

CASE STUDY

East Tennessee Children's Hospital discovers hidden improvement opportunities using Real-time feedback

Practicing the power of human understanding to inform work processes

East Tennessee Children's Hospital discovers hidden improvement opportunities using Real-time feedback

Background

East Tennessee Children's Hospital (Children's Hospital) is a 152-bed hospital with a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and a partnership with the University of Tennessee Medical Center for Level I trauma services. They are certified by the state of Tennessee as the only Comprehensive Regional Pediatric Center in East Tennessee and one of the top Leapfrog Group hospitals in the country.

Opportunity

By adopting NRC Health's Real-time solution, Children's Hospital knew they would see increased feedback volumes for understanding the pediatric care they provided. However, they hadn't anticipated receiving over 18,270 responses, 2,424 comments, and 169 alerts that included lingering patient and family questions or relationship-building opportunities—all within the first six months of implementation. Children's Hospital needed to quickly adopt workflow processes that would allow them to rapidly respond to the robust amount of qualitative data they were receiving, and effectively manage the patients and families who were being identified as needing additional follow-up.

"We can address concerns while staff members still remember the encounter. It's a tremendous difference! This gives us a different perspective than we had in the past."

—Radiology Manager
East Tennessee Children's Hospital

Approach

To effectively manage the influx of patient feedback, Children's Hospital implemented two unique processes. The first was designed for the patient experience department staff to handle patient alerts (Appendix A). The second would help clinical directors and managers provide staff recognition, education, and coaching (Appendix B).

Outcome

Using the multifaceted approach, Children's Hospital is now able to rapidly close alerts, eliminate gaps in care, and efficiently respond to the increased volume of feedback without a need for additional staffing.

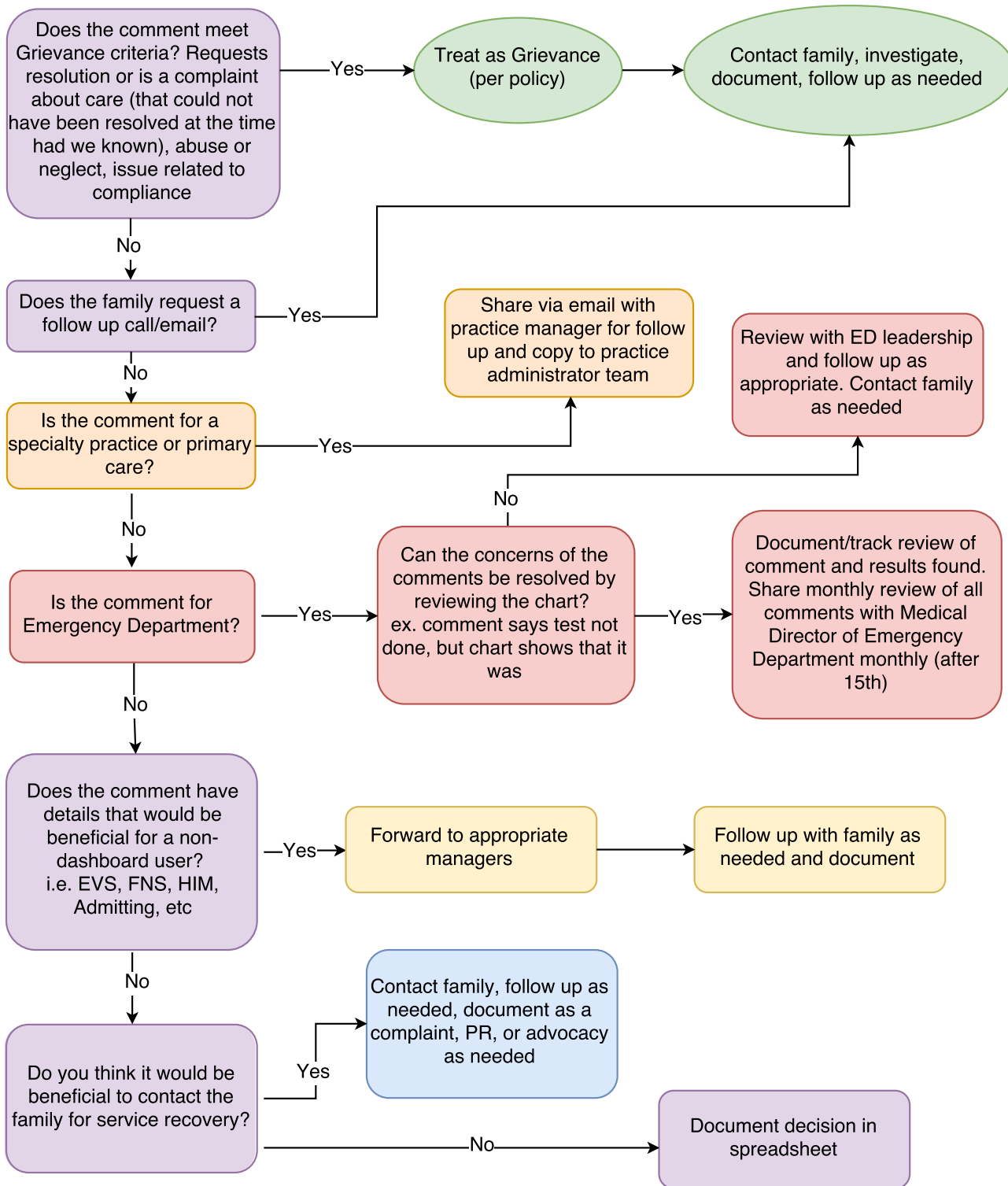
There is consistent program adoption by directors and managers who review the data daily. Dashboards and comments are shared in daily huddles, via email, at the quarterly staff/physician/Patient and Family Advisory Council meetings, and on unit boards.

Focusing on understanding patients through a shorter survey, with an emphasis on obtaining qualitative data, has captured hidden opportunities. For example, Children's Hospital emergency department patients didn't understand why others were taken ahead of sequence. To resolve the issue, Children's Hospital now creates education videos based on Real-time feedback that includes trivia facts for children. Real-time feedback illuminated multiple opportunities for improvement including:

- Communication gaps with suicidal-ideation patients
- Infection control concerns in the parking garage
- Visibility to monitors in the care setting
- Scales needed in pre- and post-surgical areas

Using Real-time feedback, Children's Hospital is able to deliver with greater understanding and agility—responding fully to what's top-of-mind for their patients and families.

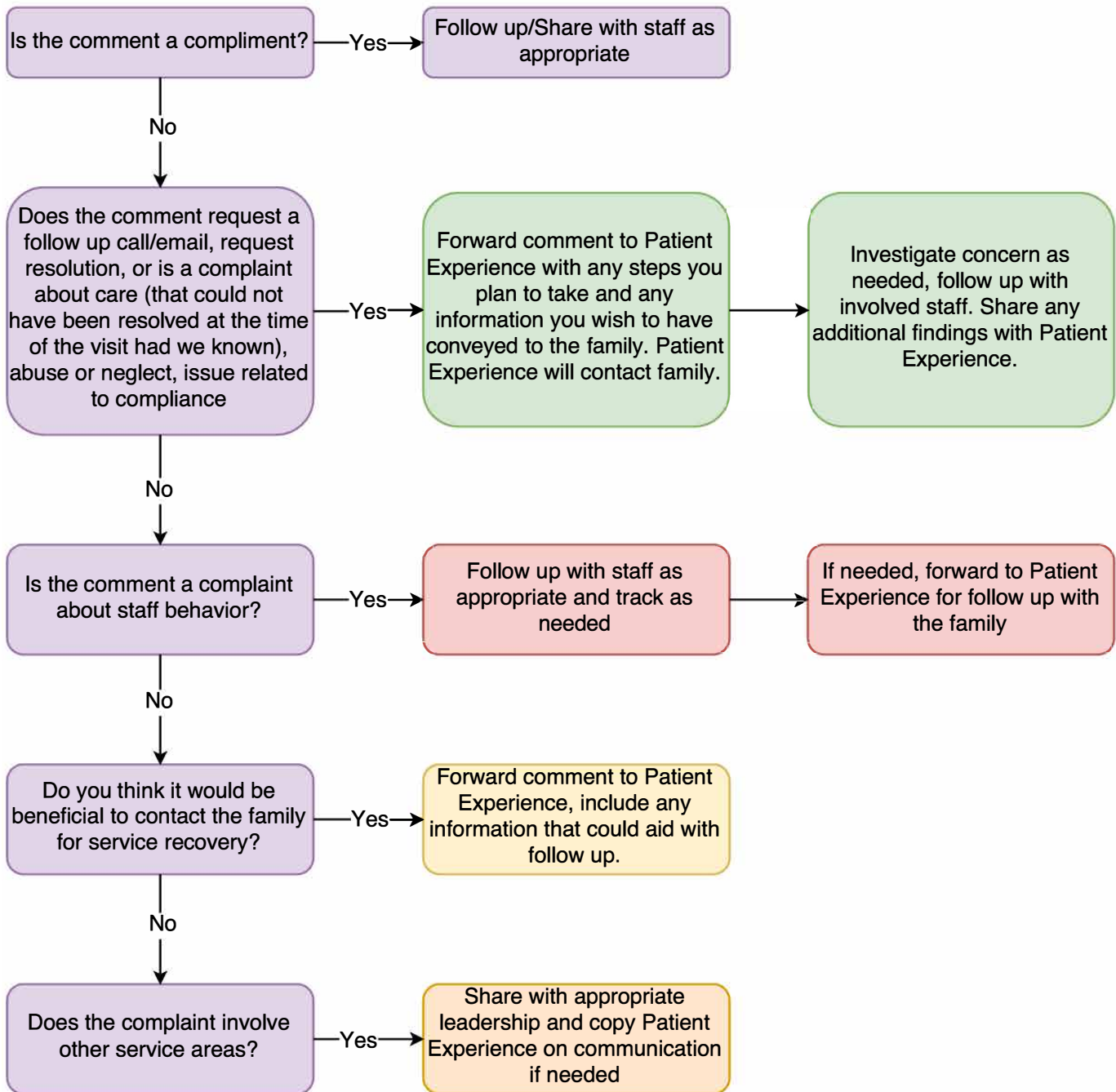
Appendix A. NRC Health Survey Comment Follow-up - Patient Experience



Document created by Mary Wynn, East Tennessee Children's Hospital, Office of Patient Experience, December 2017

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