staff embracement of this principle, continuous enhancement of the Mayo Clinic environment, and individual moment-to-moment encounters between patients and the Mayo Clinic health care team.

Mayo Clinic continuously focuses on the needs of the patient by building the infrastructure within our organization to proactively improve the patient experience by engaging and energizing our staff on service fundamentals and efforts that entail the following:

- *Service recovery:* engage employees to address patient needs as they arise and thereby increase patient loyalty, trust, and satisfaction.

- *Patient satisfaction data*: analyze and interpret data to identify themes within clinical areas that need improvement and provide service consultation to increase patient satisfaction scores.
- *The Mayo Clinic Model of Care*: deliver patient care with respect, quality, and excellence while practicing our values of collaboration, compassion, and innovation.
- *Integration*: an unparalleled patient-centric health care experience through seamless care coordination and information-knowledge transfer across the continuum.
- *Transition*: harmonious, uninterrupted attention to the patient's medical needs before, during, and after consultation at Mayo Clinic and through all stages of life.
- *Expectations*: anticipate and exceed patient expectations during Mayo Clinic encounters, designing the patient experience of tomorrow.

Programs and services reflecting the organization's Value Statements, which serve patients and external providers, are a direct result of employee dedication and senior leadership support.

The Patient Experience Subcommittee

Mayo Clinic proactively embraces patient care, aiming to set the standard in all aspects of clinical medicine. As such, the Patient Experience Subcommittee (PES) serves as a comprehensive institutional resource to ensure this goal is met. Established in 2013 by senior leadership, the PES helps Mayo Clinic staff better understand the patient experience, informs the organization, and fosters a culture of service. The voice of the Mayo Clinic patient comes to the practice through participation in Patient-Family Advisory Councils, participation in select quality committees, daily feedback to staff, patient satisfaction surveys, and complaint data. Mayo Clinic views each encounter with patients, including complaints, as a gift; our patients have always helped transform the practice at Mayo Clinic. The PES also focuses on creating a service-minded culture through educational classes and consultations with departments, health care providers, and care teams. The PES leads performance improvement projects that focus on enhancing the patient's experience and journey across Mayo Clinic.

The Referring Physician Office

The Referring Physician Office (RPO) at Mayo Clinic is the office of service to the external health care community. It is the leading resource for external providers who are seeking referral services and clinical, educational, and research information from Mayo Clinic. RPO staff are an extension of the practice, collaborating across multiple clinical and administrative departments internally to ensure

that patient access is optimized, external providers are aware of the unique services offered at Mayo Clinic to best serve their patients, and constructive feedback is heeded to improve the clinical practice.

Our approach to strengthening provider relations focuses on the following 3 core principles:

- *Respect*: appreciating the dedication and diligence of individual providers delivering the best possible care for their patients, understanding it is a privilege to be asked to collaborate.
- *Communication*: providing timely, thorough, succinct transmission of medical documentation on shared patients and being readily available for further discussion.
- *Awareness*: educating providers on quaternary clinical and laboratory services, cutting-edge research, quality projects, and education programs ongoing at Mayo Clinic, enabling patients to have the best health care in the world.

Delivering Excellence

Improving the patient and external provider experience brings numerous benefits to patients and providers in that patient satisfaction improves clinical outcomes and quality of care. A proactive commitment to continued analysis of services and structure is imperative to best serve patients and to compete in the health care marketplace. Hence, improving relationships with patients and individual providers benefits the medical institution itself, creating more productive and satisfied personnel, enhancing financial stability, and positively affecting brand reputation.

The commitment of Mayo Clinic and its employees to the organization's primary value, placing the needs of the patient first, is unwavering. This solitary, unifying ideal focuses our intentions daily. It has allowed Mayo Clinic to provide an unparalleled experience and become and remain the most trusted health care institution in the world. This mission is elaborated through 8 Value Statements:

- *Respect*: Treat everyone in our diverse community including patients, their families, and colleagues with dignity.
- *Compassion*: Provide the best care, treating patient and family members with sensitivity and empathy.
- *Integrity*: Adhere to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and personal responsibility, worthy of the trust our patients place in us.
- *Healing*: Inspire hope and nurture the well-being of the whole person, respecting physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- *Teamwork*: Value the contributions of all, blending the skills of individual staff members in unsurpassed collaboration.

- *Excellence:* Deliver the best outcomes and highest quality of service through the dedicated effort of every team member.
- *Innovation:* Infuse and energize the organization, enhancing the lives of those we serve, through creative ideas and unique talents of each employee.
- *Stewardship:* Sustain and re-invest in our mission and extended communities by wisely managing our human, natural, and material resources (*Mayo Alumni*. 2001 Fall; 37[4]: 21).

The Mayo Clinic Model of Care is structured from the Value Statements listed above and is defined by high-quality, compassionate medical care delivered in a multispecialty, integrated academic institution. The highest quality staff is recruited to Mayo Clinic to form a comprehensive health care team and mentored in the Mayo Clinic culture to ensure a strong, tireless work ethic devoted to patients. Examples from the PES and the RPO demonstrating a commitment to the Mayo Clinic patients and the Value Statements abound, some of which are described below.

Respect

Providers show dedication and care to their patients at Mayo Clinic and elsewhere. Frequently, providers with differing areas of expertise will need to collaborate, sharing knowledge and resources, to best care for a patient with complex needs. Mayo Clinic has created an electronic communication platform that allows providers to discuss complex patients. Electronic consults (“e-consults”) are available to patients throughout Mayo Clinic, including Mayo Clinic Care Network providers (a national network of like-minded affiliated practices that can access Mayo Clinic’s expertise) and Mayo Clinic Health System providers (small, community-based Mayo Clinic sites that surround the larger-destination Mayo Clinic site). This information-secure digital program allows the exchange of clinical information and test results and also serves as a discussion platform between providers. The e-consults are available to primary care providers and specialists. Since the inception of e-consults, approximately 80% of eligible patients with complex medical needs have had their concerns addressed locally by their primary provider via electronic communication with support from Mayo Clinic providers who have subspecialty expertise. This service greatly enhances patient care by expediting changes in the care plan, decreasing travel requirements, eliminating loss of work productivity, and reducing personal expenses. Patients also enjoy maintaining strong ties and interactions with their hometown practitioner. This reduction of patients referred for face-to-face consultations at Mayo Clinic then expedites appointment access for patients requiring advanced care or testing needs at Mayo Clinic. Mayo Clinic has a responsibility to care for patients not only as individuals but also as a community. It also aims to support other providers who request assistance and

guidance in caring for a patient. As such, Mayo Clinic developed an electronic portal for external providers, the Online Services for Referring Physicians. This digital platform is available to any licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician’s assistant within the United States or abroad who refers a patient to Mayo Clinic for testing or clinical care. Registration is straightforward and readily available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Once a provider is registered, each time a shared patient has a unique encounter at Mayo Clinic (e.g., specialty consultation, radiology imaging, surgery, hospitalization) an e-mail message is sent to the provider’s e-mail address of choice, notifying him or her of a patient care episode. The provider can sign onto the portal and obtain the updated information concerning the patient. If a patient has multiple external providers, each provider will receive an individual e-mail prompt concerning the care episode. The Online Services for Referring Physicians thus allows ideal, seamless, immediate communication among the patient, the Mayo care team, and the primary provider or care team. Approximately 33,000 providers use this service annually.

Compassion

Each and every employee at Mayo Clinic will share with anyone the primary value they hold so high—that the needs of the patient come first. Well known for spontaneous gestures by employees when they see a patient in need, Mayo Clinic has an engaged and informed employee base that is nurtured with educational offerings and professional growth opportunities with coursework such as Empathic Communication, Empathic Redirection, and Motivational Interviewing.

Internal storytelling shares the many ways employees go above and beyond to help make patients’ experiences better while inspiring other employees. In 2007, a spinal cord injury brought high school football player Tyler Olson, from Lake Mills, Iowa, to Mayo Clinic. Tyler moved many members of his care team. A few days after his arrival at Mayo Clinic, a nurse called the help desk in desperation, asking for any ideas or technologies that might help this young man have a visit electronically with his teammates. She was concerned about his morale following his injury.

The help desk does not typically offer this type of service, but the employee who answered the telephone was moved, and he knew Mayo Clinic had the capability and technology. He talked to his division chair and within a matter of hours he received permission to help facilitate a virtual video interaction between Tyler and his friends. A Mayo Clinic team member drove two hours to Iowa and assembled the video equipment in a room at Tyler’s school. Tyler was able to talk with his teammates from his hospital bed. It was a moment that all involved will never forget, and the satisfaction it gave the employees who

participated rippled throughout the organization. This kind of extra effort and storytelling within Mayo Clinic fosters and inspires the highly engaged staff.

When service failures do happen, the adoption of a uniform empathic service recovery approach helps employees take ownership of the encounter. Staff members are empowered to respond quickly and fairly to patient concerns and to find resolution. This approach also creates the opportunity to establish a single process for gathering and following up on patient comments and concerns shared with allied health staff and providers. The concerns (delay of an appointment or procedure, prolonged wait time, missed laboratory order, scheduling error, communication issues) shared with the staff are defined as low severity or low criticality and can be easily resolved with an apology and, when indicated, an appropriate goodwill gesture at the point of service. Evidence supports the importance of maintaining positive relationships with patients and restoring trust when lost. Patients are better served when staff listen and respond quickly to concerns. The benefits of engaged and empowered staff result in creating better experiences for patients.

Integrity

Mayo Clinic maintains the highest standards of quality and safety, yet unanticipated outcomes periodically occur in the delivery of care to our patients. When these events happen, Mayo Clinic is very transparent with the patient and family, focusing on the next steps in care and helping them understand what truly occurred. Our policies and procedures reflect our expectation that these explanations will be professional and timely. Staff are asked to disclose the facts as known and to give the patients the information they need to help them understand what is happening to their health and to their treatment plan. Although it is unfortunate that errors do occur in health care, Mayo Clinic strives to treat each patient with compassion, honesty, and integrity and to learn from every situation.

Healing

Mayo Clinic inspires hope and nurtures the well-being of the whole person by respecting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient. This value is evident simply by walking into Mayo Clinic at any location. Each of the 3 main campuses of Mayo Clinic has a focus on the experience that the facilities and space create for patients. The architecture delights with simple and elegant designs using building materials of beautiful stone, marble, and metals, infused with artwork and décor for patients to enjoy. Mayo Clinic Health System sites also have similar attention to facilities and common finishes that mirror those of the 3 main campuses. This approach is supported by policies that foster a clean and low-clutter appearance in patient areas. There are many seating and gathering spaces for patients, including religious and meditation

spaces, community spaces, and educational installations. Attention is given to creating environments that help ease the anxiety that patients and caregivers may feel, focusing on setting the stage for delightful experiences for patients. A paramount example is the 16th floor of the Mayo Building in the T. Denny Sanford Pediatric Center. Mr. T. Denny Sanford, a grateful patient and benefactor to Mayo Clinic, was an orphan and, as such, was driven to become a child and health care philanthropist. The Center opened in June 2007 and houses many pediatric subspecialty staff who were previously not co-located. The most commented-on aspect of this space is the design of the facilities, built to scale for children. It was created to delight and distract pediatric patients with an upper Midwest habitat theme and a focus on Minnesota. References reflect lakes, prairies, woods, wetlands, and the Mississippi River. Many artists worked on the environment to create this unique playful space for pediatric patients and their families.

Teamwork

Face-to-face interaction among health care providers strengthens relationships, enhances collaboration, stimulates ideas, enables education, and allows resolution of complex problems. Mayo Clinic fosters clinical practice advancement and knowledge sharing through an outreach program known as Ambassador Days. During an ambassador day, a Mayo Clinic specialist physician visits regional or distant medical clinics and hospitals that request an opportunity to meet a Mayo Clinic physician with unique expertise. During this trip, the Mayo Clinic physician gives lectures on requested topics, discusses patients with complex conditions, and meets individually with interested providers to foster relationships and discuss common goals for patients and the community. This unique opportunity is appreciated by both the external providers and the Mayo Clinic physician for its fostering of professional relationships and the exchange of ideas to enhance the clinical practice of all participants.

One of the most compelling examples of teamwork at Mayo Clinic took place in 2007, when the Carlsen twins (who were conjoined) came to Mayo Clinic. This patient story received broad public attention given that the separation of conjoined twins is a dramatic and life-altering procedure. What is little known is that months before the surgery to separate the conjoined twins, a “*team of teams*” was already at work collaborating and planning the procedure. Led by pediatric surgeon Christopher Moir, MD, a team of more than 40 surgeons and staff were addressing the many surgical challenges of the operation with a supporting team not typically found in health care. “*We had to work together in ways we haven’t worked before,*” says Dr. Moir.

With just a week to go before the twins’ separation surgery, a team comprised of medical illustrators and biomedical engineers went to work creating poster-sized

illustrations and life-sized models of the twins' conjoined rib cages to enhance the visibility and understanding of the internal organs. The surgical team had waited to this point in time—as close to surgery as possible—to have the models constructed because they needed the timeliest information possible: the twins were growing every day.

This type of collaboration—combining a diverse set of expertise across many areas—continues the vision set 150 years ago by founder William Worrall Mayo, MD, who created a model of diversity, teamwork, and mutual respect that brings the best-of-the-best to every aspect of a care team.

Excellence

Service excellence is a phrase heard often throughout the halls of Mayo Clinic, and innovative ways to continually improve and measure service are always at the forefront of every department's leadership. A recent project led by staff in the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension seized an opportunity to reengineer how they care for patients with chronic kidney disease.

The team engaged with a systems engineer to better understand not just what outcomes mattered for reimbursement but also what outcomes mattered to individual patients. They began measuring metrics for success, such as patient satisfaction, hospitalization rate, mortality, and financial performance at the outset of the project.

Team members interviewed and observed patients and their families to understand their specific behaviors, needs, goals, motivations, and expectations. They developed 8 personas to represent how different patients approached managing their chronic disease. The personas were designed to represent different patient types, considering factors such as health status, psychosocial and socioeconomic factors, values, goals, and preferences. The personas were designed to give the team insights into how patients make decisions.

The new approach developed through this process prevented almost 1,000 days in the hospital from 2011 to 2013. That success inspired the team to innovate further. *“The amazing thing has been to observe how really understanding the patient's perspective seems to have given permission for people to take risks and try new things,”* says Kathryn Zavaleta, Systems and Procedures. *“The personas helped us identify gaps in our care delivery model.”*

With the patient personas in mind, the team transformed patient education, developed patient-focused decision aids, and focused on delivering critical information for patients in transition from inpatient dialysis to outpatient dialysis centers. The new system helped patients make informed decisions about their care and treatment options. Patient

satisfaction increased, costs for outpatient and inpatient dialysis decreased, the 30-day readmission rate plummeted, and patients spent more time at home. *“The key to these great results was understanding the patient experience,”* says Amy W. Williams, MD, staff nephrologist. The team then sought to understand how their current processes worked, identify the ideal process from the patients' perspective, and then make changes to fit that ideal. The model is important, but the process by which the team developed the model offers key insights for practice redesign.

Innovation

When Drs. William J. and Charles H. Mayo founded their medical practice in the late 1800s, they created their new practice around a relatively innovative concept at the time—hiring a diverse staff of specialists to create the first integrated team practice. The beneficial health outcomes from this model of practicing medicine drew patients from around the world, even during this era, when travel was not easy.

The Mayo founders knew then what we continue to practice today: innovation does not happen by chance. Bringing an innovative technique or idea to a practical solution for patients requires strategy, thoughtful processes, discipline, and practice throughout all the supporting systems.

In 2010, a group of Mayo Clinic allied health staff began thinking about how to use the popular new app technology to meet the needs of Mayo Clinic patients everywhere, regardless of where they are in the world. What if, by simply pushing a button on a cell phone, patients could get information about their medical condition, medical record, and appointment calendar along with other needs they identify as personally important (e.g., transportation, hotel reservations)? Today, the Mayo Clinic app delivers this information through Apple's Health app in iOS 9.1.

The app provides users with an array of features, including medical record access, laboratory test results, and health and fitness data. Patients who use the app also have the ability to decide whether they want any data stored in the Apple Health app. The synchronicity of these apps allows users to view Mayo Clinic health data through the Apple Health dashboard. This synchronicity creates new value with the 2 platforms for health information and also gives patients the ability to connect with their care team directly via secure messaging. Other features in the app include the ability to view and manage details of their appointment calendars, see laboratory results and notes, and to watch informational Mayo Clinic videos on their iPhone, iPod, and iPad. This app brings Mayo Clinic knowledge and expertise to people everywhere, regardless of time or location. Future updates to the app will include features that support individual wellness goals, personalized

feedback, and disease and condition management. Mayo Clinic continues to support and update the Mayo Clinic app on Android platforms and the Apple platform. The app has been downloaded over 250,000 times by persons from 124 countries.

Stewardship

Mayo Clinic is the most trusted organization in health care due to its unwavering dedication to patient care. In addition to this mission, it also aims to provide medical, educational, and research resources to the health care community and public at large. Unique educational programs and support services are available to external health care providers to assist them in caring for their patient using Mayo Clinic knowledge and expertise. The Professional Resource Program is available to external providers who want a high-touch connection to Mayo Clinic resources. This program includes access to the Mayo Clinic clinical knowledge database (*AskMayoExpert*) and a concierge telephone service line for operational questions regarding referrals, quick access to continuing medical education course information and registration, and information regarding research protocols for patients. This program simplifies access to Mayo Clinic while providing unique clinical pearls through *AskMayoExpert*.

Conclusion

Mayo Clinic is a proactive, innovative health care organization that celebrated its sesquicentennial in 2014. Its success directly results from the consistent, resolute focus on the care of patients. The resulting organizational culture ensures continuation of the current Mayo Clinic patient care structure of seamless, whole-person, collaborative and relationship-based care among a health care team for the individual patient.

Today, Mayo Clinic is reaching patients in ways never imagined by its founders. Social media, an online patient community, and innovative methods of delivering care with technology make it easy to reach patients in new ways and with new care delivery models. Patients and consumers want access to Mayo Clinic knowledge. Brand loyalty is created and relationships are enhanced with every touch point and interaction in the continuum of care and by understanding patients' needs, wants, and desires—a tenet the Mayo Clinic founders knew instinctually that continues to be practiced moment to moment each day at all Mayo Clinic locations. The Mayo Clinic patient experience is the sum of perceptions and experiences, including experiences that are carefully planned, such as the clinical encounter, those anticipated for the future, and those that cannot be planned for.

Providing excellence in the patient's experience has always been a foundation of who we are at Mayo Clinic. Whether we are caring for a patient face-to-face in a community or

specialty setting or providing critical health care guidance and information to someone halfway around the world, we want every person we touch to have the “Mayo experience.” Moment by moment, each decision or interaction builds a relationship of trust and loyalty. As we work toward our goal of expanding our reach to include meaningful relationships with 200 million people worldwide, we must sharpen our focus on delivering affordable, consistent, unparalleled experiences for patients, their families, and consumers everywhere.

Suggested Reading

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