



Hospital Aesthetics Not Enough To Improve Patient Satisfaction



Patient satisfaction ratings do not rise in proportion to hospital renovation expenditures, according to a pre- and post-evaluation study conducted by researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. The study found that patients' experiences of care were only modestly impacted by hospital aesthetics, despite the widespread belief that patient-centred facility design improves patient satisfaction.

"This means that patients are able to distinguish the quality of care they get from doctors, nurses, housekeeping and other support services from the look and feel of where they are receiving the care," said Zishan Siddiqui, MD, assistant professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

New Facilities Do Not Guarantee Patient Satisfaction

A total of 5,663 patients were divided into two groups, one of which experienced a move to a new facility, and asked to rate their physicians, nurses and overall care. Patients who underwent a move during their hospital stay had higher facility-related satisfaction scores, but did not rate their overall care any more highly than those patients who did not move to a new facility. Data were adjusted for age, gender, duration of stay, insurance and illness severity in order to ensure that those variables did not affect results.

"We originally thought new and pleasing surroundings would improve patient satisfaction scores with physicians, nurses and overall care, but our study showed this is not the case," Siddiqui said. "Although we did see significant improvement in facility-related satisfaction scores, we did not see significant change in satisfaction related to care or overall satisfaction, for that matter."

Patients Will Benefit From Improved Education and Training

Hospital leaders who point to ageing buildings as causes for poor patient satisfaction may benefit from

prioritising projects that focus on personalised care and provider training, the authors suggest. Education programs that involve patients and their families in how to make informed care decisions is another area likely to impact patient satisfaction.

The authors acknowledge that additional research will help to determine which factors most affect patient satisfaction, such as race and readmission rates. "We'd also like to look at how we can improve patient health through improving satisfaction," said Siddiqui. "Our study was a great start in discovering the impact of a hospital setting on patient satisfaction, but there's so much more we can discover in this realm that may improve patient outcomes."

The study was conducted by Siddiqui and Daniel Brotman, MD, professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, along with their colleagues. They analysed data from surveys conducted by the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems and by consulting company Press Ganey. Both evaluate patient experiences of hospital performance.

The report appears in the March 2015 issue of the *Journal of Hospital Medicine* .

Source: Johns Hopkins Medicine

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