
Reflective Essay

We chose this project because it provides us with an insight into how patients perceive their care and what we, as future doctors, can do to make their hospital experience better. We strive to maintain high standards and make improvements where possible. Our aim was to study patient experience on surgical ward rounds. We took a patient-centred approach, focusing on their first-hand experience to work towards improving the satisfaction of future patients during the surgical ward rounds. We constructed a survey collecting both qualitative and quantitative data using semi-structured interviews and Likert Scales. We formulated our survey after reviewing current literature on patient experience in other specialties and deciding that both types of data were useful to our project. Our results indicate that most people were satisfied with their ward round experience, however concerns about privacy and priorities were raised. We believe our findings are meaningful and can add weight to other research in this field. Interestingly, similar trends have been observed in other medical specialties. After experiencing difficulties in explaining our Likert scales to patients, we decided to change the format of our questionnaire to give the patients more freedom in their answers. We found that letting the patients view the questions and circle their responses resulted in a greater variety of answers and eliminated interviewer bias. This change also reduced the repetition of instructions regarding the scales, which had caused frequent confusion. Time was a limiting factor, with patients being more talkative than we had anticipated, and our simulations were not accurate representations of the ward environment. Once we started to collect data we realised our original target of 80 surveys was unrealistic so we re-adjusted our target to a more sensible number. Having initially interviewed patients in pairs, we would advise conducting future interviews individually to develop a more intimate rapport with the patient. We recommend the introduction of patient information leaflets, detailing what patients should expect during their stay in the wards and encouraging doctors to introduce themselves to patients routinely to improve patient experience. Throughout the project, each group member was valued as part of the team, resulting in a combined effort to make this project a success. Everyone has been enthusiastic throughout the project and gained valuable insights into patient’s hospital experiences.