

# HEALTHCARE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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# Hospital Public

- Hospital 'Public' includes staff members, patients and relatives, and the governing board whereas the wider public will embrace all such groups as In case of any other Government and social organizations.
- It is implied that the community in general is also included in 'Public.'

**Definition:** Public relations practice is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics (As revised November 1987) . So: Institute of public relations (IPR), Gt Britain

■ Grunig and Hunt –defined public relations as the management of communication between an organization and its public and emphasized that this definition equate public relations and communications management.




# PR

Public relations are the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies attitudes and procedures of an Individual and organization with the public interest, and executes programs of action to carry public understanding and acceptance (Scott, 1965).

# Initial Impression

Patients, relatives and community usually form a rather permanent impression of the entire hospital either from their initial contacts which may be with the Outpatient Department, Accident and Emergency (i.e. Casualty) or even Enquiry Office.

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- It is often judged by the standard of efficiency or courtesy offered by these departments. The inpatient area is no less important.
  - As inpatient dept is not a first contact point, it gets comparatively less attention from public relations point of view.

# First Contact point with Patients



# Common Complaints against the Hospital

- . Rough behavior of lower category of staff.
- . Neglect in patient care by the staff.
- . Undue delay in rendering service; and
- . Influence, poor information and guidance system.



# Complaints of Long Waits and Rude Staff



# *Need for Public Relations*

1. It has been estimated that eighty per cent of the problems confronting management have public relations implications.
2. Hospitals cannot serve in isolation and hence it need to assist the society and to gear itself to meet the expectations of the society to give them fullest satisfaction.
3. Good services coupled with sound working practices and fair treatment of employees and medical staff is not enough unless a sound program of public relations is developed and practiced.

## *Need for Public Relations- contd*

1. Increased governmental activities.
2. Population explosion creating communication problems.
3. Increased educational standards resulting in rise in expectations.
4. Progress in communication techniques.



# Responsibility of Public Relations

1. Every hospital employee has a responsibility towards gaining the confidence of public by discharging his duties efficiently.
2. Every action by each employee is an art of gaining public relations.
3. Major responsibility rests with the highest governing body of the organization.

# Responsibility of Public Relations-contd

4. Primary responsibility is a combined affair between the trustee, the administration and the public relations staff concerned.
  5. Secondary responsibility rests with all other hospital functionaries.
- The clinicians should also be involved more actively in total hospital public relations efforts they are the viable and visible links among the patients, families and visitors and hence with the rest of the community.

# How to Improve PR

1. High quality of patient care will ensure simultaneously good public relations---It is a **sine qua non** (indispensable and essential action, condition, or ingredient).
2. All courtesies must be extended to the patients projecting a good image of the hospital.
3. Receptionist should be available on the right time.
4. Telephone operators should answer calls promptly and politely and promptly respond to the queries of the caller.

# How to Improve PR-contd

5. Environmental sanitation, cleanliness and physical comforts provided to patients create good impression. Well kept lawns, good surroundings create good impression.
6. Reception, Enquiry and Admission Office should be established as one single unit. The staff for such places should be specially selected

# Admission Office





# How to Improve PR-contd

7. The Outpatient Department is the most sensitive place from the public relations point of view. So, special care to be given to it.
8. To avoid public resentment separate counters should be opened for the hospital, employees.
9. People coming to casualty/ emergency are charged with emotions, anxiety and sense of urgency. This department should be staffed and equipped for round-the-clock services.

# Good Hospital, Good Impression Good Care



# Casualty Dept



- A hospital information booklet with adequate information to be provided which is helpful to patients and their relatives.

# Misc Points to Improve PR

1. *Name Labels and Uniform.*

2. *Use of colors in the hospital.*

3. *Allotting priorities in admission on need basis.*

4. *Ward Reception.*

5. *Privacy to be ensured.*

6. Good food, well prepared and attractively served to patients, makes a very favorable impression.

7. *Cleanliness.*

8. *Information about Illness*

# Misc Points to Improve PR-

## contd

9. *Visitors: Time should be liberal for the serious patients.*
  10. *Complaints and Suggestions:* The best way to deal with complaints is to do everything possible to avoid getting them by anticipating the problems.
- *Mortuary and Chaplain Facility:* The disposal of the dead is influenced by religion, social and cultural beliefs and practices. Disposal of dead has a great bearing on public relations of the hospital.



# Conclusion

- Very little we do realize that with a good public relations system, the hospital does not only get good name but it also helps in early recovery of the patient.
- It is very vital that all the staffs of the hospital is made aware of this aspect in order to get their full support and active help.

# Happy Patients



**Thank You**