

HOSPITAL

**PULSE REPORT
2007**

Patient Perspectives on

American Health Care

PRESS GANEY[®]

Introduction

Dear Reader,

Change within the health care industry continues at an accelerated pace. The year 2006 brought many changes—from government regulations to new quality initiatives to changes in consumer expectations about their care. In a constantly changing environment, it is important to step back and look at the big picture to evaluate both progress and opportunities for health care providers.

Press Ganey is proud to present the definitive source on hospital quality from the patient perspective—the *Hospital Pulse Report: Patient Perspectives on American Health Care*. The 2007 edition highlights the findings of 2.3 million patients at more than 1,700 acute care hospitals throughout the nation. Press Ganey, the health care industry's leading provider of satisfaction measurement and improvement services, conducted the patient surveys during 2006. This collection of findings is part of a series of Press Ganey *Pulse Reports* and *Check-Up Reports* being released throughout 2007. They will examine the status of health care quality across different care settings and from different perspectives.

Amazing things are accomplished in health care every day in the face of challenges and skepticism. This report explores the ongoing evolution of health care delivery. It identifies accomplishments warranting recognition and areas of care in need of more attention. By examining the state of health care through the eyes of the patients, physicians, and nurses who experience it, the doors open wide to the true daily experience of health care. With a strong grasp of the existing state of health care quality, health care providers are equipped to push quality improvement to the next level.

Sincerely,



Melvin F. Hall, Ph.D.
President and CEO

Contact information for questions or comments:

Matthew Mulherin
Director of Corporate Communications
404 Columbia Place
South Bend, IN 46601
(800) 232-8032
mmulherin@pressganey.com
www.pressganey.com

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Executive Summary

The 2007 *Hospital Pulse Report: Perspectives on American Health Care* examines the experiences of more than 2.3 million patients treated at more than 1,700 acute care hospitals in 2006. The report provides national patient perspectives regarding the quality of hospital care. Key findings of Press Ganey research include:

- Overall patient satisfaction with the hospital increased between 2003 and 2006. However, there continues to be variation by metropolitan area, hospital size, patient age, and other demographics.
- Obstetrics and gynecology patients report the highest patient satisfaction compared to all other patient care specialties.
- Perhaps surprisingly, patients are often very complimentary when writing comments on their patient surveys. In fact, almost half of all patient comments are positive.
 - » Patients are three times more likely to write a positive comment about their nurse or physician than a negative comment.
 - » Patients are far more critical of their physical surroundings than of their care. Fifty-seven percent of patient comments regarding the hospital room are negative compared to about 25% that are positive.
- Communication between hospital staff and patients continues to need improvement.
 - » The top priority for improving hospitals, from the patient perspective, is the ability to respond to their concerns and complaints.
 - » A hospital's ability to provide attention to the patient's needs is the strongest predictor of a facility's overall performance score on the HCAHPS® public reporting tool. HCAHPS®, or Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, was developed under the direction of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Beginning with discharges in July 2007, hospitals are required to participate in HCAHPS® to receive full CMS reimbursement.
 - » To enhance patient perceptions of safety, hospital staff must provide information to aid in a patient's decision making. Patients reported higher ratings of safety when presented with more information regarding their rights and end of life issues.

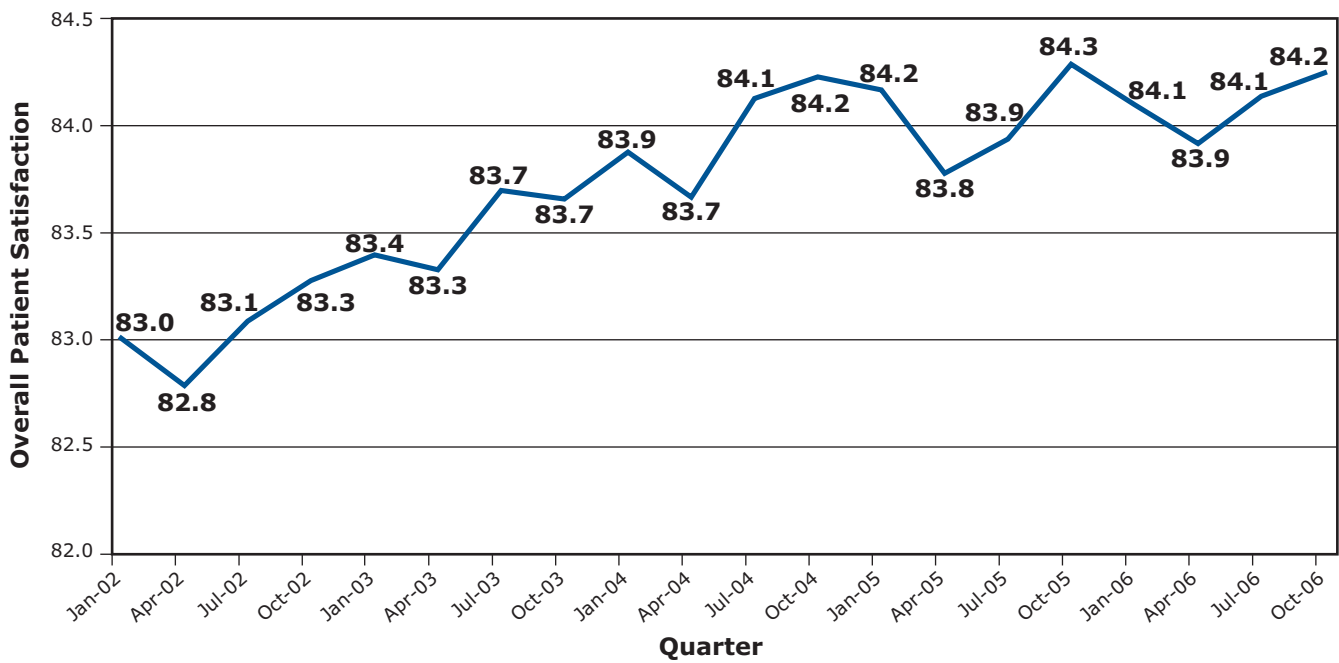
The *Press Ganey Hospital Pulse Report: Patient Perspectives on American Health Care* finds patients want care that is safe, complete, and delivered in a manner that respects their personhood. Communication is a key driver of satisfaction. Patients want more attention and credence given to their personal needs. Responding to concerns with compassion and sensitivity is essential to providing quality patient care. Even clinical care can be affected when the patient's personal needs are not met. The bottom line is, if hospitals listen to what patients are saying they can offer them better quality health care.

The Status of Inpatient Satisfaction

Change within the health care industry continues at an accelerated pace. The stage is set to give the power of choice to the consumer. Changes in health insurance will give consumers more opportunity to choose where they go for care. Hospitals are either becoming more transparent about the quality of their patient care through their own initiative, or being persuaded to be transparent by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). By the middle of this year, hospitals will be required to participate in HCAHPS® public reporting to receive full CMS reimbursement. HCAHPS®, or Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, was developed under the direction of CMS. Ratings and rankings of hospitals will be publicly reported on a government website(s).

All of these trends make patient satisfaction even more important to hospitals, and it shows. The following graph looks at how hospitals are doing from the patient's perspective. Overall patient satisfaction in America's inpatient hospitals has increased since 2002, with some setbacks and corrections.

Trend in Inpatient Satisfaction



Priorities for the Inpatient Experience

If hospitals are to make meaningful progress in improving the inpatient experience, they must listen to their patients. All five of the top priority issues patients have for hospitals refer to communication and empathy. Every one of the priorities relates to staff interaction with patients. Frontline staff continues to have the greatest impact on the patient's overall experience.

The priorities appear at the top of the Press Ganey National Hospital Priority Index, based on 2006 inpatient surveys. The National Priority Index combines information about hospitals' performance and the relative importance of each item to the respondents.*

National Hospital Priority Index

Survey Item	Priority Rank
Response to concerns/complaints made during your stay	1
Staff sensitivity to the inconvenience that health problems and hospitalization can cause	2
Staff effort to include you in decisions about your treatment	3
Degree to which hospital staff addressed your emotional needs	4
How well the nurses kept you informed	5

Represents the experiences of 2,359,935 patients treated at 1,777 hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

*The survey questions referred to in the National Priority Index are ranked by hospital performance and correlation to the question "Your likelihood to recommend this hospital to others." Higher priority was given to those issues that are relatively important to respondents and for which hospitals scored low compared with other items on the survey.

“I feel that Press Ganey was one of the tools that assisted us in our Baldrige journey. I think all of us feel the robust database gives you the opportunity to go in and focus in on things that are considered highly correlated with patient satisfaction.”

— Chuck Stokes, president of North Mississippi Medical Center, Tupelo, MS
2006 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Winner

Metro Areas with the Highest Inpatient Satisfaction

Competition for patients continues to increase as health care providers try to gain greater market share. The following table identifies the areas of the country with the highest inpatient satisfaction. Regions with the highest mean scores are setting a new standard for excellence. Remaining competitive requires concentrated focus on meeting patient needs and expectations.

Top Ten Metropolitan Areas

Metropolitan Area	Rank
Oklahoma City, OK	1
Milwaukee, WI	2
New Orleans, LA	3
Indianapolis, IN	4
Columbus, OH	5
Sacramento, CA	6
Kansas City, MO-KS	7
Nashville, TN	8
Miami, FL	9
Boston, MA	10

Represents the experiences of patients treated at hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Metropolitan areas defined as areas with population of 500,000 or more

Satisfaction by Specialty

Patients come to the hospital with a variety of ailments and treatments. No matter what patients are treated for, they are more satisfied with their experiences when their unique needs are met. The Top Ten Specialties by Overall Patient Satisfaction table highlights which medical specialties receive the highest ratings for care.

Obstetrics/Gynecology is at the top of the list, followed by Anesthesiology. Overall satisfaction of patients treated in the Intensive Care Unit follows at third. Hospitals across the nation have had greater success meeting the specific needs of these specialties, compared to specialties that are not in the top ten.

Top Ten Specialties

Specialty	Rank
Obstetrics/Gynecology	1
Anesthesiology	2
Intensive Care Unit	3
Cardiology	4
Pediatrics	5
Rehabilitation	6
Vascular Surgery	7
Orthopedics	8
Oncology	9
EENT	10

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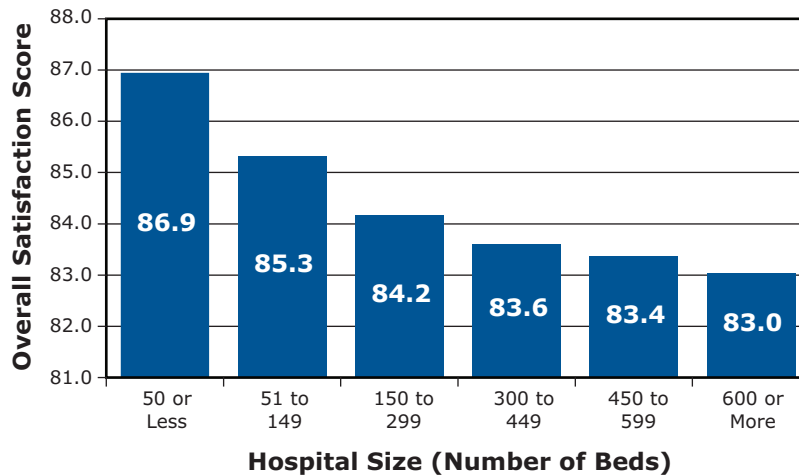
“Breaking down the data by specialty allows hospitals to understand their relative positions in the market. We are able to provide benchmarking within each specialty. Every specialty area is unique and needs individual attention. It is important to compare an obstetrician to an obstetrician. Comparing obstetricians to a different specialty doesn’t help the hospital understand its competitive position in that market.”

—J.D. Ort, Consultant, Press Ganey Associates, Inc.

Satisfaction by Bed Size

Patients are more content when they are competing with fewer patients for attention to their medical and other needs. The following graph shows that patient satisfaction decreases as the number of inpatient beds increases.

Patient Satisfaction by Bed Size

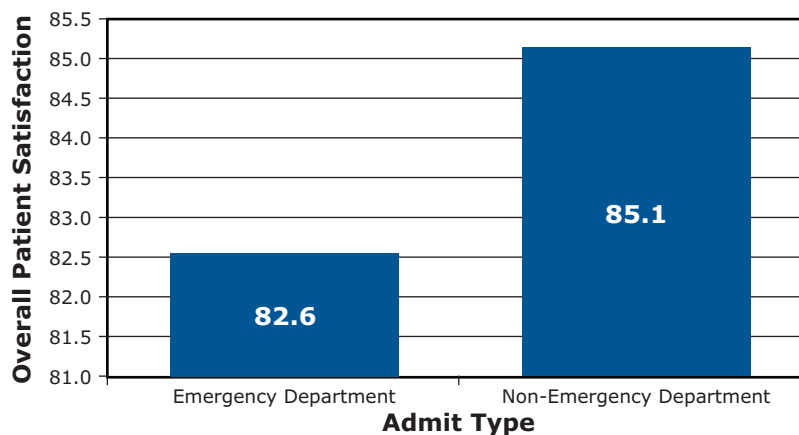


Represents the experiences of 2,359,935 patients treated at 1,777 hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Satisfaction by Admit Type

Admission to the hospital through the emergency department is often the result of an unexpected illness or accident, which may speak to the difference in satisfaction when compared to those admitted through other points of entry. The following bar graph shows the difference in satisfaction between those admitted through the ED and otherwise.

Patient Satisfaction by Admit Type



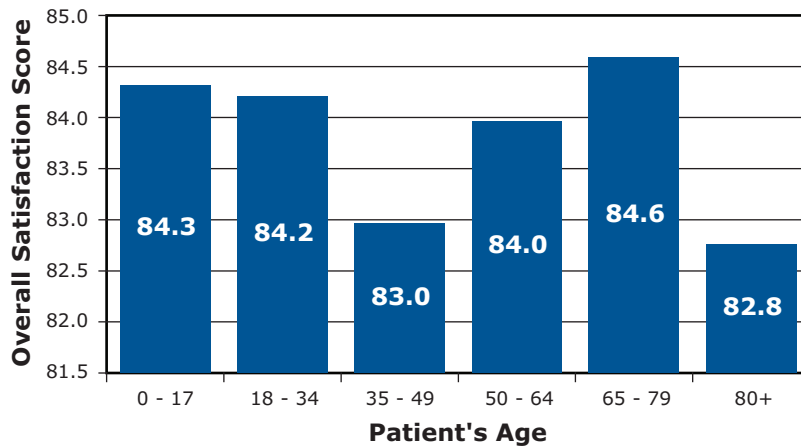
Represents the experiences of 2,359,935 patients treated at 1,777 hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Generational Differences in Satisfaction

Press Ganey found generational differences in inpatient satisfaction. Expectations of patients vary depending on their age, and patients and their care providers may have trouble relating to each other if they are from different age groups. Younger staff may have a more difficult time relating to older patients, and seasoned staff members may feel distanced from the younger population. Care providers must be sensitive to and aware of these differences.

Staff members should be educated on generational differences in the same way that they are educated about cultural diversity. Helping staff to identify where they may be holding preconceived ideas about patients of a different generation helps create awareness of generational differences. Offering staff ways to individually cater to patients from different generations may help break down age barriers.

Patient Satisfaction by Age



Represents the experiences of 2,359,935 patients treated at 1,777 hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

“Hospitals need to recognize that the needs and expectations of the different generations are considerably different. Identifying these needs and expectations is critical to serving each generation.”

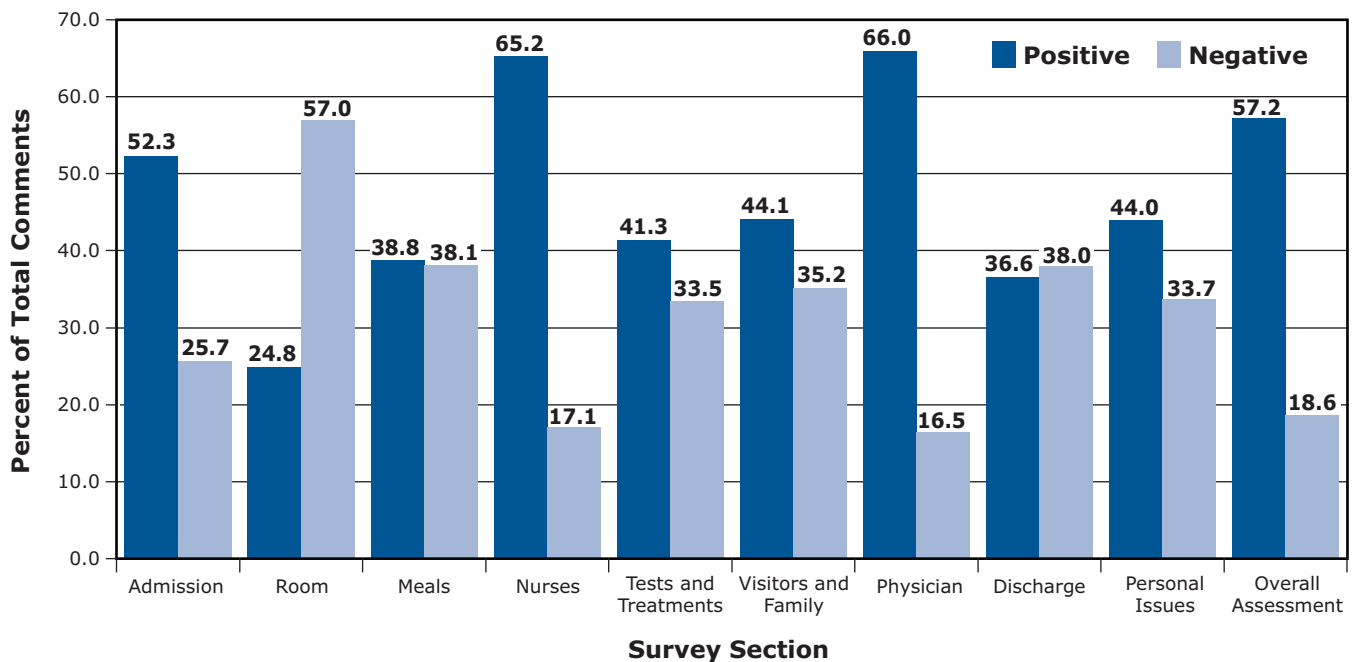
—Katie Dreves, Consultant, Press Ganey Associates, Inc.

Inpatient Comments

Patient comments often provide life and vitality to patient satisfaction data. Facilities across the country use these qualitative data to identify opportunities to reward and recognize staff and clarify the meaning behind patient responses. Coupled with quantitative data, patient comments provide a comprehensive approach to analyzing the patient perspective.

To better understand the responses of patients across the United States, Press Ganey examined the 2006 client comment reports from a random sample of more than 1,400 hospitals. Patients were most critical of their room, the meals, and the discharge process. But patients were complimentary of the nurses and physicians who treated them. In fact, more than 65% of the comments related to nurses and physicians were positive. Many comments often mentioned caregivers by name.

Percentage of Positive Versus Negative Comments



Represents a random sample of recorded patient comments nationwide at more than 1,400 hospitals between January 1 and December 31, 2006

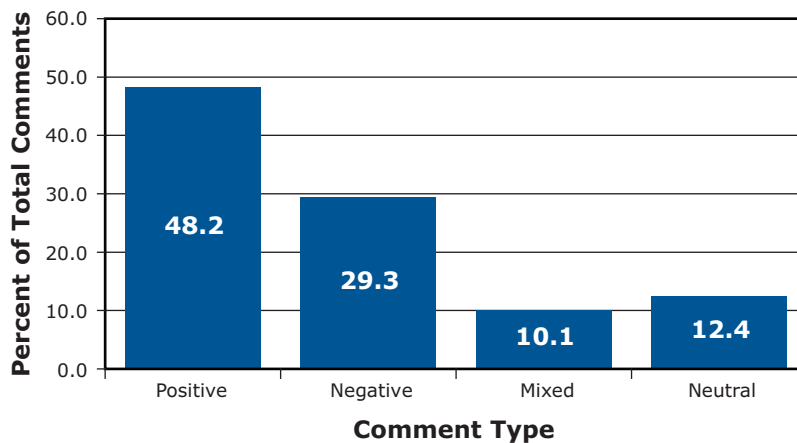
What Are Patients Saying?

The following are representative of actual patient comments.

- Comments about nurses were often positive:
 - » "Felt like family. Nurses were fabulous and very, very caring."
 - » "I would like to thank my nurse."
- Comments about rooms were often negative:
 - » "My room was too cold."
 - » "It was so noisy outside of our room."
- Comments about meals tended to indicate either extreme satisfaction or dissatisfaction:
 - » "It was basically the same menu every day and the food could have been more tasty."
 - » "The food was good. I wanted to eat more. It was that good."

Patients were more inclined to say nice things in their survey comments. More than 48% of all patient comments are positive, compared to about 29% that are negative. Women are more likely than men to offer survey comments, with 65% of comments written by women.

What Patients Are Saying



Represents a random sample of recorded patient comments nationwide at more than 1,400 hospitals between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Patient Perceptions of Safety

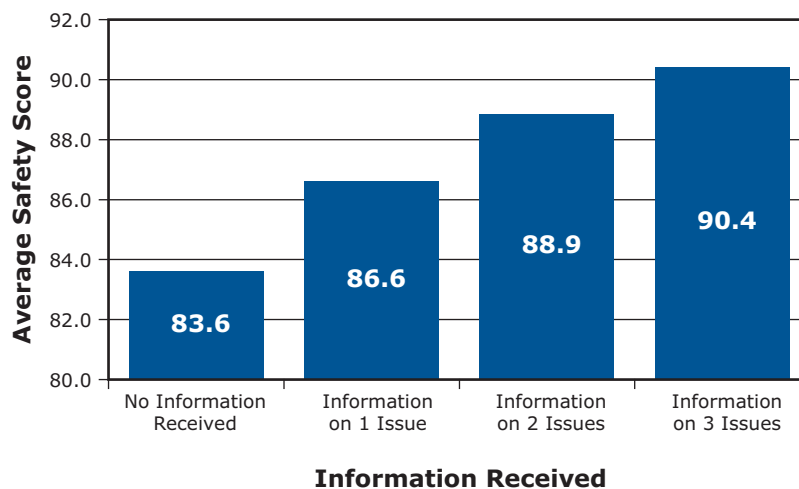
Hospitals engage in many activities that increase patient safety. Hospitals can improve safety perceptions by doing a better job of communicating their existing practices to patients. A focus on communicating safety practices to patients can bridge the gap between patients' perceptions and reality. Patients' perceptions of safety increase when the hospital staff shares more information with them.

Press Ganey gathered data on patient safety perspectives by asking about the safety and security patients felt in the hospital. There were notable differences in their perceptions of safety based on the information they received, particularly:

1. Did someone explain your extended life support options (living will, advance directives, etc.)?
2. Did someone give you information about organ donation?
3. Did someone give you information about the Patient's Bill of Rights?

The index below tallied how many times a patient responded "yes" to these questions. The more pieces of information the patient received, the safer the patient felt. While you might expect discussions regarding organ donation or living wills could make the patient feel nervous or less safe, Press Ganey research found the contrary to be true. Providing a patient with information on any aspect of his or her care and wellness gives the patient a sense of control, increasing his or her overall feeling of safety.

Perceptions of Safety by Information Received



Represents the experiences of 2,359,935 patients treated at 1,777 hospitals nationwide between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Additional research:

Wolosin, R. J., L. Vercler, and J. L. Matthews. 2006. Am I safe here? Improving patients' perceptions of safety in hospitals. *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* 21 (1): 30–38.

Wolosin, R. J., L. Vercler, and J. L. Matthews. 2005. Patient perceptions of safety in hospitals. *Patient Safety and Quality Healthcare* (Nov/Dec): 40–45.

Inpatient Satisfaction Is Going Public— Understanding HCAHPS®

Under the direction of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) developed a survey instrument called HCAHPS®, Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems. HCAHPS® is designed to measure and publicly report patient perceptions of care so consumers can make informed decisions when choosing a hospital.

The three major goals of HCAHPS® are as follows:

1. To produce comparable data on patient perspectives of care that allow for comparison among hospitals.
2. To encourage hospitals to improve their quality of care by publicly reporting the survey results.
3. To increase the transparency and public accountability of health care quality through public reporting.

In the near future, HCAHPS® results will be available online. Beginning with discharges in July 2007, hospitals are required to participate in HCAHPS® to receive full CMS reimbursement. And while HCAHPS® provides transparency through a publicly reported measure—giving consumers a way to compare hospitals side by side—hospitals will continue with existing quality improvement initiatives to drive their performance.

“HCAHPS® is meant to complement the data hospitals currently collect to support improvements in internal customer services and quality related activities.”

—Hospital Quality Initiatives HCAHPS®: Patient Perceptions on Care, CMS, 2006;
Available at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hospitalqualityinits/30_HospitalHCAHPS.asp

“...Hospitals that participate in more intensive measurement efforts (like Press Ganey) can have a better understanding of why they are performing the way they are performing and how they can improve in their measured (HCAHPS®) performance.”

—Dr. Mark McClellan, Former CMS Administrator

“The first step to improving your HCAHPS® results is expressing to the staff why patient satisfaction is vital to your hospital’s mission. You should educate the staff about the survey process, public reporting, and how to read and understand the data.”

—Jodie Cunningham, Consultant, Press Ganey Associates

Predictors of HCAHPS® Performance

Many aspects of care affect how patients will rate a hospital on HCAHPS®. Press Ganey identified five questions on its survey as the best predictors of how patients will rate hospitals on the HCAHPS® survey. In other words, by working on these five issues a hospital could garner a higher Overall Rating of the Hospital score on the HCAHPS® instrument. Earning high HCAHPS® ratings is important to hospitals, in part because the scores will be reported publicly and could affect where patients choose to go for their hospital care.

Areas Most Tied to HCAHPS® Overall Satisfaction

Issues for Hospitals to Address	Ability to Predict Overall Outcomes
Attention to personal needs	42.07%
Response to concerns/complaints	+6.63%
Nurses treat you with courtesy/respect	+3.61%
Doctors listen carefully to you	+1.82%
Staff do everything to help with pain	+1.03%
Total amount of outcome explained with these five questions	55.16%

“Attention to patient’s personal needs” is the most important issue hospitals should address, according to Press Ganey research. The data show this aspect of care offers the greatest impact on the Overall Rating of Hospital score and the most return for the hospitals’ efforts. Therefore, patients who rate the staff’s attention to their personal needs as “very good” (the highest rating) are most likely to give the hospital a positive Overall Rating of the Hospital score on the HCAHPS® survey.

“Response to concerns/complaints” is the next most important contributor to the Overall Rating of the Hospital score. Addressing this issue in addition to “Attention to your personal needs” can have an added impact of nearly 7% on a patient’s likelihood to give a hospital a favorable Overall Rating of the Hospital score on the HCAHPS® instrument.

These five aspects of care by themselves can explain and predict 55% of a hospital’s overall HCAHPS® outcomes. Because of the impact of these items, concentrated efforts in improving these specific areas of care is likely to result in improved HCAHPS® overall ratings.

Case Study: Sacred Heart Hospital

The following case study examines an approach to improve patient satisfaction and operational performance at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. This hospital is a 2006 Press Ganey Summit Award winner in the inpatient category.

When Sacred Heart Hospital began an energized patient satisfaction initiative, its overall satisfaction was already in the 87th percentile of the Press Ganey database. Hospital leadership, physicians, and employees believed they had the aptitude and innovation to raise their already high ranking by creating a distinguished climate of service excellence.

Sacred Heart introduced eight service quality and customer satisfaction teams to develop a structure and a plan for improving patient satisfaction and operational performance. The efforts of the patient satisfaction teams created sustained results and a culture to meet the detailed needs of patients.

Performance measures were evaluated to either create or fine-tune the following improvements:

- Patient and employee rounding
- Behavioral standards linked to mission and core values
- Leadership development and employee training
- A service recovery “toolbox”
- Discharge follow-up calls

This patient satisfaction initiative resulted in a 12-point jump to the 99th percentile, an accomplishment sustained for nine consecutive quarters. The dedication and hard work of the staff has led to continued success.

To read more about Sacred Heart’s Summit Award go to http://www.pressganey.com/client_recognition/summit_awards/award.php?sa_id=28.

Case Study: OhioHealth System

The following case study examines an approach to unify patient satisfaction efforts at OhioHealth System's eight hospitals in the Columbus area. OhioHealth is a 2006 Press Ganey Success Story winner.

In 1999, OhioHealth's eight hospitals (which include 16,000 employees and 2,600 physicians) were struggling to stay unified with their patient satisfaction efforts. The system used 21 different versions of their patient satisfaction survey so there was no consistent data collection methodology or periods of data collection.

Patient satisfaction ranged from a dismal 9th percentile to a mediocre 50th percentile. Because the scores did not speak to the system's strong reputation, dominant market share, and clinical competence, OhioHealth embarked on a journey of service excellence.

Sample action items included:

- A Measurement Committee that standardized the survey process and focused on efforts of patient priorities.
- Patient relations representatives who became proactive service improvement consultants. They taught staff to resolve service problems and implement everyday service behaviors.
- Presidents of facilities with quarterly scores below the 60th percentile presented corrective action plans to senior leadership at monthly and quarterly meetings.

By December 2005, OhioHealth saw 68% of the 28 satisfaction areas included in its survey reach the database's top quartile. Half of the survey questions reached above the 90th percentile. OhioHealth was able to make a dramatic turnaround through standardization, education, and motivation.

To read more about OhioHealth's Success Story Award go to http://www.pressganey.com/client_recognition/success_stories/story.php?ss_id=51.

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About Press Ganey Associates, Inc.

For more than twenty years, Press Ganey has been committed to providing insightful information that allows our more than 7,000 health care client facilities to continuously improve their performance. Our foundation for success is built upon dedication to scientific integrity, relentless responsiveness to our clients' changing requirements, and an overall passion for helping our clients succeed. By pursuing and acting upon input from our clients, we are consistently able to develop and deliver the newest innovations. We continue to succeed by exchanging knowledge with our clients, and facilitating the exchange of knowledge between our clients.

Among U.S. inpatient hospitals, roughly one-third currently contract with Press Ganey to measure patient satisfaction. With over 9.5 million surveys processed annually, Press Ganey has the most extensive database of patient, health care employee, and physician satisfaction data. Press Ganey's tools and services—measurement tools, consulting services, networking opportunities, and solutions for improvement—use patient, employee, and physician feedback to drive health care improvement initiatives.

All data and findings represent surveys returned by patients, physicians, and employees to Press Ganey clients.

Contact information for questions or comments:

Matthew Mulherin

Director of Corporate Communications

404 Columbia Place

South Bend, IN 46601

(800) 232-8032

mmulherin@pressganey.com

www.pressganey.com

Press Ganey gives acknowledgement and thanks to the individuals who contributed data analysis to this report:

Paul Davis, Research Assistant

Dana Dreher, Research and Development Intern

Jessica Langager, Policy Analyst

Kelly Leddy, Custom Research Supervisor

Megan Trucano, Research Specialist

Editor: Laura Lindberg, Knowledge Manager



404 Columbia Place
South Bend, IN 46601
800.232.8032
pressganey.com