Visual Menu: Addressing the Needs of the Limited English Proficient Patient Population

The Problem

BIDMC offers an *"At Your Request"* room service system for feeding inpatients. Typically, the Limited English Proficient (LEP) patient population is not provided the same choices. Upon admission, LEP patients are often categorized as "send a non-select tray" (NS) or "needs assistance to order" (assist). With a NS tray, the patient is sent the daily rotated predetermined meal. As an "assist" patient, they're given a paper menu closest to their native language. The paper menus are out of date, unattractive and sometimes not even close to the patient's dialect. They can lead to frustration, miscommunication and decreased consumption.

Aim/Goal

1. Ten percent of BIDMC's patient population is LEP, necessitating the development of more accommodating ways of providing preferences for food selection. This meets BIDMC's 2011 Annual Operating Plan goal to specifically assess and address the patient experience of minority and non-English speaking patients.

2. Develop a visual menu with pictures of all food items available to be translated into the most common languages: Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Russian and Portuguese.

3. Increase the number of patients participating in our At Your Request Room Service Dining program by decreasing the number of non-select trays by 10%.

The Team

Shana Sporman, MS, RD, Sodexo Food Service

Allyn Roberts, RD, Sodexo Food Service

Mitch Lawson, MBA, RD Sodexo GM Food Service

Nora Blake, Sodexo Director Food Service

Ediss Gandelman, Community Benefits

Jennifer Luszcz, Media Services

Shari Gold/Gomez, Interpreter Services

Bruce Wahl, Media Services

Diana Steinberg, Interpreter Services

The Interventions

➢ Food Service, Community Benefits and Interpreter Services met in May 2011 to discuss menu options for minority groups

➢ All food provided was photographed, layout and translation of menu was provided by BIDMC Media Services and Sodexo GMSP printing

➢ Meetings held with nursing pilot floors (5F, 6F, 6S, Farr 7) to discuss distribution of visual menu to non-English speaking patients

➢ On-going analysis of "non-select" & "needs assistance" categorization

Progress to Date

Previous Translated Menu   New Visual Menu

Lessons Learned

When patients are categorized as "non-select" and "needs assistance" with room service, it is not clear for what reason. Some are categorized for language barriers, others for cognition, dementia, blindness, or it can be as simple as patients not being able to use the phone. This makes it difficult to measure the effectiveness of the visual menu and also difficult to measure when the visual menu is actually being used.

Next Steps

➢ Implement menus on pilot floors in February 2012

➢ Develop a modifier in nursing admission screening to clarify reason behind choosing "non-select" tray or "needs assistance" when ordering meals. For example: language barrier, cognition/dementia, inability to use phone system

➢ Implement Health Touch System – a tracking device in room service to measure when nursing is using visual menu

➢ Create survey to measure impact of visual menu on patient experience

For More Information Contact
Shana Sporman, MS, RD, LDN, Patient Services Ambassador, ssporman@bidmc.harvard.edu

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

A teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School

THE SILVERMAN INSTITUTE
For Health Care Quality and Safety