

SATISFACTION

Success Story

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St John of God Hospital Ballarat Emergency Department

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PRESS GANEY



ST JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL BALLARAT

St John of God Hospital, Ballarat, Victoria

Summary

St John of God Hospital, Ballarat is the largest private not-for-profit hospital in regional Victoria and provides an extensive range of health care providing city services to residents living in Ballarat and Western Victoria.

Our dedicated team of medical specialists and experienced staff offer services in medical, surgical, emergency, day surgery, intensive care, coronary care, interventional cardiology, rehabilitation, oncology, obstetrics/gynaecology, sleep studies and home nursing.

The hospital is currently undergoing a major \$57 million redevelopment and will include a new building housing five new wards, a new day procedure centre, new emergency medical department, new chapel, reception area and gift shop/café and a new hydrotherapy pool.

Situation Overview

Our Emergency Department has been in operation since 1993. The journey to our success has been significant with the continual improvement in patient satisfaction survey results. The Press Ganey system of measurement has enabled us to identify and develop specific areas to work on within our department to further enhance our service to the community. The overall rating of the Emergency Department from the 2004 Press Ganey data marked us at the 86th percentile of all the hospitals in the national database and the 84th percentile of all private hospitals.

Using these results and recommendations from the reports we progressed in 2005 to the 92nd percentile of all hospitals and the 95th percentile of all private hospitals. In 2006 we achieved the 99th percentile to become the national benchmark for private hospital emergency departments. Rather than there being a specific problem that needed attention we needed to refine all our processes to optimise and maintain our performance in every area.

The ability to maintain and improve our results has been a great achievement for our Emergency Department in delivering the best possible care to our community in accordance with the core values of St John of God Health Care.

Planning Methods

Department meetings involving the nursing, medical and reception staff were held to analyse the Press Ganey data. Specific issues regarding patient flow and communications were addressed in a joint context and followed up within the separate areas of the department. Our department views all the areas as providing a continuum of care. An action plan was developed after each survey to set objectives for the coming year.

The department leaders in the areas of medicine, nursing and reception have all been involved in this process. Significant support was also provided by the quality and clinical risk manager for the Ballarat division of St John of God Health Care.

Press Ganey reports were intrinsically useful for implementing strategies to improve service delivery. The top ten patient priorities were identified and targets set in an action plan. This was displayed for all staff to encourage team compliance. Low scoring aspects of survey results were also identified and targets set to improve in these areas, even though these areas were not perceived as most important to the patients surveyed.

The programs developed addressed specific issues and were implemented accordingly. The St John of God T.A.P.S. (Team Approach Problem Solving) program is a model that senior staff have implemented following the last survey in 2006 to manage ongoing improvements.

Our goal was to maintain a high standard of care and high rankings in consecutive Press Ganey surveys. We achieved that goal and exceeded our expectations with an improvement in ranking over the three years surveyed.



Programs and Initiatives

The emphasis in the Department of Emergency Medicine is on care for our patients at every level of service. This involves implementing the mission values of the hospital, which are hospitality, respect, justice, compassion and excellence.

The demonstration of values and care from all members of the department are essential and we believe that we have managed to achieve this continually. The human values of empathy and kindness have been integral in our public relations. The technical aspects of emergency department medical and nursing care as well as the efficiency of our reception and billing procedures are important also, but are significantly underpinned by the human values which we emphasise every day.

This is an ongoing emphasis within the department and is an innovation from the traditional emergency department models more commonly seen in the public hospital context.

Along our journey there have been some staff members that have not embraced this value system and feedback to those staff members has been direct and through informal or formal processes as required. Some of those staff members have subsequently left the organisation and others have embraced our culture to strive to excellence in service delivery.

Results of Programs and Initiatives

As described above, we have seen an improvement in our percentile scoring in the Emergency Department over the last three years survey. We remain the benchmark for the private emergency departments in Australia. The degree of improvement has been small, however the significance of the overall result is very satisfying.

The customers have benefited from the efforts of the caregivers in the Department of Emergency Medicine by feeling individually valued and offered a high standard of care during their emergency attendances.

The parameters for staff satisfaction, morale and retention remain very high within the department as indicated by the long term retention of the great majority of our staff members in medical, nursing and reception areas.

There has been a steady growth in the overall attendances to the emergency department over the last two years with a matching increase in the number of admissions to the hospital.

Over the three years audited the improvements have been sustained.

Future Initiatives

We aim to constantly improve our service and we introduced a new patient administration system in July 2007 to be able to further map our progress and measure our success. We are evaluating our billing structure within the department to rationalise financial costs on an individual presentation basis. We are introducing a registrar position for training doctors in the Emergency Department. We will introduce medical students to the department in 2010.

We will expand the training aspects and the integration of the emergency, critical care and cardiology services provided within the hospital. Specific appointments have been made in this regard. We continue our involvement with the State Disaster Plan with one of our senior doctors being a member of the State committees with regard to disaster planning and retrieval medicine. We continue our involvement in education with the St John of God Health Care funding education initiatives for rural GPs through its social outreach and advocacy budget. Increased funding and commitment to nursing staff professional development is underway currently. We also continue our commitment to the provision of emergency placements for nursing graduates and university nursing students.

Conclusion

For our Emergency Department, the success story has been not only in the achievement of these results, but also in looking at the reasons why we are able to maintain and improve on those results. Interestingly, the reason, I believe, behind the success of the department are based on human values of our staff that compliment their knowledge and technical skill. The enhancement of these values for all staff members is a continual process.

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