



How Can Healthcare Organizations Bring Patient Experience Programs to the Next Level?

Today, healthcare depends more than ever on patient experience (PX) and feedback. Hospital reimbursements are often tied to patient satisfaction scores measured on a nation-wide scale. Hence, the experience of patients and their families is among the key differentiators for modern-day healthcare organizations. To gain competitive advantage, it is of utmost importance for every forward-thinking organization to develop a [better understanding of its patients and their specific journeys](#). But simply accumulating feedback is not enough to compete successfully.

By combining existing patient experience data with advanced analytics, organizations can reveal insights that can help them assess performance, effectively identify existing gaps in their service provision from a [360-degree perspective](#), and ultimately prioritize the required improvements.

Advanced patient analytics can help organizations make better sense of the myriad of existing data, [tap into unexplored sources](#) of unsolicited feedback, and [create a holistic picture](#) of their strengths, weaknesses and must-do versus nice-to-do improvements.

The Current State of PX Programs & How to Make a Difference?

There are several traditional practices that hospitals apply in their PX programs. These include: patient journey mapping, measuring NPS or patient satisfaction, industry benchmarks, demographic or rule-based patient segmentations, and social media activity.

Indeed, these methods can serve as a [good starting base](#) for assessing patient experience, but they do not fulfill the more demanding requirements that today's healthcare organizations are facing, given the fierce competition and patients' rising freedom of choice when selecting healthcare services providers.

Building on the widely accepted standard patient experience methodologies by adding advanced analytics, organizations can take PX programs to the **next level**:

STANDARD

Patient Segmentation:
Demographic & Rule-Based

Measuring NPS
& Satisfaction

Patient Journey Mapping
& Experience Assessment

Social Media
Activity

NEXT-LEVEL

**Deep Need-Based
Patient Segmentation**

**Predicting Operational KPIs and NPS Linkage
to Financial Performance**

**Importance Modelling
and Competitive Benchmarking**

**Advanced Text Analytics of Social Media, Reviews,
Blogs/Forums and Unsolicited Feedback**

Demographic or Rule-Based vs. Need-Based Patient Segmentations

STANDARD:

Segmentation analysis helps healthcare organizations understand different attitudes and behaviors in order to attract, engage and retain patients. However, there are some drawbacks in typical demographic and rule-based patient segmentation methodologies as well. These include picking **inefficient segmentation** factors, e.g. limited only to easy-to-measure-and-report variables, such as patient age, gender, nationality, clinical condition. Thus, patient groups are sub-optimally identified and do not allow for capturing patients' unique characteristics in the best possible way, or not at all. While more appropriate factors may be used in rule-based segmentations, albeit not always the case, a common issue there is that models put arbitrary weight on each factor.

NEXT-LEVEL:

Accurately identifying clusters of patients with shared needs and expectations can serve as a powerful strategy for understanding patients' specific needs and targeting PX improvement strategies. The more advanced **need-based patient segmentation** methodology can help healthcare organizations improve performance and gain a sustainable competitive advantage. Assessing **more detailed and effective factors**, such as patient experiences, needs and expectations, level of trust, lifestyle and healthcare attitudes and behaviors, priorities, ability and likelihood to spend, allows organizations to measure the extent to which patients' needs are being met and allows for formulating marketing strategies relevant to each cluster. Ultimately, this improves the organization's overall ability to "win" with this specific group organization's overall ability to "win" with this specific group.

Only Measuring vs. Predicting KPIs and NPS Linkage to Financial Performance

STANDARD:

Measuring NPS and patient satisfaction is a common and useful tool which continues to be widely used by organizations across many industries, including healthcare. While it is a metric which is easy to calculate and interpret, such scores have their limitations as well. Answering questions like “How likely is it that you would recommend [hospital] to a friend or colleague?” and pointing out the top reasons to recommend are often not enough to predict future financial health and performance. Moreover, measuring a patient’s intent to recommend does not always translate into measuring their actual behavior.

NEXT-LEVEL:

Advanced statistical methodologies, usually deployed in addition to measuring NPS and satisfaction, can help organizations **predict** target key performance indicators (KPIs) based on real data collected at the facility or hospital network. This method allows for **constructing specific organization-level** models and for building strategies to improve or maintain target KPIs based on future forecasted performance. These can include but are not limited to average length of stay, patient throughput, hospital readmission rates, average waiting time, average treatment cost, claims denial rate, self-paid episodes, operating margin. Further, this method can help identify and assess the relationship between NPS drivers and financial performance. This means understanding the ROI of improvements at certain stages based on their financial impact.



Patient Journey Mapping vs. Importance Modelling & Competitive Benchmarking

STANDARD:

Patient journey mapping is another widely used methodology that aims to capture the full scope of interactions between patients and healthcare providers, from the moment of choosing a provider and setting up an appointment, through admissions, until discharge and follow-up. The ideal goal of this practice is to identify what makes for a good or bad experience along each touchpoint and to strive to improve it.

NEXT-LEVEL:

Simply identifying good and bad experiences along the way is a good start but it omits to answer a key question all providers are facing: “What do we improve first? What do we focus on first?”. A typical patient journey may easily have over 70 interactions with tens of them requiring some sort of attention. Importance modelling reveals hidden patterns in the interdependency between different interactions and how each one of them impacts the overall patient experience. Eventually, healthcare stakeholders can not only identify gaps but also prioritize among services in their improvement plans. Adding a level of localized and specific competitive benchmarking per interaction further narrows down where and how to improve in order to be truly competitive.



Social Media Activity vs. Advanced Social Media Text Analytics

STANDARD:

More and more healthcare organizations currently recognize the importance of social media presence and activity. Having that said, being present and active does not necessarily mean one can make use of the mountains of social media content piling up each day. Social media engagement is only the first step to understanding what is getting published, shared, liked. Activity alone does not allow for effectively capturing key topics, tracking trends and spotting issues.

NEXT-LEVEL:

With the explosion of patient feedback accumulated in social media and review blogs/forums, organizations need to ensure that they stay up to date with what is going on about and around them. [Automated data mining techniques and advanced text analytics](#) provide organizations with a deeper understanding of the key conversation topics and patient sentiment – about own facilities as well as about competitors. [Sentiment analysis](#) adds a deeper level of insight as it assesses the actual text sentiment (positive, neutral or negative and the associated strength of emotion), i.e. patients are not only talking about the registration process, but they are mentioning it with a strong negative emotion. Advanced text analytics is even more actionable through competitive benchmarks and exploring current and future market trends.

Why Should Organizations Use Advanced Analytics as a Performance-Boosting Tool?



Reveal true **root causes**, identify the **pain points** which must be solved immediately and increase **staff engagement** through importance modelling, social media analytics and competitive benchmarking.



Improve patient loyalty and hospital reputation to ensure **patient retention** and **tailor patient communications** and marketing activity to best reflect needs.



Boost revenue, referrals and brand preference, improve **clinical outcomes** and **profitability** by understanding the link between patient experience and key indicators as well as predicting their future performance.

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TAKING THE LEAP

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