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The Baldrige framework empowers your organization to reach its goals, improve results, and become more competitive. The framework consists of the Criteria, the core values and concepts, and the scoring guidelines.

## **v How to Use the Baldrige Excellence Framework**

You can use this booklet as a reference, for self-assessment, or as the basis of an external assessment.

## **1 Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence Overview and Structure**

The Health Care Criteria include the Organizational Profile and seven interconnected categories. The categories are subdivided into items and areas to address.

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This section explains how to respond most effectively to the Health Care Criteria item requirements.

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These embedded beliefs and behaviors form the foundation of the Health Care Criteria.

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The glossary includes definitions of terms in SMALL CAPS in the Health Care Criteria and scoring guidelines.

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### **Health Care Criteria Commentary** (<https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/baldrige-criteria-commentary-health-care>)

This commentary provides the “why” behind the Health Care Criteria, as well as additional examples and guidance.

customer dissatisfaction should be seen as more than reviewing low satisfaction scores. Dissatisfaction should be independently determined to identify root causes and enable a systematic remedy to avoid future dissatisfaction.

**3.1b(2).** Dimensions of patient satisfaction might include, for example, satisfaction with provider interactions, long-term health outcomes, ancillary services, quality of care, cost, and ease of access. Information you obtain on relative patient and other customer satisfaction may include comparisons with competitors, comparisons with other

organizations that deliver similar health care services in your market or a noncompetitive market, or comparisons obtained through health care industry or other organizations. Information obtained on relative satisfaction may also include information on why patients and other customers choose your competitors over you.

For additional guidance on this item, see the Health Care Criteria Commentary (<https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/baldrige-criteria-commentary-health-care>).

## 3.2 Customer Engagement: How do you engage patients and other customers by serving their needs and building relationships? (45 pts.)

### a. Service Offerings and PATIENT and Other CUSTOMER Support

- (1) **Service Offerings** **HOW do you determine HEALTH CARE SERVICE offerings?** HOW do you
- determine PATIENT, other CUSTOMER, and market needs and requirements for HEALTH CARE SERVICE offerings;
  - identify and adapt service offerings to meet the requirements and exceed the expectations of your PATIENT and other CUSTOMER groups and market SEGMENTS; and
  - identify and adapt service offerings to enter new markets, to attract new PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS, and to create opportunities to expand relationships with current PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS, as appropriate?
- (2) **PATIENT and Other CUSTOMER Support** **HOW do you enable PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS to seek information and support?** HOW do you enable them to obtain HEALTH CARE SERVICES from you? What are your KEY means of PATIENT and other CUSTOMER support, including your KEY communication mechanisms? HOW do they vary for different PATIENT and other CUSTOMER groups or market SEGMENTS? HOW do you
- determine your PATIENTS' and other CUSTOMERS' KEY support requirements, and
  - DEPLOY these requirements to all people and PROCESSES involved in PATIENT and other CUSTOMER support?
- (3) **PATIENT and Other CUSTOMER Segmentation** **HOW do you determine your PATIENT and other CUSTOMER groups and market SEGMENTS?** HOW do you
- use information on PATIENTS, other CUSTOMERS, markets, and HEALTH CARE SERVICE offerings to identify current and anticipate future PATIENT and other CUSTOMER groups and market SEGMENTS;
  - consider competitors' PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS, as well as other potential PATIENTS, CUSTOMERS, and markets in this segmentation; and
  - determine which PATIENT and other CUSTOMER groups and market SEGMENTS to emphasize and pursue for business growth?

### b. PATIENT and Other CUSTOMER Relationships

- (1) **Relationship Management** **HOW do you build and manage relationships with PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS?** HOW do you market, build, and manage relationships with PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS to
- acquire PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS and build market share;
  - manage and enhance your brand image;
  - retain PATIENTS and other CUSTOMERS, meet their requirements, and exceed their expectations in each stage of their relationship with you; and
  - increase their ENGAGEMENT with you?
- HOW do you leverage social media to manage and enhance your brand, and to enhance PATIENT and other CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT and relationships, as appropriate?
- (2) **Complaint Management** **HOW do you manage PATIENT and other CUSTOMER complaints?** HOW do you resolve complaints promptly and effectively? HOW does your management of those complaints enable you to recover your PATIENTS' and other CUSTOMERS' confidence, enhance their satisfaction and ENGAGEMENT, and avoid similar complaints in the future?

*Terms in SMALL CAPS are defined in the Glossary of Key Terms (pages 47–54).*

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## Notes

**3.2.** Customer engagement refers to your patients' and other customers' investment in or commitment to your brand and health care service offerings. Characteristics of engaged patients and other customers include retention, brand loyalty, willingness to make an effort to obtain—and to continue to obtain—health care services from you, and willingness to actively advocate for and recommend your brand and health care service offerings.

**3.2a(1).** Health care service offerings are the services that you offer in the marketplace. In identifying health care service offerings, you should consider all the important characteristics of services that patients and other customers receive in each stage of their relationship with you. The focus should be on features that affect patients' and other customers' preference for and loyalty to you and your brand—for example, features that affect their view of clinical and service quality and that differentiate your offerings from those of competing or other organizations. Those features might include extended hours, family support services, ease of access to and use of your services, timeliness, cost, and assistance with billing/paperwork processes and transportation. Key service features might also take into account how transactions occur and factors such as the privacy and

security of patient and other customer data. Your results on performance relative to key service features should be reported in item 7.1, and those for patients' and other customers' perceptions and actions (outcomes) should be reported in item 7.2.

**3.2a(2).** The goal of patient and other customer support is to make your organization easy to obtain health care services from and responsive to your patients' and other customers' expectations.

**3.2b.** Building relationships with patients and other customers might include developing partnerships or alliances with them.

**3.2b(1).** Brand management is generally associated with marketing to improve the perceived value of your health care services or brand. Successful brand management builds loyalty and positive associations on the part of patients and other customers, and it protects your brand and intellectual property.

For additional guidance on this item, see the [Health Care Criteria Commentary \(https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/baldrige-criteria-commentary-health-care\)](https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/baldrige-criteria-commentary-health-care).