

THE POWER OF THE SEAL

Improving Perceptions of Quality of Care
through the Waiting Room

A recent empirical study conducted by the Research Department at the Women's Choice Award demonstrates how the Women's Choice Award can positively affect a women's perception of quality of care delivered by a hospital. This study confirms through rigorous statistical testing that a "Women's Choice Award effect" exists and can be translated into higher HCAHPS recommendation scores for hospitals.

METHODOLOGY

The Process

Three 15-question surveys were developed for this study. Participants were shown three pictures of medical facility waiting rooms and asked three corresponding questions based on their view of that picture. Each survey was identical except that each survey showed the waiting rooms with either a Women's Choice Award, US News or World Report, or no marketing poster.

METHODOLOGY

The Process

The three corresponding questions asked participants to rank on a scale from 1-10, to rank the following statements:

- 1. The quality of care you would imagine to be delivered by the doctors of this medical facility** *[1: Extremely Poor; 10: Excellent]*
- 2. The level of comfort you would feel in this environment** *[1: Extremely Uncomfortable; 10: Extremely Comfortable]*
- 3. The level of confidence you would feel getting medical care in this facility** *[1: Anxious; 10: Confident]*

RESULTS

- One-way ANOVA tests show a statistically significant difference between the means of all three rooms.
- In post-hoc analyses, the waiting rooms with the Women's Choice Award poster were rated higher on the questions of quality, comfort, and confidence than the US News and no poster room in 2 out of the 3 waiting rooms.
- Standard *t*-tests show that these differences were significantly significant at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

- Cohen's d effect size calculation shows that a "Women's Choice Award" effect does exist.
- This effect size can be translated to a 54% probability of superiority, which means that 54% of the time, patients will rate a hospital with the Women's Choice Award marketing materials higher than a hospital without any marketing materials.
- Another way of interpreting that result is to say that for every 25th person, the rating for a will be higher than a hospital without any marketing materials.

RESULTS

Implications & Applications

OVERALL RATING OF HOSPITAL

21. Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst hospital possible and 10 is the best hospital possible, what number would you use to rate this hospital during your stay?

- 0 Worst hospital possible
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Best hospital possible

- Converting the 10-point quality scale to the HCAHPs recommendation scale means that more people will recommend the hospital than not.

22. Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family?

- Definitely no = 1 to 3
- Probably no = 4 to 5
- Probably yes = 6 to 8
- Definitely yes = 9 to 10

EXPLANATION

The “Women’s Choice Award” Effect

- Patients are poor judges of hospital quality. Their judgement is based on **perceptions** of hospital care, which is greatly influenced by aesthetic or comfort factors (i.e., TVs, magazines, bright lighting, etc.).
- Individuals use mental shortcuts, or “heuristics”, to make decisions in areas where they are non-experts.
- Anchoring: a common human tendency to rely heavily on the first piece of information to make judgements about something.
- The Women’s Choice Award is an anchor that signals to patients about the real quality of that hospital and eliminates the need for them to make their own assessment based on non-quality related factors.