

A smiling female healthcare professional with blonde hair tied back, wearing blue scrubs and a name tag, holding a black tablet. The background is a bright, blurred hospital setting.

Improving Press-Ganey Scores Using Qualitick.

Bassett Healthcare Network – Cobleskill Regional Hospital

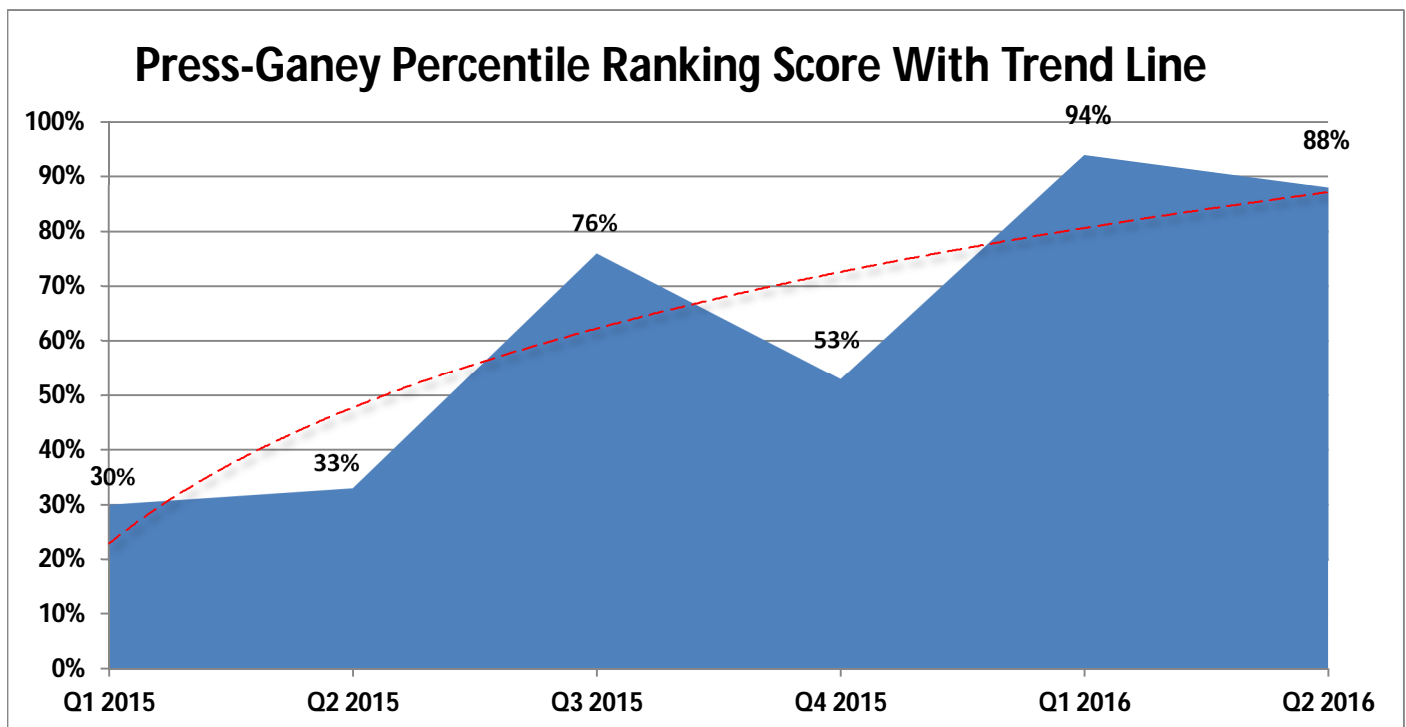
This case study outlines how Cobleskill Regional Hospital ED successfully employed the Qualitick program to dramatically, and consistently, improve their Press-Ganey scores and national ranking.

Overview

Cobleskill Regional Hospital, affiliated with Bassett Healthcare Network, is a 40-bed not-for-profit hospital founded by the people of Schoharie County in 1956. Cobleskill Regional Hospital is Schoharie County's only provider of acute inpatient medical care, emergency care, short-stay inpatient rehabilitation, and many other diagnostic and therapeutic healthcare services. Cobleskill Regional Hospital has been affiliated with Bassett Healthcare Network since 1994.

Cobleskill ED wanted to improve their ED patient satisfaction scores but found that low 'n' numbers from their regular Press-Ganey mail surveys, and protracted reporting time, they needed a program which could generate higher 'n' numbers for deeper performance analysis, and real-time reporting for rapid-cycle improvement.

To help achieve these objectives Bassett Healthcare Network commenced their Qualitick program in Q1 2015. The ED team initially focused on patient wait times, staff interactions by readily making performance data available, recognizing ED staff, and sharing all comments, good or bad. This approach made for transparency and accountability, and patient comments were communicated in real-time. The process was executed with a personal touch through staff member recognition emails for a job well done. No matter how many times an individual was recognized this process was adhered to. If the ED had a dissatisfied client it was the Joan Goodrich (ED Director), or Deborah Funk-Valois (ED Medical Director), reaching out personally to address their concerns within 24 to 48 hours. The real-time nature of the Qualitick program allowed for immediate service recovery.



Method

The Qualitick program's innovative process of engaging patients prior to discharge helped Cobleskill ED to garner higher 'n' numbers, and the state-of-the-art reporting provided real-time knowledge. This deeper understanding allowed the leaders to strategically and tactically make adjustments and improvements in the delivery of care. Ultimately, this improvement was reflected in their Press-Ganey scores.

CMS & EDCAHPS

With HCAHPS already in place, it's very likely that EDCAHPS will be similar in structure. CMS has been very vocal about the use of their mandated surveying being for their own use and urges hospitals to employ their own data-collection methods as the CMS mandated methods do not necessarily garner large sample sizes. CMS is very clear on this:

"CMS does not review or endorse the use of HCAHPS scores for comparisons within hospitals, such as comparison of HCAHPS scores associated with a particular ward, floor, individual staff member, to others. Such comparisons are unreliable unless large sample sizes are collected at the ward, floor, or individual staff member level."

Furthermore, during AHRQ/CMS webinars on 'How to Improve CAHPS Scores,' hospitals have been encouraged to:

1. Do their own 'Proxy Surveys'
2. Which provide greater insights of 'whys' and 'drivers'.
3. To use this data to operationalize improvement.

Improvement

Candie Miller (Quality Process and Data Analyst) commented, "with the Qualitick trending data it became apparent that wait times were an issue, so a policy was put in place where patients were notified about wait times more frequently. This in turn had a huge positive impact on patient perception about wait times, as opposed to not knowing and having to wait."

Candie continued, "Qualitick data, was reviewed regularly across all ED teams, discussions would take place and plans were implemented for improvement. Our Qualitick account manager was always in close contact with the Quality Process and Data Analysis team, and this was the catalyst in effectively implementing strategies for success. Once upward trends in our Press-Ganey score became apparent, the results were presented to C-Suite, who now intend to use the same methodology in the clinic setting and the inpatient side."

Tracie Kobel (Qualitick Operations Manager) added, "it took dedication from the team at Cobleskill to turn perception into real knowledge about performance execution. For many years they simply depended on a handful of mail surveys each month in the vain hope of understanding team performance. Now they have an effective tool and process in place from Qualitick to get a more in-depth understanding of performance execution, where they can marry common sense strategies for superior results. And with EDCAHPS around the corner, Cobleskill are well positioned to ascertain great scores."