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# MAIN LINE HEALTH FACILITIES PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS STORY

A Case Study



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# ARAMARK SUPPORTS MAIN LINE HEALTH'S CULTURE SHIFT TO "I AM THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE" INITIATIVE

Making a wholesale cultural shift of embracing patients as partners may be one of the most challenging initiatives a healthcare organization can undertake. Many healthcare organizations continue to deliver services without fully engaging the patient, despite growing evidence that active engagement of patients and family members contribute to improved outcomes, operational efficiencies, experiences, and costs. Yet, when patient satisfaction scores affect healthcare reimbursement levels, new approaches are needed. In 2015 Main Line Health sought to increase its HCAHPS scores in its 6-facility Pennsylvania healthcare network. It developed and embraced a new philosophy toward its operations that generated significant performance improvement. Success was driven, in part, by the adoption of the program by the Environmental Services department.

To create a wholesale change, Main Line Health created a strategic plan for 2016 through 2020 with **five objectives**:

- ▶ Deliver a superior experience for patients while also involving physicians, nurses, employees, partners and payers
- ▶ Improve the health of the communities served
- ▶ Develop highly engaged employees, physicians, nurses, and partners
- ▶ Deliver outstanding value by continually improving performance
- ▶ Advance research and the education of future healthcare professionals



To shift its culture toward achieving these goals, the organization adopted the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework for Healthcare and embraced the theme: “I am the Patient Experience.” The fundamental message was that everything the healthcare organization does should be centered on patients’ and their families’ interests, first and foremost. To carry the new message across the network to its 11,000 employees working in 6 facilities, the healthcare organization enlisted the support of its Environmental Services provider, Aramark. Together, a new approach to patient engagement was developed. Adoption of the program by Aramark became a model for other departments on how to execute patient engagement.

The Aramark team was involved in a variety of projects to support the initiative using its well-honed service capabilities, including everything from dynamic employee training at all levels of the organization to a powerful nurse engagement program. The results exceeded Main Line Health’s goals — beginning with a major boost in patient survey scores in just under one year. Furthermore, it achieved several operational efficiencies, cost savings and improved employee-manager ratios with Aramark’s help. The partnership has been so productive that Main Line Healthcare has extended its relationship with Aramark, recently signing a new five-year contract as well as expanding into Patient Transport services.

## HCAHPS CLEANLINESS SCORES IMPROVED **25 PERCENTILE POINTS** BETWEEN 2015 AND 2017.

### MAIN LINE HEALTH RESULTS

- Created manager-to-employee ratios of 15-to-1 in facilities, matching best-in-class industry standards
- Met the goal of reaching 33 percentile in Truven staffing benchmarks
- Increased HCAHPS scores
- Trained 11,000+ employees on the “I am the Patient Experience” initiative



# Main Line Health-Aramark Partnership Wins

## WIN 1

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### **Educating and Engaging 11,000 Staff Members**

One of the first steps in changing the culture at Main Line Health was spreading the guiding message to the entire 11,000-member staff across the network. The goal was for the employees to understand and embrace the organization's new theme, *"I am the Patient Experience."* Aramark's patient experience expert helped create the educational program, including an orientation class, a two-hour deep dive course, and refresher courses. Aramark also instituted a "train-the-trainer" program, and deliver the program to existing employees and new employees as they came onboard. Aramark embraced the "I Am the Patient Experience" by hiring an IATPE facilitator, training 100 percent of its staff and new staff with IATPE. In addition, Aramark adopted all of Main Line Health's Patient Experience language and tools (i.e. AIDET Execution, Patient Experience Assessment, and Occupied Room Observations) and modified their existing tools to reflect Main Line Health's content. Because of its enthusiastic adoption of the program, the Aramark Patient Experience Manager was selected to train MLH staff in other clinical and nonclinical areas. Part of the Train-the-Trainer program.

Aramark also launched and maintained employee communication on newly created "huddle boards", a centrally located bulletin board for communicating performance and timely messaging. The messaging was aligned with the new cultural theme and featured daily updates on each unit's scores. Team members could visualize their progress toward assigned goals and tasks. The huddle boards both reminded staff members about their new guiding theme and encouraged them to meet their goals. The "huddle boards" were so successful, they were adopted by other non-Aramark departments as well.

## WIN 2

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### **Achieving Best-In-Class Employee-Manager Ratios**

Another important Aramark initiative was driving greater employee efficiencies across the network. Management of two smaller Main Line Health locations were consolidated under the leadership of a single general manager. Best-in-class industry standards on manager-to-employee ratios — 15-to-1 in the healthcare division — were realized. This was achieved through smart scheduling, establishing more scalable staffing models and scheduling to volume. Innovation in equipment was also introduced to support this effort. Tru-D ultraviolet room disinfection units were deployed. Main Line became an early adopter of Oxycide, a disinfectant proven to reduce HAIs. Finally Patient Connect, Aramark's hand-held patient rounding tool, was also implemented. All of these efforts have resulted in a scalable staffing model across the system, greater standardization, and significant cost savings.

Another important objective of Aramark's service agreement was finding opportunities to cut costs across the network. This effort realized a significant expense reduction over two years.

### WIN 3

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#### **Boosting Nurse Engagement and, Thus, Patient Care**

Critical to carrying out its culture shift was securing acceptance and participation by the nursing community. Main Line Health tasked Aramark with an initiative to boost nurses' engagement. Aramark initiated consistent communication program. Team meetings are held once-a-month between nursing leadership and Aramark to share insights on the "I am the Patient Experience" program and updates on reaching the organization's goals. These meetings fostered greater connection between EVS staff and nurses. Faster and better response to nurse questions and concerns were realized. The goal is to determine what's important to them and how Main Line Health can make the changes they request and improve the quality of their days. In this way, the nurses have a voice within the organization and feel more engaged with their jobs.



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# ABOUT MAIN LINE HEALTH (MLH)

“We have utmost confidence in our partnership with Aramark. They have been good stewards of our mission and budget. That’s why we extended our contract with them for five more years, without distributing an RFP.”

— Main Line Health spokesperson

“We recently expanded our relationship with Aramark by adding more of their services to our partnership. In retrospect, we should have done this a lot sooner.”

— Main Line Health spokesperson



## PARTNERSHIP AT A GLANCE

Partners Since: 2005

Facilities: 6

Staff Size: 11,000+

Physicians on Staff: 2,000+

Patient Beds: 1,400

**Aramark Services:** Food and nutrition  
Uniform services Linen distribution  
Patient transport Environmental Services  
Mail room services

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### About Main Line Health (MLH)

Founded in 1985, MLH is a not-for-profit health system serving portions of Philadelphia and its western suburbs with four acute care hospitals, a rehabilitative medicine facility, a drug treatment center, a homecare and hospice facility, an institute for medical research, and five medical centers. MLH is the recipient of numerous awards for quality care and service, including System Magnet® designation, the nation’s highest distinction for nursing excellence, and recognition as among the nation’s best employers by *Forbes* magazine.

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To find out how Aramark can help your healthcare system deliver significant data-driven results for healthcare facilities, contact Aramark today. For more information visit us at: [healthcareinsights.aramark.com](http://healthcareinsights.aramark.com).