Best Practice Guide: Staff Rounding
Vocera Communications, Inc.

Staff rounds best practice guide
Rounding on staff gives leaders opportunities to gain valuable insights from speaking with front-line providers, nurses and staff. By increasing leadership visibility and engagement, leaders discover barriers to safety and quality within the workplace, assess and promote staff satisfaction and engagement and hardwire processes and initiatives to meet specific goals. Staff rounding is also proven to positively affect patient satisfaction scores and elevate staff morale. In many organizations, this practice is part of the standard high reliability or Lean Daily Management System program to drive continuous process improvement and standardize operations.

When to perform staff rounds?
Staff rounds should be conducted by all levels of leadership, including C-level executives and on all shifts. They may be conducted one-on-one, in small groups, as part of huddles or by simple observation of work in progress. Staff rounds also serve as an opportunity for staff-directed service recovery for EVS/Housekeeping, IT, facilities or other areas. The built-in, closed-loop feature of the Vocera Rounds solution provides analytics to help drive accountability and transparency. Staff rounds don’t have to be an entirely new process and should not be a stand-alone effort. They can be integrated into existing unit huddles, process improvement programs and employee coaching and recognition programs.

What questions should be asked while rounding on staff?
The most effective questions used during staff rounds are those that facilitate open dialogue and focus on specific initiatives. The most commonly used questions promote discussion around staff engagement, job satisfaction and opportunities to address broken processes that impact care delivery and patient experience.

Examples of specific areas frequently addressed during staff rounds are:

1. What else do you think I should know about, or what other questions can I answer for you?
2. What barriers keep you from serving patients and families to the best of your abilities?
3. Have you noticed anything that may pose a safety risk to our patients, employees, or visitors?
4. Is there a staff member, physician or department you would like to recognize for going above and beyond to help you or a patient?

In addition, organizations are not limiting staff rounds to satisfaction measures, but also auditing behavior of specific initiatives or interest. Hand hygiene compliance, faculty and staff safety, AIDET or behavioral standards and Joint Commission preparedness are also good topics to incorporate into the staff rounding process.

Where to conduct staff rounds?
Vocera Rounds support up to 12 round types, 6 patient facing rounds and 6 staff facing rounds for each area, unit or department within an organization. Common areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Clinical and non-clinical departments
2. Off-campus clinics affiliated with the organization
3. Physicians’ offices and outpatient clinics

“By going to gemba to round on staff and patients in a way that enables us to hear their voices, fears, and concerns, we have discovered more than 60 improvement opportunities, reduced patient complaints by 50%, and raised patient satisfaction by 25 points.”

Chris Pratt
Senior Director, Performance Improvement
El Camino Hospital
What are some general coaching rules of thumb?

1. Define desired behaviors
2. Reinforce desired behaviors
3. Redirect non-desired behaviors

Delivering effective coaching

1. Start positive!! Use a 5:1 positive to negative feedback ratio
2. Focus on behaviors and their impact
3. Be timely
4. Focus on behaviors that can be changed
5. Give the person an opportunity to respond
6. Summarize and express your support

What are the keys to success?

Organizations achieve the greatest success by laying a strong foundation, supporting behavior change and encouraging the staff rounding process by:

1. Building Trust:
   - Engage staff members on a personal level, learning their names and interests
   - Clearly communicating the “why” for rounding
   - Ask open-ended questions for candid dialogue
   - Make a commitment to round on off-hours
   - Listen to concerns and promptly act on them

2. Observation:
   - Identify what is working well in the organization/watch how work is actually performed
   - Identify opportunities to improve tools, equipment or processes within the organization
   - Identify quality or safety issues that need improvement
   - Focus on areas/ideas that affect patient perception of care
   - Recognize staff members for exceptional performance or care
   - Identify opportunities for staff professional development

3. Commitment:
   - Set scheduled rounding times/number of staff to round on
   - Be visible/get outside the office
   - Drive continuous weekly feedback to provide follow-up data
     a. Include rounding results monthly on leadership and department meeting agendas
     b. Include rounding results in employee forums to provide follow up and feedback
     c. Celebrate staff compliments and recognitions, link to performance reviews
     d. Provide feedback from any “tough questions” heard during rounding
     e. Report trends and related actionable items