Has Patient Experience Become the Key to Financial Viability?

"During the most recent years we have seen health care leaders invest in technology and organizational-wide process improvement. Having addressed infrastructure issues there appears to be a new path being forged by health care leaders and improved Patient Experience has become the key to success. "

– Mary Christensen, President and CEO, Experienced Resources

The Leadership Perspectives on Health Care survey, now in its tenth year, reports on the achievements and challenges facing health care leaders in different types of organizations, leadership roles, and geographic locations. This summary of the survey results provides an analysis that we encourage you to share with your leadership team, broader organization and board.

In last year's survey, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents identified Patient Experience as their key focus. Perhaps not surprising to many, our 2016 survey once again revealed Patient Experience as the #1 priority of health care leaders throughout the upper Midwest. With that in mind, it is only fitting that we dedicate a substantial portion of this summary to leaders' sharing thoughts and insights on their Patient Experience Journey. We trust this information will prove thought-provoking and beneficial as you move forward into 2016.

The initiatives that fell to the bottom of the 2016 priority list include Patient-focused Technology, Data Interoperability and Participation in a Regional Health Plan or ACO. This "downgrading" of the two technology strategies suggests an increased emphasis on developing "soft" skills as a means of impacting Patient Experience.

Survey Participants by Geographical Location

32% Greater Minnesota
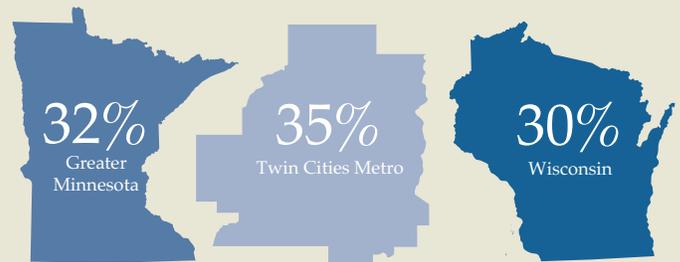
35% Twin Cities Metro

30% Wisconsin

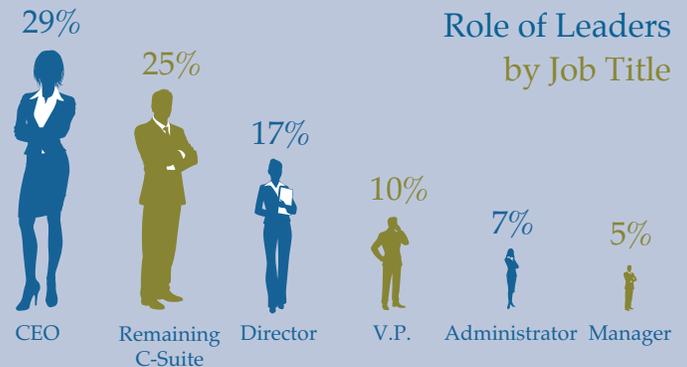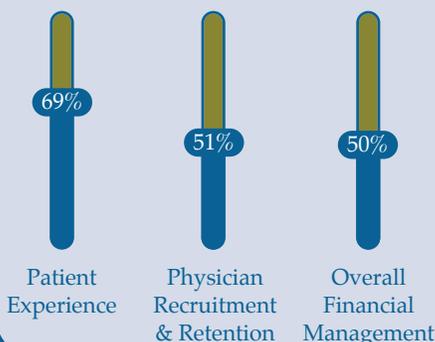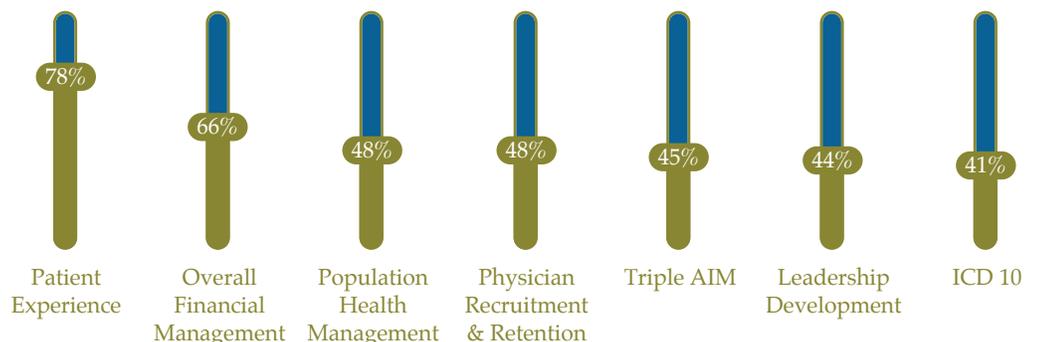## 2016 Priorities
Are Leaders Narrowing their Focus?

A year ago, more than 40% of the leaders responding to our survey reported seven different top priorities for 2015. In our 2016 survey, 40% of leaders chose just three priorities – Patient Experience, Physician Recruitment and Retention, and Overall Financial Management. This narrowing of priorities seems to indicate that leaders are targeting fewer priorities hoping a more focused approach will yield greater gains.

Role of Leaders
by Job Title

Role	Percentage
CEO	29%
Remaining C-Suite	25%
Director	17%
V.P.	10%
Administrator	7%
Manager	5%

2016 Top Priorities (>40% Response)

2016 vs. 2015 Top Priorities

2015 Top Priorities (>40% Response)

Priority	Percentage
Patient Experience	69%
Physician Recruitment & Retention	51%
Overall Financial Management	50%
Patient Experience	78%
Overall Financial Management	66%
Population Health Management	48%
Physician Recruitment & Retention	48%
Triple AIM	45%
Leadership Development	44%
ICD 10	41%

Top Priorities for 2016 by Location

Wisconsin and Greater Minnesota leaders are virtually aligned as it relates to their 2016 Priorities. The leaders in both of these geographical locations identified Patient Experience, Physician Recruitment and Retention, and Overall Financial Management as their top three priorities for the coming year. Meanwhile, the Twin Cities Metro leaders view their top priorities slightly different. Patient Experience is their #1 priority, followed by Overall Financial Management, and Population Health Management.

Patient Experience: Strategies and Gains in 2015

In 2016, Patient Experience once again reigns supreme in the minds of health care leaders.

With Patient Experience as the #1 Priority for the second year in a row, we decided to dive deeper into this important movement underway throughout health care. During 2015, Midwest health care leaders reported that they utilized a variety of strategies to improve Patient Experience.

What Patient Experience Strategies Were Most Commonly Used?

Regardless of the organization type, Employee Engagement was generally the most often deployed strategy relative to improving Patient Experience. More specifically, Employee Engagement was #1 for Health Care Systems and #2 for Independent Medical Practices, Independent Community Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals. More specifically, Employee Engagement was #1 for Health Care Systems, #2 for Independent Medical Practices, Independent Community Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals, and #3 for Health Care System Hospitals and System-owned Clinics.

Strategies for Impacting Patient Experience

Patient/Leader Rounding
Ranked #1 by Health Care System Hospitals, Independent Community Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals

Ranked #2 by Health Care Systems

Patient/Employee Communication
Ranked #2 by Health Care System Clinics

Patient Access
Ranked # 1 by 83% of Health Care System Clinic Leaders

Ranked #3 by 70% of Independent Medical Practice Leaders

In 2016, Patient Experience once again reigns supreme in the minds of health care leaders.

Seeking Improved Patient Experience, Our Leaders Report Their Type of Organization

30%
Critical Access Hospital

18%
Health Care System

16%
Independent Medical Practice

15%
Health Care System Hospital

9%
Independent Community Hospital
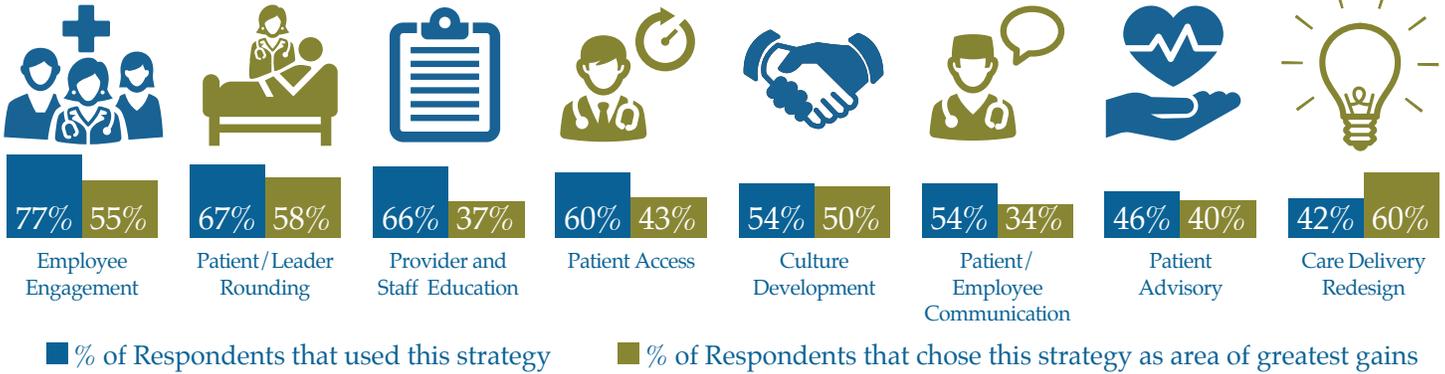
5%
Health Care System Clinic

Employee Engagement, Patient/Leader Rounding, and Patient/Employee Communication, no matter how they might be defined by an individual organization or leader, are all "soft" strategies with the focus being on human interaction and relationships. In recent years, particularly since 2008, there has been a focus on technology-oriented strategies designed to improve performance within health care organizations. With what we are seeing in this year's survey results, perhaps leaders are shifting their focus to improving soft skills throughout their organizations as a means of producing a better experience, outcomes, and financial performance.

What Patient Experience Strategies Produced the Greatest Gains?

In our survey, we asked leaders to share the specific strategies that they employed to improve Patient Experience in 2015, and more importantly where they experienced their greatest gains.

Overall, Patient Experience strategies appear to be paying off more often than not with 63% of leaders reporting that their Patient Experience measures increased during the past year. At the same time, less than 1% of leaders saw

Patient Experience Strategies and Gains

Strategy	% used	% greatest gains
Employee Engagement	77%	55%
Patient/Leader Rounding	67%	58%
Provider and Staff Education	66%	37%
Patient Access	60%	43%
Culture Development	54%	50%
Patient/Employee Communication	54%	34%
Patient Advisory	46%	40%
Care Delivery Redesign	42%	60%

■ % of Respondents that used this strategy ■ % of Respondents that chose this strategy as area of greatest gains

their measures decline. It's clear that leaders are attempting a variety of different strategies to improve Patient Experience. The amount of time and resources being deployed toward this effort appears to be ever-increasing. The question remains, what are the keys to effectively transforming the Patient Experience in such a way that everyone across the continuum will be satisfied?

2015 Patient Experience Strategies Deployed by Location Eighty-eight percent of Wisconsin leaders cited Employee Engagement as their #1 strategy relative to Patient Experience with Patient/Leader Rounding as #2, and Patient/Employee Communication as their third strategy. Greater Minnesota leaders reported Provider and Staff Education, Employee Engagement, and Patient/Leader Rounding as their top three strategies respectively. The Twin Cities Metro Area leaders identified Patient Access as #1, followed by Employee Engagement, and Care Delivery Redesign. However, prioritized strategies were not always those that produced the greatest gains.

2015 Greatest Gains in Patient Experience Strategies by Location

WI
1. Employee Engagement
2. Patient/Leader Rounding
3. Provider & Staff Education

Greater MN
1. Employee Engagement
2. Patient/Leader Rounding
3. Culture Development

Twin Cities Metro
1. Patient Access
2. Care Delivery Redesign
3. Patient/Leader Rounding

Here is one example of a health care organization that thoroughly explored their patient's emotional needs and expectations, resulting in a design that significantly changed the Patient Experience through intentional integration of behaviors, environment and processes.

Case study:

Health & Wellness Center by Doylestown Hospital (Doylestown, PA)

Business Issue:
Construction of a new Health and Wellness Center with a mandate to create a distinctive healthcare experience integrating traditional medical services with specialized retail, wellness, and fitness services.

Experience Solution:
- Conducted an in-depth audit of the current patient experience
- Developed and implemented an experience sensitive design that integrated behaviors, environment, and process around priority customer emotions

Results: *Within the first year of operation*
- Exceeded planned income projections by 58%
- Ranked #3 out of 357 "high end" healthcare facilities polled in Press Ganey patient priority survey. Ranked in 98th percentile in "overall satisfaction" and 99th percentile for "sensitivity to patient needs" and "explanations given by staff" (Press Ganey)
- Experience-based services became so popular they moved from being a cost center to a profit center

This case study was provided by Experience Engineering® based on work they performed with Doylestown Hospital (Doylestown, PA).

The Leadership Job

In this year's survey, we asked participants to best describe what it's like to serve as a leader in today's health care environment. **Thirty-eight percent of leaders used the word "challenging" in their response.** The specific responses varied from *"Challenging, dynamic and frustrating"*, *"Stressful, challenged, frustrated"* to *"Challenging. Energizing"* and *"Challenging times call for innovation, commitment and collaboration."*

Many responses also included the word "Patient" with a number of leaders referencing Patient Experience. For instance, one Twin Cities Administrator stated, *"Patient expectations continue to rise and become critical to ongoing success."*

. . . .

86%
of leaders are **confident** that they will meet their priorities during 2016.

82%
of leaders were **confident** that they would meet their priorities during 2015.

. . . .

"…it [my confidence level] depends a bit on the topic. We are very confident on some [priorities], confident on others, and some we may need help on."

– One Greater Minnesota CEO

"Health Care Leadership is one of those jobs that can be the best job ever and the worst job ever, all in a matter of a couple of hours. Flexibility, attitude, patience, trust, communication, team and focus are all necessary components for leaders to survive and thrive."

– Wisconsin Health Care System CEO

. . . .

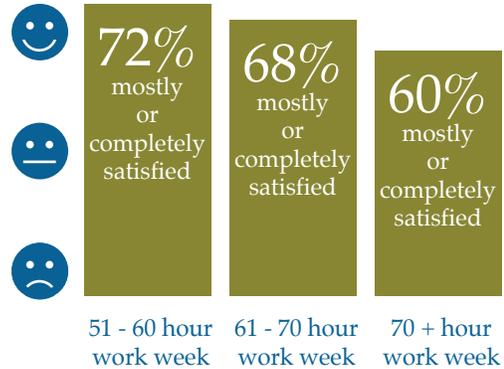## The Ever-expanding Work Week

Four years ago, 53% of leaders reported working 51 or more hours per week. Today, that number has reached 70%! Taking a closer look at this ever-expanding work week, 21% of leaders report working 61+ hours each week and of those, 4% work more than 70 hours a week. This compares to 2012, when less than 15% of all leaders worked more than 61 hours each week.

% of respondents working greater than 51 hours per week

53%
2011

70%
2016
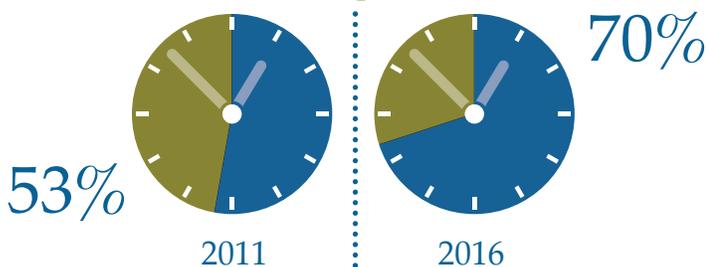
Although obviously challenged by today's health care environment, it was encouraging to see that 82% of all leaders who responded to our survey are satisfied in their current role. This is a substantial increase over prior years, including 2015 when only 66% reported that same level of satisfaction. The degree of satisfaction does tend to decrease with the longer work week.

Leader Satisfaction Levels

| 72% mostly or completely satisfied	68% mostly or completely satisfied	60% mostly or completely satisfied
51 - 60 hour work week	61 - 70 hour work week	70 + hour work week

Generational Diversity within the Leadership Ranks

Based on our survey, Wisconsin health care organizations are employing a larger percentage of GenX leaders: 29% of Wisconsin leaders are GenXers and 68% Baby Boomers. This compares to Greater Minnesota where 14% of our survey respondents were GenXers and 79% Baby Boomers.

Baby Boomers on the Move

In this year's survey, 63% of leaders report that they expect to leave their current role within the next five years. Last year, this figure was 59% and in 2011 it was even lower at 47%. This is a clear indication that we are experiencing the movement of Baby Boomers from the full-time leadership work force. Of CEOs alone, two out of every three expect to leave their role within five years. Within the COO and Managers groups, 40% see themselves leaving their current organization within the next five years. The group of leaders where it appears we will see the highest percentage of departures within the next five years are CNOs. Seventy-one percent of the CNOs indicated they will leave their current organization within the next five years.

2011 — 47%
2015 — 59%
2016 — 63%

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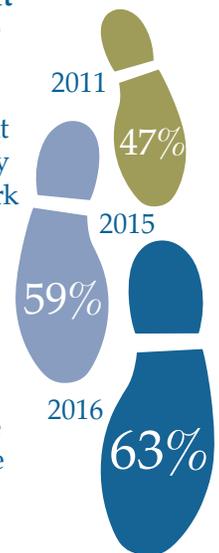
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