

Customer Care Training

Client: Ruaraka Neema Uhai Hospital
Date: 08th November 2019
Duration: 3 Hours, 30 Minutes
Team: Carol Mathai (Team Leader)
Marilyn Ommeh (Trainer 1)
Irene Karanja (Trainer 2)
Host: Victor Obuor Hospital Administration
Number of Participants: 33

Hospitals today, are now putting great emphasis on quality customer care because of competition pressure, patients' preferences on where to access healthcare services and a full realisation that a healthcare business environment is a customer centric reality.

A customer care training was organised by the management of Ruaraka Neema Uhai Hospital on 8th November 2019, where 33 participants from various departments attended. It was a very insightful training conducted by SafeCare Team and Healthcare Management Solutions (HMS) team from the PharmAccess Foundation.

29 out of the 33 participants who filled the feedback form stated that the training met their expectations. However, one (1) of the participants suggested that the training can be improved, whereas the rest (28) were content that the training was **well done**.

The workshop began with introductions and general discussions about the expectations of the workshop participants, which were cited as follows

- How best to deal with clients / patients
- Know how to make the patients comfortable
- Learn how to deal with harsh and stubborn patients
- How to handle the family of the bereaved after death of a loved one
- Relate well with patients coming from Surgery
- Problem solving skills especially for the front desk persons

Customer care, was unanimously appreciated as a culture that the institution needs to adopt for better customer experience and relation. Ruaraka Neema Uhai customers were identified as follows

- Patients
- Relatives of patients
- Staff within hospital
- Family members of staff
- Service Providers
- Insurance companies
- Visitors / Donors / stakeholders
- Government/Regulators / & Suppliers
- Job Seekers
- Public (Social Media)

Training Discussions facilitated by Marilyn Ommeh and Irene Karanja

Hospital Customers (such as patients and their relatives) are relying less on doctors to choose the “right hospitals” for their treatment. This means that how customers are treated at a health facility determines if they will return back for followup services.

There are 5 important variables to Hospital Customer care

1. **Demeanor:** Hospital customers accord great importance to the demeanor of the staff. A health facility with helpful and friendly staff who make the patients feel at home, will win the confidence of patients for good bedside manner. Patients and their caregivers will hold high preference to health providers that demonstrate such connection.
2. **Competence:** Hospital customers form an impression of the level of competence of the hospital personnel as they experience various service points. A quiet/ unengaging nurse at the triage point is likely to bring about concern on the patient about their confidence to proceed to other service points. A nurse that engages the patient in a conversation at the point of triage, possibly about why the measurements being conducted are important information, will build confidence that the next service point will also be as helpful. Also, for emergency care, the effective response of the health provider is key to the confidence that the patients will feel about the service they are receiving.
3. **Hospital costs:** This is a make or break in customer retention and long term relationships with patients and their relatives. Hospital bills always provoke a reaction. It is imperative that the health provider sells the value proposition to the patients clearly. Charges that appear in the bills are often not understood for their value, any more than they cause a negative reaction to patients/caregivers. However, it is important that a hospital can carefully and clearly communicate to a patient the various procedures and requisite materials used during the treatment process, for elimination of doubt. A customer who can articulate their bill, is a happy /content customer. Also, some hospitals that display their pricing list publicly at the health facility will often have more repeat customers due to the impression of trust and transparency.
4. **Communication:** Improving communication with the patients by explaining medical procedures, process flows in the hospital and discussing concerns enhances a relationship with customers. In fact, when customers/patients receive followup calls after their release from hospital, they will tend to feel connected and cared for by the health provider. Customers / patients are always anxious, agitated and eager throughout their treatment journey and therefore consistent communication will help bring ease to the patient.
5. **Quality:** To a patient, quality is interpreted differently from the medical professionals. Physical evidence that the hospital will give quality of service is a huge determinant of whether the customer is impressed by their choice of health provider. Hospitals that display their services gives the patient/customers confidence that they will get good treatment. Signages showing directions to the Lab, X-Ray, Wards, Ante Natal clinic etc give an impression that a health facility is equipped sufficiently to serve the needs of the patients.

Language and Choice of words

Discussions at the customer care training at Ruaraka Neema Uhai Hospital also looked at the importance of the choice of words used while interacting with customers. Code of conduct, consistency of communication and equal treatment to all customers was also discussed.

Placing Value on the customer

Through out the training, it was unanimously agreed upon that the customer is the “boss”. Whereas, all the staff recognised their main reporting channels within the organisation, they also acknowledged that each customer contributes to the success of the organisation, without whom there is no employment and livelihood.

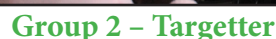
Group 1 - Champions Team

Benefits of Customer Care

- Maintaining customer

- ### Effects of poor Customer care

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Benefits of good customer care

- ### Effects of poor customer care

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Benefits of Customer Care

- ## Effects of poor customer care

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Participant Feedback

What the Participants felt can be done before, during and after the training

- Time Management; beginning on time to cover more content
- More staff involvement for the staff training
- An evaluation to be done in the hospital to measure improvement after training
- Refreshments to be served
- Give reading materials on the trainings taught
- Increase the interactive sessions and group work
- Increase the font of the presentation and make it full screen
- Communication before the training will assist to prepare well

Participant remarks or suggestions

- More trainings that involve all the staff for sustainability of a positive culture of RNUH
- The Customer Care training was enlightening
- Presenters were good, informative and very insightful
- The sessions were interactive
- Early morning hours are preferable for training than afternoon
- All departments to be trained on Customer care, tailored to the service points eg. Morgue, Theatre
- More training on practicals, language and expressions when dealing with customers
- The company should appoint members of teams to be focal points of customer care, to assist their team members to improve the care given to the patients and other customers
- Proper communication within departments will improve on how the hospitals customer care culture works
- Reception and Front desk need more support on customer handling in addition to the rest of the hospital staff
- There should be improvements at the front/reception area
- A support staff should be tasked to assist patients on where to go after each service point
- Training time was very short

Report Prepared by Irene Karanja (HMS)

Submitted to SafeCare Team through Carol Mathai & Marilyn Ommeh