



rL solutions

software for safer healthcare

Name of Organization

Providence Hospitals

Healthcare Organization Type

Hospital

Client since 2001

Product

Feedback MonitorPro®

Key Challenges

- Low patient satisfaction scores
- Front-line Complaint Management Systems not integrated with Feedback Management Software
- Patient advocates lacked accurate data

Key Benefits

- Patient satisfaction scores now in the 90+ percentile
- Proactive feedback management
- Comprehensive reports help quickly determine problem areas

Client Website

www.providencehospitals.com



PROVIDENCE HOSPITALS

Case Study

Providence Hospitals

June 2009

How Providence Hospitals tripled its patient satisfaction scores – in just 4 months



Organizational Snapshot

Providence Hospitals is a two-hospital system with 250+ total beds, owned by Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. Based in Columbia, South Carolina, Providence is the state’s heart leader and it has a smaller community hospital in northeast Columbia. Providence established a Service Excellence Department in 2005, made up of 4 patient advocates who spent most of their time talking to patients in the ER.

The Challenge

In spite of the patient advocates’ efforts, Providence’s patient satisfaction scores remained low. Providence Hospitals hired Dusty Deringer in November 2007 as the Director of Service Excellence and charged him with improving the hospitals’ scores. Dusty had successfully implemented Feedback Management Software (FMS) at his previous job and was eager to bring it to Providence. To his surprise, he found that Providence Hospitals already had FMS – Feedback MonitorPro® (FMPro) by rL Solutions – but it was a very old version and it was not integrated with the hospitals’ other Complaint Management Systems (CMS). In February 2008, Providence Hospitals upgraded to a current version of FMPro and set out to integrate this updated software with its front-line Complaint Management Systems, including Press Ganey surveys, comment cards, focus group feedback and other feedback mechanisms.





“If you resolve a complaint within 24 hours, that patient is 93% likely to come back. If you do it within 5 days, it’s 75%. Past 5 days, that likelihood drops to about 30%.”

- Dusty Deringer, Service Excellence Director
Providence Hospitals

Background

In November 2007, before upgrading to the current version of FMPro, Providence Hospitals’ Press Ganey patient satisfaction scores were in the 26th percentile. By February 2008, Providence was up-and-running with FMPro. By July 2008 – only 4 months after upgrading the hospitals’ FMS – Providence’s scores were in the 90+ percentile, where they remain today.

How did Providence improve its hospitals’ scores so quickly? By listening to its patients and customers.

Integrating patient feedback with FMPro


Providence has several ‘listening posts’ it uses to capture patient feedback, including:

- Press Ganey surveys (see below)
- Comment cards
- Focus groups
- Website
- Patient/Family Advisory Council
- Risk Management
- Complaint/Grievance procedures
- Feedback from executives & managers who sit on external boards/committees
- “We Miss You” surveys (sent to patients who haven’t been to Providence for 36 months)

With the introduction of FMPro, patient advocates now have a centralized system where they can enter data from all of these listening posts. Every stage of the feedback management process is tracked in FMPro, from the initial complaint to its resolution. Even traditional CMS, like Press Ganey surveys, are tracked in FMPro:

Press Ganey surveys

Providence imports all of its Press Ganey survey data into FMPro. The Hot Comments section of the Press Ganey survey data has proved the most useful to the patient advocates at Providence. The hospital customized a list of over 200 trigger words to flag negative feedback, including “angry”, “mad” and “killed”. If a patient writes a trigger word on a Press Ganey survey, it is sent to the patient



“What we’re doing is very simple: we’re listening to our patients. FMPro is just the tool we use to collect the data.”

advocate who manually documents it in FMPro. Then the advocate follows-up with the patient within 24 hours to investigate and resolve the issue; this speedy follow-up has helped dramatically improved Providence’s patient satisfaction scores.

Tracking complaints & compliments

Patient advocates follow-up on all complaints within 24 hours – but what about positive feedback? Compliments are distributed every Friday morning via “The Happy People Report”, which is emailed to everyone at Providence Hospitals. The Service Excellence team easily generates this report using the aggregated patient feedback stored in FMPro.

Complaint reports are also distributed weekly with information broken out by site, department and category (e.g., communication, billing). However, this data isn’t just emailed to employees: it’s also posted in the hospitals’ cafeterias. This transparency has fostered healthy competition between departments at Providence and created baselines & benchmarks for complaint data. For example, in 2007 more than 60% of complaints were related to quality of care. FMPro’s accurate, timely reports have helped the Service Excellence department drill-down to quickly find and address problems. Presently, less than 30% of complaints at Providence are related to quality of care.

FMPro leads to better decision making

Along with decreasing the number of complaints related to quality of care, Providence has increased its staff and patient satisfaction scores. Integrating its front-line Complaint Management Systems with FMPro has given the Providence Hospitals a better understanding of what is really happening throughout the organization.

As Dusty explains it, “FMPro has helped us get better information to the ‘decision makers’. It’s hard to get money to fix a problem when you don’t know what the problem is. Now that we have the data, we can solve our patients’ problems – and make sure that they keep coming back.”

For more information, please contact rL Solutions at:

Phone: (416) 410-8456

Email: pr@rl-solutions.com