Munroe Regional Medical Center, Ocala, FL

Background
A healthcare leader in central Florida, 421-bed Munroe Regional Medical Center treats nearly 150,000 patients in its expanding inpatient, outpatient, and ED facilities. In 2000, MRMC implemented innovative programs designed to enhance patient care and satisfaction.

Laying the Groundwork
During the first year, Crothall installed its programs and systems, implemented training programs, and raised standards. “There were some bumps,” recalls Paul Clark, “but Crothall introduced a team of strong leaders and a level of professionalism and organization that laid the foundation for the dramatic improvements to come in their second year.”

Among the leaders Crothall assigned to MRMC is Laymon Johnson, originally the assistant director, now Unit Director, who formulated a plan to move the program to the next level. “By the end of our first year, the Hospital was significantly cleaner,” explains Laymon, “but our patient satisfaction scores were frustratingly low. Our challenge was to align patient perceptions and the Press Ganey scores with the new reality.”

“We had an in-house Environmental Services program struggling to meet our standards,” says CEO Paul Clark. “We were committed to increasing quality, productivity, and patient satisfaction; we also wanted to raise our staff morale and lower turnover. After study, we concluded we could not achieve these objectives with an in-house solution, and needed the professional leadership, structured systems, and corporate resources that only a specialist firm could provide. That’s why we reached out to Crothall.”

“There is impressive new energy among the housekeepers now. They have stepped beyond their cleaning role and are engaging the patients with professionalism and welcoming hospitality. They’ve made a significant difference at MRMC.”

GUEST RELATIONS PROGRAM LEADS TO SURGE IN PATIENT SATISFACTION
Hospitality Initiatives
A full-time EVS Patient Ambassador was appointed. The Ambassador’s primary focus is to greet new admissions, personally visit each patient daily, and to carefully analyze Press Ganey data for each nursing unit.
Recognizing the need for full department involvement and buy-in, Laymon educated his associates on the Press Ganey survey. He initiated intense ‘scripting’ training—focused on customer-friendly language, grooming, and behavior—for all managers and associates.

The management team includes an on-site ‘Training Guru,’ to continuously reinforce the hospitality behaviors and scripted messages. All associates are now required to engage every patient every day. If a patient is absent at the time of room cleaning, the housekeeper is to return later to confirm the patient’s satisfaction with the service. If a patient is too ill, then the associate attempts to engage family members.

Laymon initiated an incentive program to reward associates for meeting Press Ganey goals. Laymon agreed to treat all of his staff to lunch for a full five days, reminding all that ‘5’ is the targeted score. Individual incentives, including gift certificates, were created for those associates specifically mentioned in survey comments. Press Ganey scores are posted in the staff lounge to help monitor scores and ignite competitive spirits.

Outcomes
Administration champions, such as Don Floyd, the Director of Facility Management, generously supported the program and routinely joined the EVS staff when they gathered to celebrate achievements. Nursing reached out as well, by welcoming EVS associates into their service delivery teams, jointly analyzing data, collaborating on strategic solutions, and celebrating improvements. Together, nursing and EVS staff formed tightly-organized teams singularly focused on patients. Within two months, scores rose, eventually surging to the 99th percentile ranking among MRMC’s peer group. Employee morale has increased and turnover has declined. Through the campaign, housekeepers have rediscovered their critical importance to patient care, and feel a new level of appreciation and recognition.

According to Gil Slacum, MRMC’s Director of Guest Relations, “There is impressive new energy among the housekeepers now. They have stepped beyond their cleaning role and are engaging the patients with professionalism and welcoming hospitality. They’ve made a significant difference at MRMC.” Paul Clark believes Crothall’s commitment to raising patient satisfaction has been invaluable. “Crothall’s program is clearly working. We have seen our scores rise in both the new and old sections of the hospital. The Hospital is clean—and patients perceive it as clean. Our patients benefit, and over time, with a polished image and growing market share, MRMC will benefit.”

Steps to Success
- Patient Ambassador visits to each new admission and stay-over patient.
- Thorough training on Press Ganey, how its scoring system works, and how to influence scores through hospitality behaviors and scripting techniques.
- Mandated personal interactions with each patient every day.
- Comprehensive turn down service as a service enhancement.
- Team rapport on each nursing unit to analyze shortfalls and celebrate successes with EVS.
- Incentive programs for individuals and the team as they achieved quarterly targets.
- Press Ganey Information Board in the staff lounge to raise awareness and stimulate further progress.

Satisfaction Rising: Crothall’s Guest Relations program yields dramatic increases in Press Ganey percentile ranking scores.