

El Camino Hospital Uses Allen Technologies Interactive Patient Survey To Improve Patient Experience In Real-Time

R.J. Salus readily admits he is an advocate for patient engagement feedback. So when Salus was brought on board at El Camino Hospital as director of patient experience, he sought out creative ideas for soliciting patient feedback without adding more workload to the nursing staff.

Working with the Allen Technologies account success team, Salus was able to launch the new survey in patient rooms at El Camino's 300-bed Mountain View, California, campus in less than two weeks of initiating the project. Since going live in mid-October 2014, the hospital has received an average of three to five responses daily and saw an immediate uptick in its HCAHPS scores. "If we receive a negative response, the nurse or department manager responds instantly to follow up and ask more questions about their experience," he said. "It's a nice pinpoint for my team to check in with the patient."

The questions on the Allen Technologies interactive patient survey are similar to those used in rounding, making it easy to marry the two feedback mechanisms. Questions range from how well the staff is communicating with the patient, to responsiveness, room comfort and food service needs. The survey takes less than 60 seconds to complete.

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"It's an extra set of eyes and ears into patient engagement with us, a great way for us to get real-time feedback with minimal effort," says Salus. Prior to implementing the new tool, the hospital staff relied solely on rounding to get feedback on a standard set of questions. "We make an attempt to get to as many patients as we can, but we might have to try repeatedly because the patient is sleeping or the door is closed. It is difficult to reach every patient."



"I'm a big fan of engaging patients to get feedback," says Salus, a 10-year veteran of hospital patient engagement leadership who joined the Silicon Valley nonprofit facility in August 2014. "Early on in the new job here, I met with Allen Technologies to learn more about the company's capabilities. When I saw the patient survey feature, it was an immediate no-brainer. It gives the patient a voice, and it gives us a direction in terms of where to focus our energy throughout the day."

The patient satisfaction survey is one of numerous features available through the Allen Technologies Interactive Patient System suite, and gives hospitals a simple way to generate patient feedback via the in-room television screen. Salus developed a six-question survey, that is auto assigned to a patient 24 hours after being admitted to the hospital and will appear in the patient's Inbox at that time. When completed, the results are sent to an email group managed by the patient experience team.

“What I like about the Allen Technologies piece is that it is totally voluntary. The patient isn’t obliged to do it, so when one does submit feedback, we know that item is important to that person. That patient has decided to take their time even if it is only 30 seconds to give very high-level feedback, and that helps us prioritize,” he says.

For the hospital’s busy staff, perhaps the best part about the Allen Technologies patient survey is the fact that it generates the feedback with no extra workload or intervention required by the nursing or marketing teams. “The nurses don’t have to explain it to the patient or do anything extra that impacts their work,” says Salus. In addition, because the system automatically sends a message to the patient, there is no need for marketing collateral like signage or tent cards to promote it.

“When I worked in another hospital, we developed a QR code that patients could scan on their smart phones to send feedback but it wasn’t nearly as successful as the Allen Technologies tool,” he says. “Because I was relying on people putting out promotional tent cards on a timely basis, and on nurse managers to engage patients, that program – which was in six units across five hospitals – didn’t get as many responses a day as this one in a single facility gets.

“With this solution, the fact that I don’t need additional collateral is a huge bonus,” he adds, “Those things require resources – people to put out tent cards or put posters up in patient rooms that impact the aesthetics of the room and create clutter. Instead, the Allen Technologies system pushes out a message to patients, and that is a huge value-add in my perspective.”

Soon, El Camino Hospital will extend the Allen Technologies interactive patient survey to its Los Gatos campus. “I’m excited to go live at Los Gatos with the Allen Technologies survey,” says Salus. “My goal is to predict and be proactive in responding to patient needs, and this is a tool that supports that.”

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About El Camino Hospital

El Camino Hospital is an acute-care, 443-bed, nonprofit and locally governed organization with campuses in Mountain View and Los Gatos, California. Key medical specialties include behavioral health, cancer, heart and vascular, men’s health, orthopedic and spine, and the first Women’s Hospital in Northern California. The hospital is recognized as a national leader in the use of health information technology and wireless communications, and has been awarded the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission as a Primary Stroke Center as well as back-to-back ANCC Magnet Recognitions for Nursing Care.

About Allen Technologies

Allen Technologies, the pioneer of interactive patient solutions for nearly 40 years, transforms the way hospitals engage, educate and entertain patients. Allen Technologies helps hospitals impact patient outcomes, improve patient satisfaction and achieve operational efficiencies. Allen’s multiplatform interactive patient engagement system, delivered via television, tablet and bedside monitor, is a robust patient-centric portal for customized patient education, in-room comfort control, and entertainment. Allen is the leader in interactive patient engagement solutions for smart TVs. Allen’s E3 Patient Engagement Solution integrates seamlessly with electronic medical records and system platforms including HVAC, housekeeping and food service systems. Learn more at www.engagewithallen.com, www.twitter.com/allen_ips or www.facebook.com/allentechnologies.

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