



EXCELLENCE IN PERSON-CENTERED CARE

Top 10 Best Practices

Building a construct for caring in your organization while becoming person-centered is no small feat — it requires commitment, education, and enthusiasm across all departments, and can be felt not only by patients, but also by their loved ones and the community as a whole.

As you'll see, though, the effort is well worth the investment. Leaders in person-centered care earn higher patient satisfaction rankings, greater reputations both in and out of the community, and healthier, happier patients and staff.

Let's take a look at ten essential person-centered care practices, and how they benefit patients and healthcare organizations.

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1

Get everyone in your organization excited about person-centered care.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Communicate your organization's commitment to person-centered care to patients, families, staff, and leadership.
- Set clear expectations for what staff can expect in a person-centered environment and share them proactively. Include these expectations in all job descriptions and performance evaluations.
- Give staff at all levels — clinical and non-clinical — opportunities to voice their ideas and suggestions for improvement to leadership.

WHAT YOU GET

- A sense of community and achievement both within and around your organization, centered on a philosophy that puts people first.
- Clear, person-centered expectations attract high quality talent and improve staff performance.
- Employees recognize that they matter to the organization, improving morale and momentum while increasing the flow of ideas.



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Ask patients, families, and the community what they want and need.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Invite patients and family members to share their experiences with your organization in focus groups.
- Create a patient and family advisory council to provide input to organizational leadership.
- Include patients and family members as members on site-based teams and committees.

WHAT YOU GET

- Input provided by patients and families provides the foundation to guide the organization's strategic direction.
- Ideas derived from the lived experiences of patients and family provide valuable perspective leadership may otherwise overlook.
- Patients and family feel valued, engendering positive feelings toward the organization.

A physical therapist in a white lab coat is assisting a male patient on a stationary bike. The patient is wearing a grey t-shirt and shorts. The therapist is leaning over the bike, adjusting the patient's feet. The setting is a well-lit gym or rehabilitation center with various exercise equipment visible in the background, including a red parallel bar, a blue exercise ball, and a wheelchair. A large number '3' is overlaid in a white circle on the image.

3

Invite patients to be involved in their care.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Invite patients and families to participate in rounds, change of shift reports, and discharge planning.
- Write plans of care in language patients and loved ones can understand, providing tools for patients to manage medications, appointments, and health needs.
- Establish a process for reinforcing and assessing comprehension of information and instructions provided at discharge.

WHAT YOU GET

- Reduced readmissions, costs while creating sustainable health gains.
- With greater patient input, you can create a more appropriate and effective care plan.
- When patients and families are involved in their continued care they become more confident in managing their health care needs and adopting healthy behaviors, yielding better health outcomes, enhanced patient experiences, and lower costs.



4

Communicate effectively with patients and loved ones.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Encourage patients to raise concerns related to patient safety and/or care while they are hospitalized and instruct them how to do so.
- Encourage patients and families to ask questions, and establish a process for capturing questions when caregivers are not present to answer them.
- Establish systems to assist patients and families in knowing who is providing their care, and what the role is of each person on the care team.

WHAT YOU GET

- Feedback from patients fuels continual improvement, and responding to their concerns shows the organization cares.
- Creating a dialogue with patients and their loved ones ensures their concerns and priorities are not dismissed and makes healthcare professionals accountable for explaining things in a way patients will understand.
- Build stronger relationships between patients and each provider on their team.



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Provide care options for a variety of cultural, spiritual, and personal preferences.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Provide food options to suit diverse diets and tastes, and allow patients to set their own eating schedule.
- Provide space for quiet contemplation, prayer, and communal worship, and the option of meeting with religious leaders — and educate staff on various cultures, religions, and communities.
- Develop care plans that accommodate patients' personal schedules and routines, and make complementary and integrated therapies available.

WHAT YOU GET

- Patients are happier, comforted, and centered in their own spiritual and cultural traditions.
- With more background knowledge, staff has greater insight into the patient experience and can empathize more easily.
- Providing flexibility and options in care increases patient satisfaction and prepares individuals to better manage their day to day care.



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Provide patients ample, understandable access to their health information.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Give patients and family the opportunity to request additional information on their diagnosis and care options.
- Give patients access to their medical record while they are being treated, and provide a healthcare professional to walk them through it.
- Establish a process for compassionately disclosing unanticipated outcomes to patients (and families, as appropriate).

WHAT YOU GET

- Patients can contribute their own progress notes to their medical record, providing a valuable source of data.
- As patients understand their diagnosis and treatment better, they become more engaged in their own care.
- Having plans and best practices ready in times of adverse events allows you to deal with unanticipated situations professionally and empathetically.



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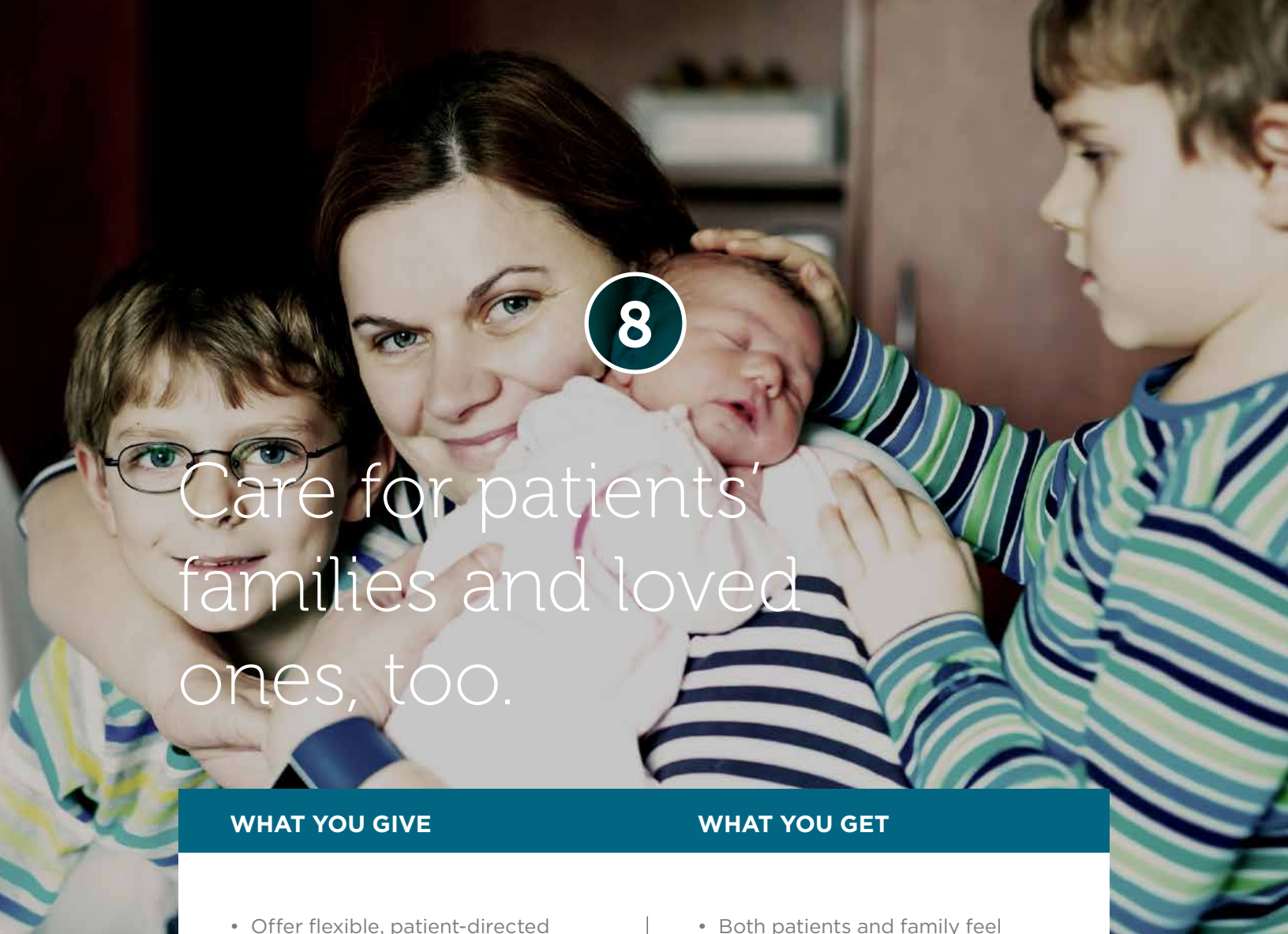
Create a welcoming, comforting environment of care.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Provide a welcoming, caring first impression from the parking lot to the lobby and nurse stations, with pleasant sights, sounds, and smells.
- Maximize patients' access to natural light and outdoor views while also preserving their privacy and modesty.
- Ensure signage reflects primary languages of populations served, with icons to aid in comprehension and simple navigation.

WHAT YOU GET

- Overall patient experience improves, lowering stress levels and raising satisfaction — not just for patients, but also for staff.
- A greater sense of control over their environment can translate into setting the stage for more effective partnership in all aspects of treatment.
- The healthcare facility becomes safer as you reduce the likelihood that patients become lost or confused.



Care for patients' families and loved ones, too.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Offer flexible, patient-directed visitation to family, allowing the patient to define “family.”
- Provide support to patients and families involved in an adverse event.
- Create comfortable spaces with positive diversions for families, and provide overnight accommodations to loved ones wishing to stay with a patient.

WHAT YOU GET

- Both patients and family feel more positively toward the organization when they can see their loved ones.
- Patients and family can better handle the stress of a health event when they know they have the organization’s support.
- Involving family during a healthcare episode prepares them to carry out care activities at home, recognize warning signs, and coordinate follow-up care. This reduces the likelihood of the patient being re-admitted.



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Care for the caregivers in your organization.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Provide stress relief and wellness support to staff, including space to decompress between patients and support after adverse events.
- Give employees ample opportunities to provide input into ways to enhance the work environment.
- Make healthy food available to all staff, including those who work nights and weekends.

WHAT YOU GET

- Morale increases and turnover decreases when employees feel valued and supported.
- Each employee has a unique view of the organization and can make suggestions and recommendations that benefit the person-centered mission.
- Reducing stress and providing a healthy, safe work environment reduces burnout and injury on the job.



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Care for your community.

WHAT YOU GIVE

- Make space available within the facility for community groups to meet.
- Provide free health-related lectures, wellness clinics, health fairs, etc. to the public on a routine basis.
- Offer support groups for patients who want to connect to other people with the same diagnosis or challenges.

WHAT YOU GET

- Increase awareness and recognition as a positive force in, and pillar of, the community and region.
- Improve public health while promoting your organization as a healthcare thought-leader and innovator.
- Build deep bonds between patients and the greater community for more sustainable continuity of care.

To learn more about how to become Planetree Person-Centered
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