Clients That Switched From In-house Surveying to Press Ganey

Hospitals that partner with Press Ganey experience increased response rates, verified and accurate results, improved satisfaction, an enhanced work environment and – most importantly – improved patient service quality.

Overview

Clients that made the switch to Press Ganey say the in-house method was not capturing dissatisfied patients because satisfied patients were the most inclined to send surveys back to the hospitals. Hospital representatives also say the reliability of Press Ganey’s data gives leaders and staff a common language and goals – one client says the comprehensive data has even helped during union negotiations. Perhaps the most common response is Press Ganey is not just about measuring patient satisfaction; Press Ganey is about improving patient satisfaction.

The following testimonials are from hospitals/systems that were disappointed with their in-house patient satisfaction surveying efforts and decided to partner with Press Ganey. Do any of these facilities sound like yours?

- **The University of Utah Hospital & Clinics (UUHC)** is an academic medical center located in Salt Lake City, Utah. The system, which includes a 425-bed hospital, a 50-bed cancer hospital, a 90-bed inpatient psychiatric hospital, a staff of 5,000, 863 medical faculty members, and more than 780,000 annual patient visits, conducted its own in-house surveys for approximately eight years before switching to Press Ganey’s Inpatient Satisfaction Survey in 2004. *U.S. News and World Report* rated UUHC as a “Best Hospital, 2006”.

- **Falls Memorial Hospital** (now called Rainy Lake Medical Center) is a critical access, not-for-profit facility located in International Falls, Minn. on the U.S./Canadian border. The hospital, with 25 licensed beds and a staff of 139 employees, serves a population of more than 7,000 residents. Falls Memorial conducted an in-house survey for years before switching to Press Ganey’s Inpatient Satisfaction Survey in 2002. In 2006, the hospital became a Press Ganey Compass Award winner for the ambulatory surgery and inpatient categories.

- **CHRISTUS Jasper Memorial Hospital** is a faith-based, rural, general medical and surgical hospital located in Jasper, Texas. The hospital, part of CHRISTUS Health Southeast Texas and the CHRISTUS Health System, has a staff of 300, 59 licensed beds and serves a population of approximately 8,000 residents. The hospital conducted in-house surveys for a number of years before switching to Press Ganey’s Inpatient Satisfaction Survey in 2000.

- **Capital Health Systems** is comprised of two general medical and surgical not-for-profit hospitals. Both hospitals are located in Trenton, N.J. with a combined total of 609 licensed beds (589+ are NICU) and more than 3,234 staff members. Capital Health Systems has 23,610 annual inpatient plus birthing visits, and 232,246 outpatient visits a year. Capital Health Systems partnered with Press Ganey from 1995-1998 and rejoined Press Ganey in 2005.
Benchmarking

“External data and benchmarking against other hospitals is key,” said Laura Hopkins, vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at Falls Memorial Hospital. She said Falls Memorial leaders thought they were doing a good job at satisfying patients until they saw how the hospital measured against similar facilities in the Press Ganey database. “It was pretty humbling, because our own (in-house) surveys had shown we were doing very well. But it turned out the people who were turning in our surveys were the ones who liked us. With Press Ganey, we now have a true measure of how we are improving.”

“Benchmarking. Definitely benchmarking.” That is the response Chrissy Daniels, director of customer, employee and outreach services at UUHC, gave as the reason the hospital decided to convert to an external vendor. Why did UUHC choose Press Ganey? “You were great. You were recommended … it worked out perfectly.”

“The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) recommends benchmarking, so that was a key driver for us to seek an outside vendor,” said Carreen Herold, director of patient satisfaction at Capital Health Systems. “We chose Press Ganey because it represents the majority of hospitals and has the largest database.”

Reliable and Versatile Database

Chrissy Daniels, director of customer, employee and outreach services at UUHC, likes how Press Ganey allows clients to download raw data from their surveys and utilize it for their own research and analyses. Daniels said you can get as “high level and sophisticated, or basic, as you want” with the analyses.

Laura Hopkins, vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at Falls Memorial Hospital, said the reliability of the survey results allows you to “start striving for common, quantifiable goals. Everybody knows where the data came from, everybody can look at the data and everybody can come to the same conclusion. It’s not like you’re all looking at different numbers and trying to argue over whose number is correct.”

Hopkins said Press Ganey’s dependable and trusted data helps when hospital administrators are speaking and negotiating with union leaders. “We all know what the information is and we can all discuss it in the same language.” The Press Ganey data has resulted in the hospital and unions progressing from a negotiation style “where you hammer and hammer and hammer away” to a sharing of information. “We didn’t realize it, but we each had a secret language. Press Ganey has given us a common language that is easy to understand.”

Colleen McFall, RN, director of education at CHRISTUS Jasper Memorial Hospital, believes the biggest asset to using Press Ganey surveys is the “reliability of the survey and the reliability of the data you are receiving. You may think you’re doing well and you’re not really doing well. Knowing how a patient perceives your facility is the first step to improvement. You need to go to an outside vendor if you really want to know.”

Data Interpretation/Reports

“We use this data, and it drives decisions and operations – our operational managers rely on the real-time data sets,” said Chrissy Daniels, director of customer, employee and outreach services at UUHC. “One of the big values of (eCompass) is that we get real-time feedback, and our reports give us a prescription for action, which is a really important issue.”

“When we get the reports back, we go in and try to get to the specifics,” said Laura Hopkins, vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at Falls Memorial Hospital. “We go into infoEDGE® and get
down to the specific survey questions. Which survey questions are we improving on? Which questions are most correlated to overall patient satisfaction? Our service teams build their progress, agendas and what they’re going to improve based on the Press Ganey results on infoEDGE."

- “The Priority Index has been very helpful,” said Colleen McFall, RN, director of education at CHRISTUS Jasper Memorial Hospital. “The Priority Index lets us know what we specifically need to work on.”

- “We look to see if our overall mean score is improving. Then we look at the overall mean scores at the individual campuses and the nursing units. Nurse managers meet with employees once a month and go over the Press Ganey scores and look to see what they can do to improve. I think it’s very good for the nursing units to look at all those (patient) comments so they get an idea of what is realistic (to improve) and what is not,” said Carreen Herold, director of patient satisfaction at Capital Health Systems.

**Best Practices/Solutions Starters™**

- “Press Ganey not only provides measurements, but they also provide solutions and I think that’s a good combination to have,” said Colleen McFall, RN, director of education at CHRISTUS Jasper Memorial Hospital. “Solutions Starters have been really helpful. It allows us to see what the question means and get some suggestions for improvement.”

- Laura Hopkins, vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at Falls Memorial Hospital, finds Press Ganey Solutions Starters to be very helpful. “If we’re having trouble on a question, we go to the Solutions Starters and take a look at some of the best practice recommendations for making changes. We’ll try out some of the ideas to see what works.”

- “Press Ganey is very good as far as working with you, giving you ideas and telling you what other hospitals have done,” said Carreen Herold, director of patient satisfaction at Capital Health Systems. “We are receiving multiple copies of the Press Ganey publication *Satisfaction Monitor* which I distribute to the nurse managers and department directors. This publication highlights successful hospital programs and provides us with valuable information.”

**Customer Service**

- “Our Press Ganey consultant not only worked with our IT department to set up the survey, she is available on a daily basis. She makes annual visits to our facility to train our staff,” said Chrissy Daniels, director of customer, employee and outreach services at UUHC. “She has been very valuable, with real-time responsiveness, and she helps us interpret our results and solve issues such as sample sizes.”

- With regards to HCAHPS, Daniels said her facility’s Press Ganey consultant “was very instrumental in setting up our HCAHPS service, and she has been a big advocate in HCAHPS issues and how we can be compliant.”

**Response Rates**

- “When we decided to go with an external vendor we knew that the accuracy, rate of return, validity and reliability would be taken care of,” said Laura Hopkins, vice president of patient services and chief nursing officer at Falls Memorial Hospital.

- “We receive the response rates monthly so we can see what else we need to do to improve them. Press Ganey has been good about working with us. They come up with a lot of ideas for us,” said Carreen Herold, director of patient satisfaction at Capital Health Systems. “We were not mailing at 100% on both campuses, so now that we are, we are getting a better return.”

For additional information on how Press Ganey can help your facility administer the HCAHPS process, please contact Sara Nemeth at 800.232.8032 or at snemeth@pressganey.com.