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NARMC's patient-satisfaction scores skyrocket

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North Arkansas Regional Medical Center reached a milestone last week when its patient satisfaction level reached the highest level recorded since the late 1990s, the time the hospital began using a national consulting company called Press Ganey to track these statistics. According to Rob Lake, NARMC president and CEO, in a recent weekly survey of patient satisfaction scores, the hospital scored in the 99th percentile and is ranked No. 1 in the nation in the Press Ganey patient satisfaction scores.

When Lake took over the hospital's helm in early January, the hospital's Press Ganey patient-satisfaction scores were in the 65th percentile, according to Marsha Carter, NARMC director of marketing.

Press Ganey is a consulting company that serves the health care industry with tools to measure and improve the delivery of care, explained Diane Roberts, vice-president of quality services at NARMC.

"They facilitate NARMC's patient satisfaction survey process," Roberts said. "Press Ganey randomly selected 300 patients a month from our inpatient population and sends surveys to those patients."

The quality services director said the patient's mail the completed surveys directly back to Press Ganey. Only the results are shared with NARMC.

Roberts said more than 40 percent of the nation's hospitals partner with Press Ganey to improve patient care delivery.

"Survey results for patients discharged this year demonstrate a patient satisfaction ranking at the 99th percentile," Roberts said. "This means that patients are more satisfied with the care they receive at NARMC than patients are at 99 percent of the hospitals in the Press Ganey database."

Press Ganey has the largest database for hospitals in the nation, Lake said.

What is responsible for the recent marked improvement in patient satisfaction at the Harrison hospital?

"Everyone at NARMC is committed to providing excellence in the delivery of care," Roberts said. "Adopt-a-Room has been extremely well-received and has been a big part of our recent success."

"NARMC has been focusing on improving both patient satisfaction and physician satisfaction, and their efforts are paying off," Lake said. "I was not surprised, given the attitude of the staff and their willingness to do whatever it takes to get the job done. It's always nice to be recognized, but if we continue to do the right thing for the right reason, everything else will fall into place. I couldn't be prouder of the staff for what they have accomplished. They are the best."

Lake instituted the Adopt-a-Room program not long after he took over as hospital CEO in early January. Each NARMC manager drew the numbers of three patient rooms, and those managers have taken the responsibility of visiting those rooms every day and talking with the patients about any concerns they may have, and trying to find a resolution for those concerns.