



# The Case For Scalable Real-Time Service Recovery Solutions In Healthcare Provider Systems

*N. Parnaby & R. Kottai*

*www.jabfab.com*

*Updated March 2021*

Healthcare providers are now able to shift service recovery and patient experience management models to real-time, versus after the fact appointment surveys via email, SMS and snail mail. The shift to TRUE real-time will be a game changer for service quality leaders.

**P**rogressive healthcare providers are redoubling their efforts in their continuous quest to deliver service quality excellence.

Whether driven by the financial and reputational incentives set by the CMS Value Care initiative, their own mission and values, or to differentiate the quality of their services from other competing providers - the patient experience (PX) movement is gathering momentum – thanks, in part, to the awareness and best practice sharing seen by organizations like The Beryl Institute, HIMSS and Cleveland Clinic.

Service recovery is a key element of PX that has often been more of a compassion sharing artform than a standardized, predictable and repeatable process. With such a huge body of documented best practices out there in the industry, it is time for technology solution providers to step it up. In a constantly understaffed world of ambulatory and acute care, many providers are seeking ways to incrementally improve and standardize service delivery – through digital tools.

Without injecting automation and enabling technology, there is a limit to what people can achieve in addressing service recovery situations.

Rounding technology has focused heavily on scheduling and sequencing of how and when patient services staff should be routinely deployed. The highest touch providers empower rounding staff with tablet eSurveys, to ask patients questions during regular scheduled rounding. However, there has been an absence of solutions available that offer the ability to trigger a service recovery event in real-time, instigated by the patient, versus the staff.

Electronic surveys are often sent to patients immediately after a visit, to capture feedback on what could be improved next time. In our opinion this, on its own, is both too late and a wasted opportunity. While the vendors of such post-appointment survey tools claim this to be 'real-time', it really is not. Real-time means in the moment, on the spot, live and at any point in the patient journey.

Kiosks placed in lobbies or waiting areas, to capture feedback from patients were useful to a point but are ultimately too expensive and maintenance heavy to be spread across every location along the patient journey.

*To make a marked difference in service recovery outcomes, the industry requires solutions that offer true real-time alerting and informed intervention.*

Service recovery can be essentially broken down into a series of 6 key elements that technology, when applied effectively, can significantly enhance:

<b>AWARENESS</b>	<b>CONTEXT</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>TIME</b>
<b>ACTION &amp; OWNER</b>	<b>LEARNING</b>

**Awareness** – staff being made aware of the existence of a service issue or event that requires (immediate) attention.

**Context** – what happened and the nature of the event that must be addressed.

**Location** – in what exact location along their journey is the patient, visitor or provider individual requiring attention.

**Time** – exactly when and how long ago did the event happen, so we know if it can still be addressed now or something we are going to learn from for next time.

**Action & Owner** – how we resolved the situation or addressed the need for service recovery, and the outcome. Additionally, who was ‘on first base’ and dealt with the situation, or is currently dealing with the situation, so that we can avoid duplication of effort or inaction.

**Learning** – continuous tracking of the reason(s) why we needed to mobilize around this event. With the intent of improving our ability to reduce the time taken to address a similar issue next time, or even eradicate the issue via an update or change to our procedures or operational workflow. Pre-emptive ideally.

**Looking at each of these elements through the lens of a technology enabled solution there are several readily available technologies that can be applied for immediate benefit.**

Instant alerting, for **AWARENESS** can be accomplished via several technology platforms that your staff already have access to. Mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets, even email or via a web browser you already provide. With the onset of Wi-Fi networks inside most provider facilities, the use of smartphones is simplest approach, due to their inherent ability to receive alerts via SMS text that arrive with more immediacy than email.

As we enter a decade where 80%+ of the world’s population has a mobile device, the natural way for patients to communicate with providers is already in the palm of their hand. Through voice or text/touch they can share **CONTEXT** and disposition, indicate their current satisfaction, or simply ask for help.

Most **LOCATION** technology works well in outdoor environments, within eyeshot of the nearest satellite. Indoors there are alternative tools for capturing location. From dedicated hardware, placed in specific locations (e.g. Kiosks), the ability to carry active remote frequency ID (RFID) tags or cards, or via television screens and other hardware that belongs to a given location. These technologies are typically more cumbersome and require a serious investment that may not be feasible for all provider budgets. There are other ways to determine patient location, using simple and affordable interactive signage that specific to that **TIME** and location, and can trigger an instant service recovery event via the patient’s smartphone.

Orchestrating service recovery between more than one patient services staff member for **ACTION & OWNER** based activity can be accomplished quite simply, using workflow or simple task management of the service recovery events..

Perhaps the most exciting way that technology can transform service recovery is in the use of self **LEARNING** and continuous improvement. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology in particular, coupled with issue tracking and event categorization, has the highest potential to transform how we understand, react to and even pre-empt service recovery events.

**Next generation patient experience leaders are also underscoring the need for further innovation and technology enabled solutions for service excellence:**

Becker's Hospital Review, in a January 2020 roundup, interviewed seven of the US healthcare industry's most pre-eminent Chief Experience Officers. These individuals were asked to list their top goals for 2020. The most frequently referenced goals pointed to the use of digital technology and improved patient experience management programs – key goals included:

“

- ❑ **digital patient experience – leveraging innovative technology solutions to deliver on individual needs and preferences**
- ❑ **reinventing access to care, people and information at the right time, in the right place**
- ❑ **good communication and engagement between the care team and the patient and their loved ones**
- ❑ **new ways to hear the voice of our diverse patient population**
- ❑ **creating a seamless patient experience.**
- ❑ **respond more nimbly to the expectations of our increasingly savvy healthcare consumers**
- ❑ **reducing the friction for our customers as they access and navigate the health system,**
- ❑ **to better personalize the interactions and overall experience**
- ❑ **self-service tools**
- ❑ **Develop an insights-driven, systemwide customer service program leveraging more dynamic customer surveying**

”

Where there is a will there is a way, and technology will certainly continue to evolve around this agenda in the next few years.

The healthcare sector has historically embraced enabling technology, and almost every staff member you speak to in the healthcare services industry will confirm their belief in digital solutions. However, the speed at which the industry has historically adopted technology has not been as uniform or dramatic as one would expect. Certainly not as progressive as other verticals, such as the consumer goods and financial services sectors.

Perhaps this is due, in part, to the fact that there is only a certain amount of technology that can be absorbed by a provider or network in a given timeframe. Most likely due to the limited resources, time and budget available to the staffs. Service recovery is a complex choreography between teams of staff that is increasingly facing burnout or short supply. Time is also precious, and in short supply in this industry.

**Therefore, we believe that a key success criteria for technology solutions to be widely adopted in this space is simplicity. Simplicity of the solution for both patients and providers, and simplicity in implementation.**

---

Patient experience data is extremely time-sensitive and healthcare providers that learn how to exploit the value of TRUE real-time response will be the winners in the #GenerationNow economy

“If patient experience data was fruit”



Patient Still Here	Patient Gone Home	1 Day After Visit	2 Days After Visit	3 Days After Visit	4 Days After Visit	5 Days After Visit 
<p>Real-time intervention is possible, to ensure the best possible outcome</p>	<p>Patient already posted a negative review on Twitter</p>	<p>Patient reflected on bad experience and also posted on Facebook</p>	<p>12 people retweeted the tweet 247 friends saw the Facebook post</p>	<p>3 friends on Facebook encouraged patient to leave a bad Yelp review</p>	<p>Patient has found an alternate provider</p>	<p>Patient receives satisfaction survey in the mail from original provider</p>

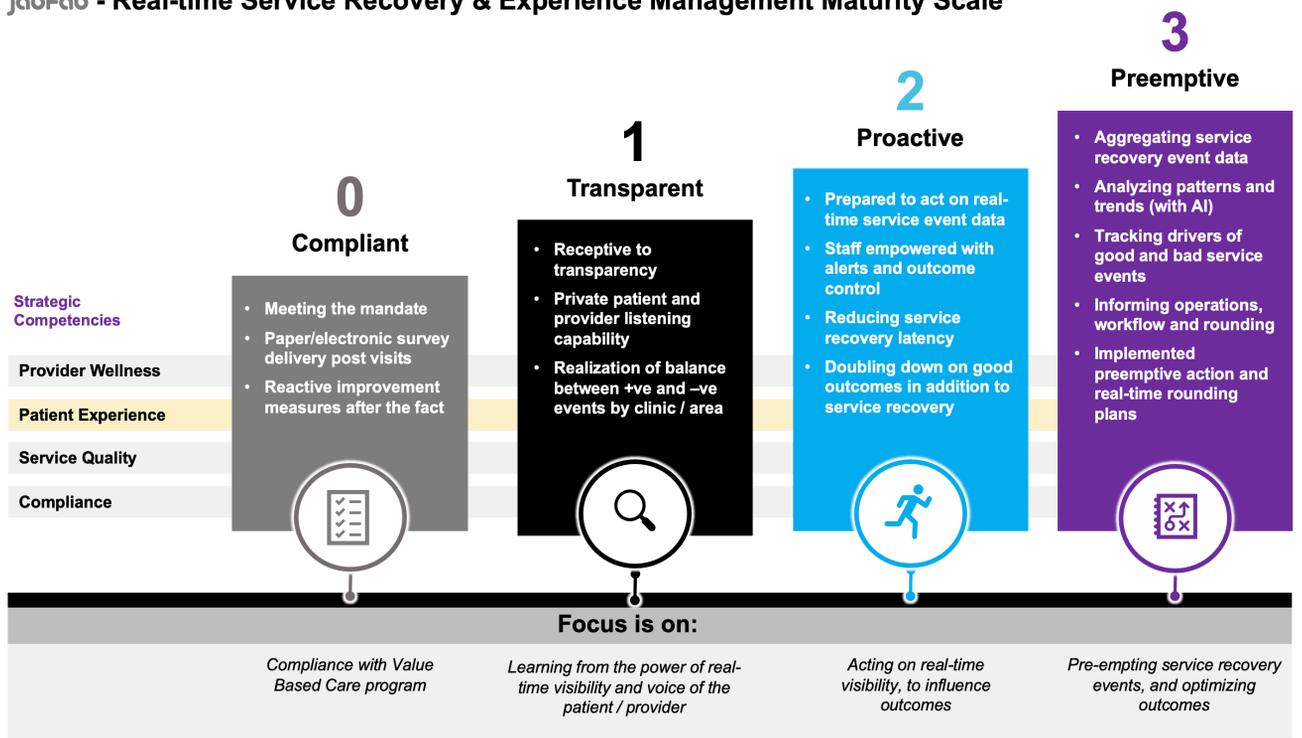
As healthcare providers look towards the next frontier for service quality, JabFab has created a helpful maturity scale that plots the journey from simple CAHPs value-based care compliance, to preemptive service.

The journey to preemptive starts with a realization ( or admission ) that transparency is key, and that measurement of patient satisfaction alone, without action, is merely a futile exercise for developing long-term value, patient loyalty and a next generation quality of service.

“ An organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into rapid action, is the ultimate competitive advantage.

Jack Welch

### jobFab - Real-time Service Recovery & Experience Management Maturity Scale



jobFab empowers service quality and experience management teams with up-to-the-second transparency of experience issues and opportunities as they happen – so you can instantly intervene, improve outcomes and meaningfully impact loyalty or satisfaction.

References:

- Service recovery defined - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service\\_recovery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_recovery)
- CMS Five Star Quality Rating program - <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/CertificationandCompliance/FSQRS>
- \* Becker’s Hospital Review, Jan. 2020 - <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/patient-engagement/7-patient-experience-leaders-on-their-goals-for-2020-1-17-2020.html>