



Regions Hospital Specialty Clinics

“I continue to be amazed at the ongoing positive influence our work with *bizFutures* has had on improving staff morale and patient satisfaction at the Regions Specialty Clinics. The many individual transformations we have seen have shown employees throughout the organization that *one person can truly make a difference simply by having good intentions and a positive attitude.*”

**Megan Remark, Vice President, Outpatient Services, Regions Hospital and CEO,
Regions Hospital Specialty Clinics, Inc.**

Client Profile

Regions Hospital is a premier, full-service, private hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota. It provides outstanding medical care in many areas, with special programs in heart care, women’s care, cancer care, seniors’ services, digestive care, behavioral health, surgery, burn, emergency and Level I trauma. Established in 1872, the hospital has served the Twin Cities and surrounding region for more than 130 years. Patients receive state-of-the-art care in an environment that promotes comfort and healing. The health professionals at Regions Hospital are involved in teaching and research focused on improving health and medical care. Regions hospital is part of the Bloomington, Minnesota-based HealthPartners family of care.

The Regions Specialty Clinics, which were the focus of the consulting relationship with **bizFutures**, include more than 300 employees as well as 200 providers practicing in primary medicine and surgical specialty clinics at Regions Hospital.

Challenge/Opportunity

Prior to 1999, the staff at Regions Specialty Clinics had low morale and, at times, showed little respect to each other. Employees and clinic leadership were also aware that patient access to see physicians was becoming more and more difficult. It became obvious that change was needed.

Approach

Clinic leadership realized that, in order to move forward, it was imperative we first build a strong foundation. Without this, future efforts would be lost. We began by having all employees attend focus groups. At each session, the same two questions were asked: 1) What kind of service do you, as a customer, deserve? 2) What kind of service do our patients deserve?



Data from these sessions was compiled. From these sessions, we identified seven areas for improvement. This information was incorporated into pocket cards entitled “Personal Service Expectations.”

The next step on our journey was the challenge to build our foundation, based on service, acknowledgement and appreciation for patients AND staff. Our patient services manager was introduced to the FiSH! video by an outside source. He went on to attend **bizFutures’ Creating a Vital Workplace** course, and then began coordinating and leading the charge. There was an immediate connection and understanding by a significant number of front line staff. Our world has not been the same since! The work done by Pike Place Market and **bizFutures** have provided us with an ongoing source of direction and energy. At the same time, we have realized the importance of building our own foundation, “one minnow at a time.”

We have done so by obtaining patient satisfaction surveys three times per year in each clinic. We have joined in a corporate-wide initiative to improve access to our patients, by allowing them to see the primary provider of their choice at a time convenient to them. This involves major ongoing work by the providers and support staff, to work down backlog and make every attempt to do “today’s work today.”

All employees now view the FiSH! videos as part of their new employee orientation. They are asked to commit to our Personal Service Expectations. In addition, service has become a major component of our annual employee performance reviews.

FUN is no longer a foreign concept in Regions Specialty Clinics. It’s part of who we are. We’ve implemented activities for staff such as an employee **County Fair**, clinic-wide **Chocolate Chip Cookie Contest**, and, a **Champions of Service Olympic Event**, to name a few examples.

Our leadership has been challenged to think from new perspectives. We have had retreats led with creativity and heart, not just overheads and long Power-Point presentations. Three examples include: a theater team with the theme ‘Improvisation,’ focused on the need to frequently improvise in our work world; an orchestra conductor showing the comparison of leadership and passion/compassion with the world of music and the world of healthcare; a professional hockey team assistant general manager showing the similarities of leadership and teamwork with hockey, compared to that of the healthcare industry.

Regions Specialty Clinics feel the adoption of the principles and practices we learned, and the support and guidance given to us by **bizFutures** have been instrumental to our success. At the same time, it has been each person’s ongoing commitment and dedication within the Regions Specialty Clinics that keeps our momentum going and our attitudes positive.



Results

The goal of these activities was to improve service, have staff value their co-workers, feel good about their work, determine their own destinies, and evaluate how each of them felt they were doing in the areas where improvement was needed. Today, other departments within the hospital have begun to use some of our ideas to help change their own areas.

Regions Specialty Clinics are part of a larger organization called HealthPartners, which is the recipient of a Robert Wood Johnson grant, to identify how to dramatically improve the care patients receive within our health care system. We are thrilled to be involved on the cutting edge of re-defining healthcare. We are practicing initiatives referred to as STEEEP. It is our goal to provide care that is Safe, Timely, Efficient, Equitable, Effective and Patient-centered (STEEEP). It only makes sense to incorporate these initiatives with the technology we learned from **bizFutures**.

It is our intention to provide top-notch patient care, along with acknowledgement and appreciation for each other. Intention is a very powerful thing. We have now begun to realize our possibilities!

**Jan Ostertag, RNC
Medicine Specialties Operations Manager
HealthPartners Regions Specialty Clinics
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