Thibodaux Regional Medical Center: Providing a Stellar Patient Experience

Best Practices Case Study
Thibodaux Regional Medical Center, a 185-bed acute care hospital in Thibodaux, LA, has been recognized for the first time by J.D. Power and Associates as a Distinguished Hospital for service excellence and its commitment to providing an “outstanding patient experience.” With an 80-year history, Thibodaux Regional, which began as a community hospital with 26 beds in a church rectory, now is a multi-building medical complex that serves Lafourche Parish and seven surrounding parishes. The medical center resides in the southeastern region of Louisiana, along the banks of the Bayou Lafourche.

**Establishing Patient-Centered Benchmarks**

Nearly a decade ago, Thibodaux Regional began what it calls its “Journey to Patient-Centered Excellence,” which this year has culminated in the hospital earning recognition as a J.D. Power and Associates Distinguished Hospital. “Thibodaux had been a good hospital providing good care, but we wanted to be a great hospital that provides great care,” CEO Greg Stock explains, adding, “We have concentrated on system improvement methodologies such as Lean, Six Sigma and Do-It-Groups (DIGs)—proven process improvement methodologies that are incorporated in our strategic vision for everyone within the organization.” Thibodaux Regional uses these techniques to continuously improve, solve problems and manage change.

**First Success Measured with Performance Benchmarks**

Thibodaux Regional approached J.D. Power and Associates as a well-known and respected third party to validate its commitment to patient satisfaction and provide credibility and benchmarking in the community and marketplace.

**Voice of the Customer And Recognition**

Recognition as a J.D. Power and Associates Distinguished Hospital was determined through a number of processes and metrics that included a telephone-based survey of recently discharged patients that asked about patients’ stay and focused on the five key drivers of patient satisfaction with the overall hospital experience—speed and efficiency; dignity and respect; comfort; information and communication; and emotional support. Next, research results were compared to national benchmarks established by the annual J.D. Power and Associates National Hospital Service Performance Study℠.

Thibodaux Regional significantly exceeded the national benchmarks for overall satisfaction and performed particularly well, compared with the national study, in the treatment of patients in a speedy and efficient manner, as well as keeping patients comfortable, according to the J.D. Power research data. The medical center also received high ratings on the measures of concern for continued recovery and comfort during procedures. In relation to the national study, Thibodaux Regional also achieved strong scores in the areas of treating patients with dignity and respect—particularly for respect for patient privacy and the courtesy of the discharge personnel. Validation of success in patient satisfaction from J.D. Power and Associates has been a key way for Thibodaux Regional to continue measuring progress as a patient-centric facility and gain recognition and top of mind awareness of its quality of care and service.

**Moving from Measurement to Improvement**

Thibodaux Regional does not plan to rest on its laurels, but to continue monitoring patient service and quality scores on weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual bases. In addition to...
J.D. Power survey results, Thibodaux Regional also will rely on internal surveys, public perception and community interaction. CEO Greg Stock also points out that the hospital's progress can be measured in overall patient volume growth on a year-over-year basis.

**Acquiring and Retaining Patients**

The service excellence distinction, which was determined by surveying recently discharged patients from Thibodaux Regional Medical Center about perceptions of their hospital stay and comparing the results to the national benchmark established by the annual J.D. Power and Associates National Hospital Service Performance StudySM can be used in promotional and marketing materials to help retain and acquire new patients. In qualifying for Distinguished Hospital recognition, Thibodaux Regional Medical Center received an overall Hospital Performance Service Index (HPSI) score that placed the hospital in the 95th percentile.

For example, a majority (80%) of Thibodaux Regional Medical Center patients say they intend to recommend the medical center to others, according to J.D. Power patient satisfaction research, and 83% say they will return to the facility if needed. Among Thibodaux Regional Medical Center patients, nearly one-half indicate they have “much more” trust and confidence in the medical center after their most recent stay. These findings may be broadcast to the medical center’s staff, which also boosts morale.

**Keeping the Brand and Pride Alive**

Thibodaux Regional Medical Center held a special celebration on January 14, 2009, in the facility’s Medical Mall to announce receiving the J.D. Power and Associates Distinguished Hospital Award. To further enhance and define Thibodaux Regional’s brand message of quality and patient satisfaction, the medical center is featuring a photo of the award on its Web site home page. Also on the Web site are a news release, an article and a photo of Kevin Lieb, senior director of Provider Programs at J.D. Power and Associates, presenting the award to CEO Greg Stock and the Thibodaux Regional board of commissioners.

In addition, a multi-media campaign (including print, outdoor and radio promotional materials) was developed to communicate Thibodaux Regional Medical Center’s recognition as a J.D. Power and Associates Distinguished Hospital. Letters initially announcing the award and thanking the staff were signed by Greg Stock and sent to the homes of all employees. Additionally, letters were sent to all members of the Medical Staff. Banners honoring the Hospital’s recognition for service excellence also hang in the hospital lobby.

**Patient Satisfaction Helps Gain Share**

The J.D. Power and Associates Distinguished Hospital Award for service excellence and patient satisfaction can be leveraged in a number of ways throughout 2009. Recognition positively separates Thibodaux Regional from other healthcare providers and it can be used in marketing materials within the region to help gain market share. Jim Dougherty, executive director of the healthcare practice at J.D. Power and Associates, points out that hospitals such as Thibodaux Regional Medical Center that invest in patient satisfaction and respond to patients’ needs also achieve better clinical outcomes as well.

As a Distinguished Hospital, Thibodaux Regional can use its strong patient satisfaction metrics in negotiations with payers and can command better prices on services and offer fewer discounts, Dougherty advises. In addition, national recognition for service excellence bolsters the reputation of the hospital and can be used in marketing activities. CEO Greg Stock said of the Distinguished Hospital Program, “Since this recognition, there has been a renewed breath of life in our staff and the public as a whole, and the feeling that Thibodaux Regional is doing the right things, has performed [well] and will continue to perform with a patient-centered focus.”
**About J.D. Power and Associates**

J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company operating in key business sectors across a variety of industries including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, Web intelligence, and customer satisfaction. Established in 1968, the company has been listening to consumers and business customers; analyzing their opinions and perceptions; and refining research techniques and study methodologies to offer some of the most advanced product quality, customer satisfaction, and tracking research available today. The company’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

**Custom Research**

J.D. Power and Associates conducts customized research and customer satisfaction measurement and tracking on a proprietary basis. J.D. Power has been conducting proprietary research in the areas of quality and customer satisfaction for four decades. J.D. Power and Associates conducts custom research studies across numerous industries, utilizing a variety of data collection methods. These studies dive deep into each stage of the customer life cycle, thus enabling management to understand the customer experience and prioritize improvement opportunities to enhance that experience. To learn more about our products and our services, please visit: www.jdpower.com/corporate

**Certification Programs**

J.D. Power and Associates certification programs help consumers and B2B customers identify product and service providers that deliver an outstanding customer experience. In order to become certified, the client company must meet or exceed the customer satisfaction benchmark established by the most recent J.D. Power and Associates research study in that industry. Companies that become certified may then have the opportunity to license the J.D. Power brand to enhance consumer recognition of their certification. The company offers certification for the following:

- Automotive Retail Dealerships
- Call Centers
- Hospitals
- Hotels
- Insurance Agencies
- New Home-Builders
- Technology Support Operations

To learn more about these certification programs, please visit: www.jdpower.com/corporate/awards/certification

**Web Intelligence**

The J.D. Power and Associates Web Intelligence Research Division offers a breakthrough capability to analyze social media—to provide richer and deeper insights about topics of most importance to online content creators. J.D. Power Web Intelligence crawls more than 70 million blogs each week and collects unaided opinions of the online community—turning it into valuable marketing intelligence about markets, trends, issues, segments, brands, products, and services. This capability not only delivers feedback in the form of data, but also provides insights into the online dialogue that millions of consumers conduct on a daily basis via blogs, message boards and other forms of online content. To learn more about our products and our services, please visit: www.jdpower.com/corporate/webintell

Reproduction of any material contained in this publication, including photocopying of this publication in whole or in part, is prohibited without the express written permission of J.D. Power and Associates. Advertising claims cannot be based on information published in this case study.

Photos courtesy of Thibodaux Regional Medical Center. Used with permission.