



Case Study: Patient Smile

A disciplined and holistic way of improving patient experience

Overview

Dr. Mallikarjuna and Dr. P. C. Reddy founded AINU with a clear plan and a true purpose. From the very start, they believed that in addition to exhibiting clinical excellence, delivering a superior patient experience would be the only way to out-compete the larger and more established hospitals. Day by day, they started building a reputation using a very systematic approach: they introduced a program that makes sure that every patient leaves the hospital with a positive emotion. Patient Smile!

Patient smile places the patient at the centre of the hospital operation, measuring their experience at several stages during their journey in the hospital. It introduces a systematic approach that ensures the support team responds to the patient feedback in time. Service recovery steps are taken up as necessary, while the patient is still in the hospital. Good feedback is routed to the care givers responsible for it, thus encouraging those positive habits.

The program leads to an absolute cultural change in the hospital: from a self-serving one to a patient centric organisation. Smiling patients alter the atmosphere of the hospital leading to smiling employees.

Financially, the results speak for themselves. The occupancy rate has increased multifold and the number of surgeries has tripled over the years. Simultaneously, AINU has been able to cut down on traditional marketing and advertising cost. To top it, their employee turnover has dropped significantly leading to lesser costs associated with recruitment and training.



AINU

Location: Hyderabad
Size: 70 beds

Company Bio

Established in 2013, AINU has gained a reputation as the premium destination for treatment of Nephrology and Urology ailments. It was one of the youngest hospital to be NABH accredited in early 2015. The hospital has introduced robotic surgery in 2016 and routinely undertakes complex kidney transplant procedures on a monthly basis.

" Patient Smile has helped us deliver top patient experience consistently at AINU. Forum has been a true partner in growth for AINU in the last 3 years "



Dr. C. Mallikarjuna
Managing Director, AINU

How has Patient Smile helped AINU over the last 3 years?

Patient NPS

72

+ve Google Reviews

98%

Top Patient Emotion

Trust

Word of Mouth Referrals

46%

The Challenge

AINU was a two year old organisation when Patient Smile was started in February 2015. It was young and had a significant room for growth. The primary challenges that AINU faced at that time were:

- Expanding the existing patient base
- Building a positive brand image and protecting it

The Approach

Listen. Learn. Grow.

Listen to the patients, Learn from their experiences, and Grow by continuously improving their experiences. This fundamental approach has been the same since day one.

So this is what we do. We put the patient in the centre. We introduce systems that allow the hospital to understand the patient emotions at multiple stages in the patient journey. We introduce processes that ensure no patient concern goes unaddressed, and then evaluate the quality of their implementation.

While negative patient feedback would only be used to recover the service at the patient level and to identify trends for process improvement opportunities, positive feedback would be extensively showcased internally, clearly communicating the expected behaviour patterns. This system would never be used to either penalise or incentivise a member of the hospital, resulting in a truly in-spirit implementation.



"Our approach to the solution was a combination of patient psychology, consumer behaviour, behavioural economics and technology.."

- Mark Stohr
Director, Forum Business Research

The Solution

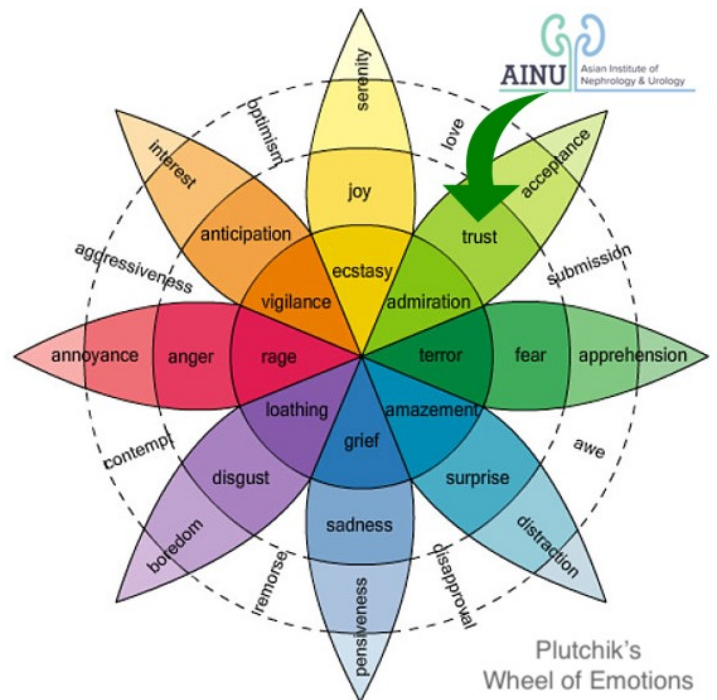
Patient Smile is thoughtfully crafted mix of patient psychology and technology. It is normal that patients and their families hesitate to give negative feedback, while they are still in the hospital for fear of retribution by the care givers. So when left alone to complete a feedback form on their own, the response rates are usually low. Even the few patients that give feedback tend to give very short and dry responses that leave a lot unsaid.

Our trained interviewers connect with patients to obtain rich, honest feedback. Rather than focus only on ratings, our idea is to identify the predominant patient emotion based on their hospital experience.

"We know emotions drive the subconscious mind which controls buying and referral decisions."

Essentially, no patient concern goes unaddressed. Response times are monitored along with the quality of closure for indicators of courtesy and compassion. The closure is then further verified with the patient in the next feedback cycle to check if their concern was addressed to their satisfaction.

When done diligently with every patient, every day, the patients feel heard, understood and very connected to the hospital. They walk out on the day of discharge with a solid conviction that the hospital had done everything in its capacity to address their physical and emotional needs. This strong conviction and connection results in higher friends and family referred patients to the hospital.



The Results

The hospital enjoys a premium brand image among its competition and attracts patients from far and wide, many having been referred to by their friends and family. Patients arrive at the hospital for the clinical expertise and trust the hospital for its open and transparent working culture.

AINU has been able to generate higher share of friends and family referred patients and has significantly improved its top line in the last 3 years. With occupancy rates hovering around 80% even during off peak periods, AINU operates at near maximum capacity. The hospital has reduced its marketing and advertisement budget by a significant margin. It is now reviewing opportunities to establish hospitals in other cities and replicate the success.

About Forum Business Research

We are experts in patient experience management. We believe managing patient experience is the only sustainable initiative that a hospital can take up to ensure long term growth. We work with hospitals that have a patient centric purpose and the courage to act on it.

forumbusinessresearch.com

