A New Quiet Menu for Patients to Improve Patient Experience

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Background

Sleep plays a vital role in good health and has been considered an essential part of the healing process. There is evidence that quality sleep can lessen pain and anxiety, control high blood pressure and blood glucose levels, and help the body fight infections (Shah & Krishnan, 2019). Sleep may be impaired during an illness, and restful sleep is even more challenging in a hospital because it is typically a busy and stimulating environment. During patient experience rounding, hospital leaders learned that the noise from hospital equipment, alarms, paging systems, delivery carts, and conversations of care team members and visitors created disruptions in patients' sleep.
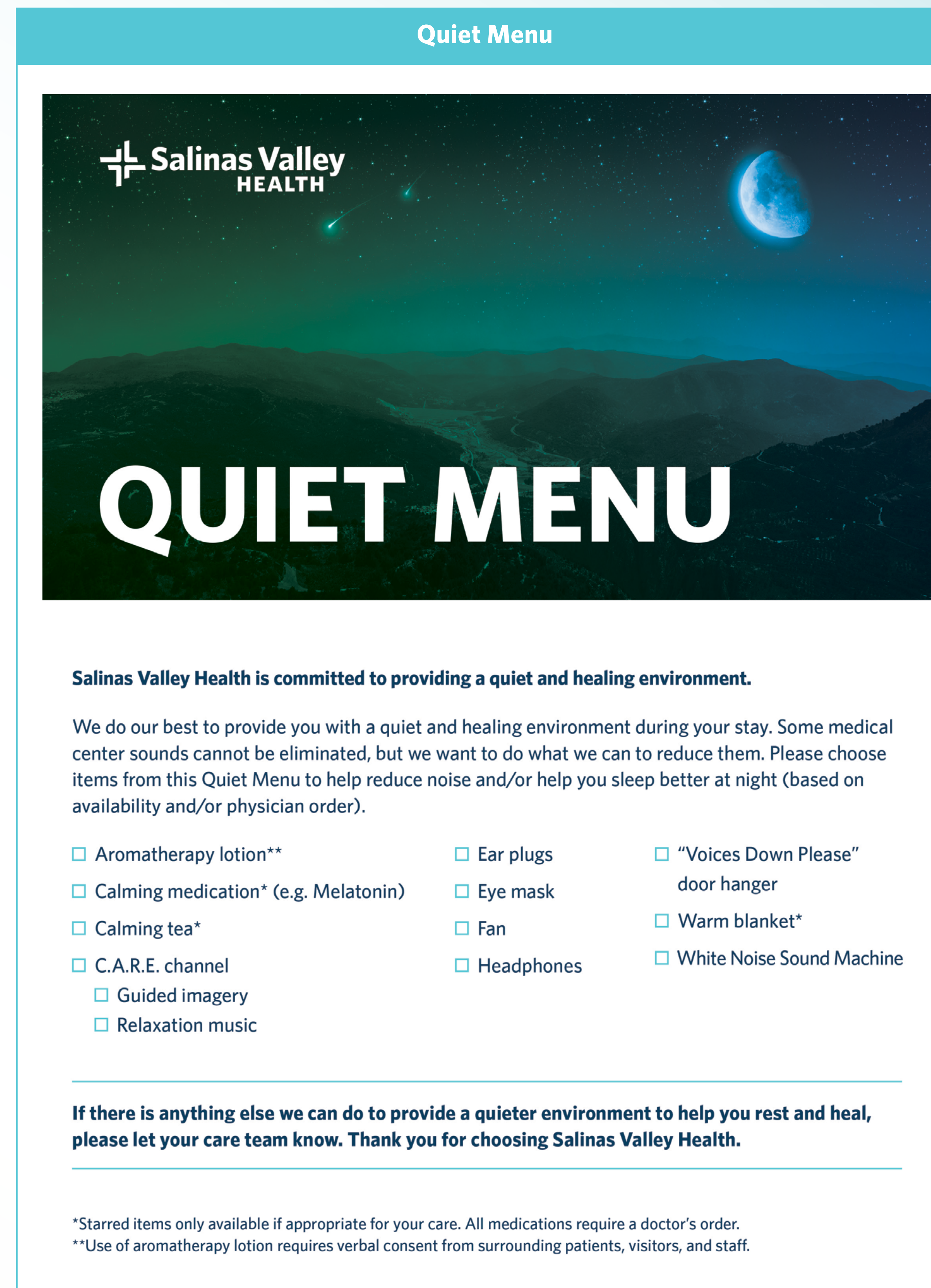
Providing excellent patient experience is a priority at Salinas Valley Health Medical Center. Patient and family feedback data are obtained via Press Ganey® surveys, from leaders and charge nurse rounding on patients, and collected in MyRounding software, and through patient concerns or complaints reported to the Patient Experience Department. Data are regularly reviewed by the Patient Experience Department, executive and other leaders, and professional governance teams.

Excessive noise not only has an adverse effect on a patient's perception of care experience; well-rested patients are more likely to be satisfied with the quality of their care (Antonio, 2020). The Night Shift Practice Council was aware that the organization's *Quiet at Night* patient experience scores had historically been low and decided to focus one of their council's goals on improving these scores. While Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) *Quietness of the Hospital Environment* scores had improved following a "Quiet Commitments" initiative in late 2022-early 2023, the scores were still not meeting organizational targets.
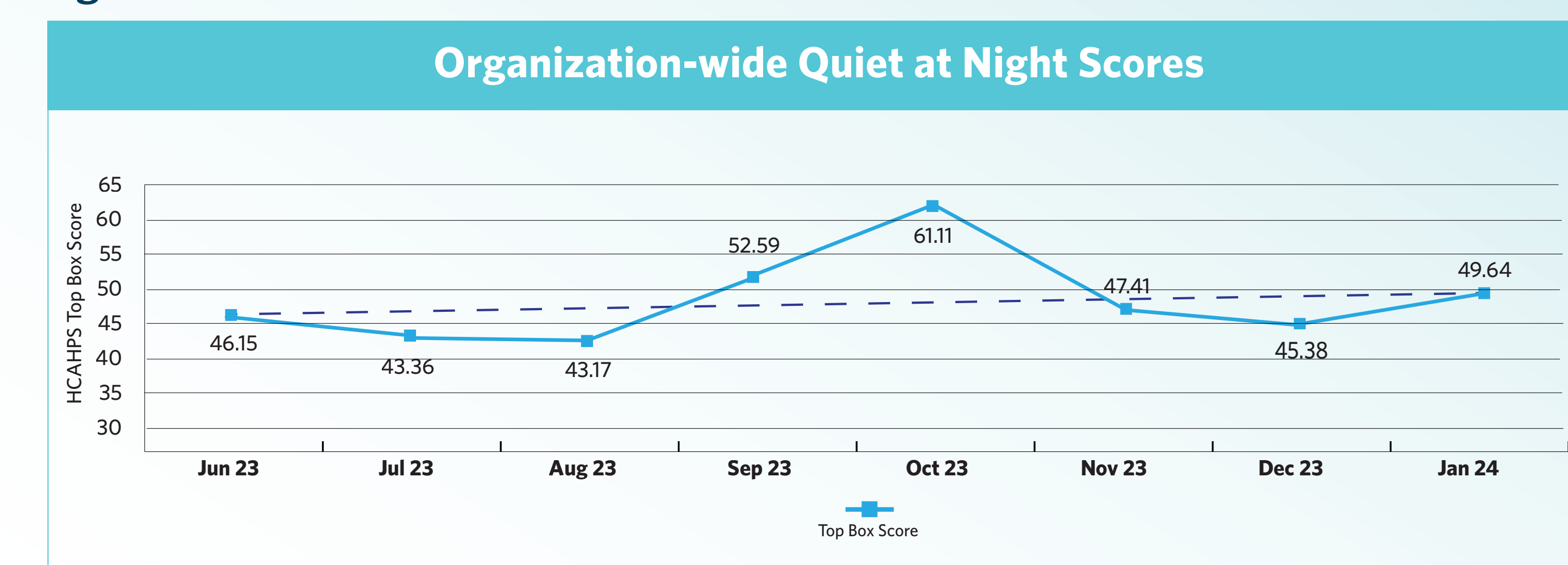
Methods

To improve HCAHPS Quietness of the Hospital Environment scores, the Night Shift Council developed a "Sleep Menu" initiative. Literature has shown that the use of a sleep menu improved patients' sleep (Antonio, 2020). We believed that using a sleep menu would improve HCAHPS scores related to Quietness of the Hospital Environment. The Night Shift Practice Council reviewed the literature and decided what items to include in the menu, which was named the "Quiet Menu." The council worked with the Marketing Department to create the handout, Quiet Menu (see Figure 1) and collaborated with the Patient Experience Department to assemble Quiet Menu kits. In order to fund some of the items within each kit, the council applied for a Partners in Care grant from the Salinas Valley Health Foundation. In early October 2023, a committee within the council compiled, delivered, and educated staff on the Quiet Menu kits. As a unit rounding tool, a WIN tip sheet was created for council members.

Figure 1

Quiet Menu

QUIET MENU

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Salinas Valley Health is committed to providing a quiet and healing environment.

We do our best to provide you with a quiet and healing environment during your stay. Some medical center sounds cannot be eliminated, but we want to do what we can to reduce them. Please choose items from this Quiet Menu to help reduce noise and/or help you sleep better at night (based on availability and/or physician order).

- ☐ Aromatherapy lotion**
- ☐ Calming medication* (e.g. Melatonin)
- ☐ Calming tea*
- ☐ C.A.R.E. channel
  - ☐ Guided imagery
  - ☐ Relaxation music
- ☐ Ear plugs
- ☐ Eye mask
- ☐ Fan
- ☐ Headphones
- ☐ "Voices Down Please" door hanger
- ☐ Warm blanket*
- ☐ White Noise Sound Machine

If there is anything else we can do to provide a quieter environment to help you rest and heal, please let your care team know. Thank you for choosing Salinas Valley Health.

*Starred items only available if appropriate for your care. All medications require a doctor's order.
**Use of aromatherapy lotion requires verbal consent from surrounding patients, visitors, and staff.

The council reviewed pre-intervention HCAHPS Quietness of the Hospital Environment Top Box scores starting in June 2023 through September 2023 with scores ranging from a low of 43.17 to a high of 52.59 (see Figure 2). The HCAHPS Top Box score is the percentage of patients who gave the most favorable responses to questions about their hospital experience. A higher Top Box score indicates that a hospital ranks higher among participating hospitals. The first month post-intervention, in October 2023, the council saw significant improvements, from 52.59 to 61.11 HCAHPS Top Box score (see Figure 2). Scores dropped in November and December 2023, which may have been associated with several factors. These included not having an established ordering process for the Quiet Menu items, a decrease in staff educational rounding, and a lack of opportunity to communicate the initiative with interprofessional stakeholders such as phlebotomists, Environmental Services staff, and security.

Figure 2

Organization-wide Quiet at Night Scores

	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24
Top Box Score	46.15	43.36	43.17	52.59	61.11	47.41	45.38	49.64

HCAHPS Top Box Score (y-axis: 30–65)

Conclusions

We identified the need for additional work to improve the Quietness of the Hospital Environment Top Box scores by implementing a more organization-wide, focused unit rounding in an effort to hardwire Quiet Menu use, starting at the point of admission. With appropriate utilization of the Quiet Menu, the council anticipates improved patient experience scores. As a future consideration, a return-on-investment analysis based upon Quiet Menu use can be performed. A benefit of the menu would likely lead to faster recovery, reduced length of stay, and decreased hospital costs. Facilitating discharge from the hospital reduces exposure to hospital-acquired complications and provides a more streamlined and efficient healthcare experience, which would ultimately lead to positive perception.

References

Antonio, C. (2020). Improving quiet at night on a telemetry unit: Introducing a holistic sleep menu intervention. *American Journal of Nursing, 120*(10), 58-64.

Shah, P., & Krishnan, V. (2019). Hospitalization and sleep. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, 199*(10), 19-20.