The primary goal of health care is to offer services that will improve the quality of life for patients. Every day health care systems strive to optimize their limited resources while maintaining the highest quality patient care. However, if these efforts fall short, patients may feel frustrated and neglected because help is not always readily available when needed. A literature review was conducted for benchmarking purposes. Based on that review, we found that delays in responding to patient needs have a negative impact on HCAHPS staff responsiveness scores. Therefore, responding in a timely manner when patients call for assistance is essential, and the consistency of staff responsiveness helps to improve staff satisfaction scores.

In April 2015, the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) - Staff Responsiveness score on the Cardiac Telemetry Unit 2A at Alamance Regional was in the 14th percentile.

After the education, the following interventions were implemented:

- Mandatory hourly rounding for all staff
- Call light versus direct staff phone number process changed
- Patients to call nurse/nurse tech directly using the posted telephone numbers on the whiteboards in the patient rooms
- A laminated sheet at the bedside with nurse/nurse tech phone numbers to be used for patients who cannot see the whiteboards
- Leadership daily rounds were conducted to ensure compliance to the newly established protocols and to gather feedback for patients and families

The unit leadership evaluated HCAHPS scores on staff responsiveness and assessed current practices, focusing on identifying gaps and barriers. The leadership collaborated with the Unit Based Council to improve staff response time by implementing clinical changes and providing supplemental training to departmental employees.

The department nursing leadership collaborated with the patient experience team, unit staff and secretary to conduct a call log study and create an action plan based on the findings. The purpose of the call log study was to identify the most common reason(s) for patients calling for assistance and the period in which the unit received the heaviest call volume.

Patients were educated regarding hourly staff rounding and how to contact their assigned nurse and/or nurse tech directly by phone. The Unit Assistant Director developed a one-to-one training via Power Point presentation and required all department staff to participate. The training included teach-back and role play to ensure understanding.

The frequency of hourly rounding, utilization of staff phone numbers, patient education and nursing communications have resulted in significant improvement in HCAHPS scores for the Cardiac Telemetry unit at Alamance Regional. Unit staff worked together and drove practice improvements at the bedside to increase staff satisfaction scores while providing the highest quality care and maximizing health outcomes.