I Can Help Greeter Program

Children's National Medical Center | 2013

**Problem**
In 2009, the Volunteer Services Department in conjunction with the Welcome Desk at Children's National Medical Center sought the need of identifying interpersonal way-finding tools to increase volunteer opportunities for staff and employee engagement.

**Solution**
After benchmarking with seven children's hospitals in the United States, the I Can Help greeter program was created. The greeter program was created to promote and embed a culture of service excellence and safety through enhanced interpersonal way-finding. Greeters wear a red smock with the Dr. Bear logo and program name. Greeters provide world class customer service by:

- **Greeting** every individual with a smile;
- **Asking** how they can help;
- **Assisting** with way-finding by providing directions to hospital areas to patients, families, visitors;
- **Escorting** families to appointments;
- **Providing** carts or wheelchairs to families;
- **Answering** general questions;
- **Providing** excellent customer service and identifying areas where service recovery is needed;
- **Identifying** safety issues

Children's National staff, primarily non-clinical are encouraged to be part of the program as it offers an opportunity for them to interact with patients and families. This opportunity is also available for volunteers. Volunteer Services offers monthly two-hour trainings and recommended two one-hour greeter shifts monthly. Recruitment and retention are essential pieces of program. Volunteer Services is responsible for acquiring leadership support. The following are tools utilized for recruitment/retention: house-wide emails, bulletins, flyers on Welcome Desk; staff meeting presentations; quarterly social activities.

In 2010, leadership from Children’s National charted the Government and External Affairs and Human Resources Departments to participate in a pilot for the I Can Help greeter program. 128 greeters were trained serving over 210 hours as a greeter. In 2011, Volunteer Services initiated a phased approach to expand the program to other hospital departments. 88 greeters were trained, serving over 207 hours as a greeter.

In 2012, I Can Help greeter program was expanded to the Extended Campuses to upsurge employee engagement and increase patient satisfaction. In 2013, faced with a drastic increase in patient admission during flu season, the I Can Help Program High Census was launched in the Emergency Department. In a 3-month period greeters served over 1,000 families and successfully performed 87 ED family waiting room rounds.

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**Outcomes**
As a result of the program's 5 year plan, 364 greeters were trained serving over 1,228 hours

94% of the greeters rated their satisfaction with the program as either great or excellent and 91% have found their work with the program to be rewarding experience.

Staff embraced the program, 100% rated the ability of greeters to assist visitors with their needs as either great or excellent.