

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT CARE

Mikel Barr is the executive director of quality for Madison Memorial Hospital (MMH). She is a great strength and leader in the community for her dedication to excellence in patient care. Her leadership has led a Quality Revolution at Madison Memorial Hospital. She has also led the development of a robust Patient Family Advisory Committee and a Care Transition Team and Program. She excels at team building and protecting “spark plugs”. Mikel is a highly sought-after speaker and is devoted to improving the patient experience and care. She has a critical eye in her responsibilities and her focus is data driven. But mostly, Mikel just simply wants to do the right thing for everyone, especially the patient.

Mikel is a leader at staying connected to emerging national, state and local patient care discussions. Dr. Clay Prince, CMO at MMH said, “I think Mikel is often on the forefront of issues that are trending in healthcare. A recent example is that she was part of a team invited to a neighboring hospital to provide training. She has also been invited to speak on quality at the University of Utah, which is quite an honor for someone representing such a small affiliate hospital. Mikel enjoys wide respect among her peers in our community of neighboring hospitals and we are always hearing about how much they wish they had her, or someone like her.” When asked if Mikel speaks on behalf of what is best for the patient, Dr. Prince is emphatic. “Always! While Mikel’s job is now far removed from the bedside, she remains a nurse at heart. She and I have had many discussions regarding how we can improve patient satisfaction scores. Central to those discussions is a real desire to actually improve the patient experience — patient comfort, the ease of the experience, the flow of the experience, the lessening of the trauma of the interaction with ‘the system.’”

“Mikel shares her knowledge and pushed our organization to create a Quality Revolution in order to help us change how we think and perform. She has been asked to present multiple times at the Qualis Health Patient Safety Annual Conference as well as at the National Association for Healthcare Quality and multiple times at the Coverys Risk Management Conference. Mikel demonstrates her leadership ability as a patient care champion. Mikel’s first impulse is to gather a team — the right team. Mikel excels at first getting the correct parties into the discussion. She understands that without the right people at the table, no meaningful decisions can be made. Without all sides being represented, the right decision can’t be made. Mikel has grown our rapid cycle testing program which has helped to foster and develop a culture of safety at MMH. Mikel has helped us switch from addressing quality issues from corrective actions and root cause analysis to focusing on looking proactively at what is causing errors so that we can truly prevent them from happening again. She has included the bedside staff in our concurrent, real-time chart reviews so we can identify where and when we might be missing a critical part of the patient’s treatment plan. Mikel is committed to elevating patient care innovation.” Dr. Prince comments, “She is not just interested in complying with Medicare standards, she is interested in the spirit of those standards, which is to maximize patient safety.”

Mikel has a great passion for collaborative learning. Nolan Bybee, director of risk management and compliance commented, “Mikel very strongly believes that we need to protect our spark plugs. These are those individuals in the organization who are excited to try something new to fix a problem. All too often these individuals will propose a suggestion and are quickly shot down, so next time there is a problem they refuse to speak up. She reminds all of us in leadership that our staff have some great ideas for how to improve and unless we protect these individuals and their ideas they will shut down and not want to share. We need these sparks to ignite and when they do it spreads.”

Misty Gordon, director of inpatient services, remarked, “Mikel never seeks recognition or praise, she has many great ideas that sometimes get credited to another. She is unselfish and wants to see others succeed. She

knows that developing others is the mark of a true leader. She will be the first to take ownership for a mistake and is so willing to use disappointments as a strength and learning tool." Mikel does not approach things from a place of personal ambition. She has the best interests of the organization at heart. This apparent lack of personal agenda makes it easy for others to trust her, because one can quickly ascertain that she won't be jockeying for position, playing favorites, or flowing with politics. She just wants to get stuff done and is single-minded about that."

As executive director of quality, Mikel is constantly focused on best practice implementation. This covers a wide swath of hospital activities, from physician credentialing and peer review, to the details of medication administration. She has the unique privilege, and responsibility, to look at all these processes with a critical eye and make sure that each is the best for Madison Memorial Hospital. She chooses which things to focus on by closely reviewing the data. Misty further commented, "Mikel is the epitome of what a patient advocate is. She fights for best practices in all areas and is relentless to achieve the best care possible for all. Providers and patients alike look to her to help stay on track with best practice efforts."

Rachel Gonzales, CEO at MMH stated, "There are many fabulous healthcare leaders in the nation. The patient care leader that rises above the rest, is the one who will consistently strive to make decisions that are truly in the best interest of the patient, the organization, and the healthcare system. Mikel is such a leader. Madison Memorial Hospital is a higher quality institution because of Mikel."