

**Describe a successful project your team implemented, including its impact on patient outcomes or the work environment. If possible, provide supporting data.**

In 2025, the 8 South Medical–Surgical Unit at Methodist Hospital in Omaha embarked on a focused initiative to transform the patient experience while strengthening teamwork among nursing staff. The unit’s Unit Based Council (UBC) led this work, recognizing that patient perception of care is closely tied to communication, responsiveness, and collaboration among the healthcare team.

Historically, the unit’s HCAHPS scores related to patient experience showed opportunity for improvement:

Year	Likelihood to Recommend	Communication with Staff
2022	74th Percentile	63rd Percentile
2023	83rd Percentile	62nd Percentile
2024	75th Percentile	49th Percentile

Recognizing the importance of the patient voice, the UBC made the intentional decision in 2025 to shift their primary focus toward improving the **patient experience and staff responsiveness**. The council implemented several initiatives designed to improve communication, teamwork, and patient-centered care:

- Exploring an escalating call light option to improve response times
- Creating a patient and family welcome letter to introduce the care team and set expectations for the hospitalization experience
- Enhancing real-time communication using Vocera communicators in patient rooms to address needs immediately
- Providing education for staff on giving and receiving constructive feedback to strengthen team communication
- Implementing proactive rounding every hour during the day and every two hours overnight
- Establishing a “No Pass Zone” culture to ensure call lights are answered promptly by any available team member

- Hardwiring a buddy system for staff breaks to ensure safe patient coverage and effective handoffs
- Conducting proactive patient experience rounding by UBC members to gather real-time feedback and identify opportunities for improvement

These efforts created measurable improvements in both responsiveness and communication with patients. As a result of the team's dedication and consistent focus, the unit achieved significant improvement in HCAHPS scores in 2025:

- **Likelihood to Recommend:** 89th Percentile
- **Communication with Staff:** 80th Percentile

This project not only improved the patient experience but also strengthened teamwork and shared accountability among nursing staff.

**Describe the steps your team has taken to support and engage nursing staff and enhance nurse retention.**

Throughout 2025, the Unit Based Council intentionally expanded its membership, inviting additional nurses to participate in improvement work and unit decision-making. By engaging frontline staff in meaningful projects, the team cultivated a culture of ownership, collaboration, and professional empowerment.

Nurses were encouraged to bring forward ideas, provide real-time feedback, and participate in initiatives designed to improve both patient care and the work environment. This inclusive approach strengthened communication among staff and fostered a sense of shared purpose across the unit.

As engagement increased, so did staff satisfaction and retention. For the first time since 2020, the 8 South Medical–Surgical Unit is approaching full staffing with highly qualified nurses who are committed to the team's mission and culture. The collaborative environment created through the UBC has played a significant role in retaining experienced nurses while welcoming and supporting new team members.

**Please describe what makes your team unique and provide a minimum of three reasons why you are winners.**

The 8 South team exemplifies nursing excellence through a strong commitment to patient safety, staff engagement, and compassionate care. Their ability to improve outcomes while fostering a supportive work environment makes them truly deserving of recognition.

### **Patient Safety and Clinical Excellence**

- **Zero CAUTI**
- **Zero CLABSI**
- Patient falls reduced to **30 in 2025**, the lowest number since 2016

### **Improved Patient Experience**

- **40% reduction in patient call lights** following implementation of structured hourly rounding
- Significant improvement in patient communication and likelihood-to-recommend scores

### **Commitment to Community and Nurse Wellness**

- **59 health system staff** participated in the AFSP Out of the Darkness Suicide Awareness Walk
- **\$1,246 raised** in support of suicide prevention efforts

### **Recognition of Nursing Excellence**

- **1 Employee of the Month** (staff nominated)
- **6 Meaning of Care Awards** (patient nominated)
- **2 Making a Difference Awards** recognizing excellence in precepting
- **37 DAISY nominations**
- **4 individual DAISY Award recipients**
- The unit's **first TEAM DAISY Award**

The accomplishments of the 8 South team reflect more than strong metrics—they represent a culture of collaboration, accountability, and genuine commitment to both patients and one another. Through the leadership of the Unit Based Council and the engagement of frontline nurses, the team has demonstrated how empowered nurses can drive meaningful improvements in patient experience, safety, and team well-being. Their work in 2025 highlights the power of shared governance, innovative thinking, and compassionate care. The 8 South nursing team exemplifies the spirit of the All-Pro Nursing Team Award by advancing patient-centered care while fostering an environment where nurses thrive, lead, and support one another in delivering exceptional care.