

4 Low-Cost Ways to Improve Your Radiology Service



With the trend towards value-based reimbursement, providers are exerting more effort to improve quality of healthcare services. It's important to note that quality service delivery is determined on an individual basis, through patient-as-customer perceived satisfaction, which may be very different from essential clinical outcomes, according to an article in the *Journal of the American College of Radiology (JACR)* .

Although radiologists and their staff members may not be at the centre of the care continuum for all patients, the kind of service they provide affects overall patient satisfaction, the article notes.

"All staff members, from help-desk volunteers to technologists to radiologists, should be trained in the basics of customer satisfaction, including tenets of a patient-as-customer philosophy and potential triggers for dissatisfaction," write the authors, Paul Armstrong Hill, MD, and Ronald Paul Hill, PhD.

See Also: [What Satisfies Imaging Patients? Views Differ](#)

The *JACR* article suggests implementing these low-cost changes to improve service delivery by radiology departments:

Smartphone applications. "Apps" can be used to provide directions (roads and building floor plans) so patients can get to their appointments on time; update where they are in the office queue and expected wait time; ask for feedback at appropriate intervals and monitor satisfaction. These can also be a tool to assess overall health and service outcomes.

Staff training. Staff members should learn the basics of customer satisfaction, including soft skills (eg, empathy); develop understanding of typical triggers for dissatisfaction and possible remedies; and set up a continuous feedback loop whereby patients are kept up to date on wait times and treatment protocols.

Cosy office environment. Use colour schemes, music, and lighting in waiting rooms to maximise calming effects. Also, consider ways to make treatment rooms less austere and more comfortable. Display of licences/certificates and testimonials can help to foster patient trust and anxiety reduction.

Transparency. Educate patients about the full range of imaging studies, their purposes, and side effects. Disclosure of when and by whom results will be presented, as well as addressing any questions, will be helpful in reducing patient anxiety. Follow up to ensure service protocol was satisfactorily completed.

"Patient satisfaction should be considered the superordinate goal of every person who affects patients-as-customers' experiences, and their contributions (or lack thereof) should be an important factor in performance reviews," the authors say.

See Also: [Improving the Radiology Service Patient Experience](#)

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