

Online Physician Profiles Include Patient Feedback



Rush University Medical Center (Chicago, IL) has begun adding the results of patient surveys to the profiles of individual physicians on its website (www.rush.edu). Rush has added the patient evaluation scores to about 100 physician profiles since the beginning of 2015 and expects to reach approximately 180 in all. The profiles appear on the site's "Find a Doctor" section.

Currently, Rush is one of the few medical centres in the United States to make this information available to potential patients. This initiative reflects the growing trend in healthcare towards increased transparency. "We want to embrace that trend, because we believe that information will empower patients who are making important decisions and simultaneously inspire us to be the best we can be on their behalf," said Anthony Perry, MD, vice president of ambulatory (outpatient) care and population health at Rush.

Each year, Rush collects feedback from approximately 17,000 patients who receive mail or email surveys following an appointment. The survey includes more than 30 questions asking patients for feedback about their care and service, including 10 that focus on their care provider. Rush will make available patient feedback about any physician for whom the Medical Center has received 30 or more surveys in a rolling one-year period.

Patient feedback is presented in the form of stars, ranging from one star for a "very poor" evaluation to five stars for "very good." All patient responses to the survey are included in determining the number of stars each physician receives. None have been excluded or removed.

The overall number of stars a physician receives appears on the main page of his or her profile. Clicking the "Patient Feedback" tab on that page takes a viewer to a page with the doctor's cumulative score on each of the 10 questions.

The questions are about factors such as the care provider's friendliness, explanations of the care, level of concern and understandability. "These aspects of care are what patients notice first and most about their physicians, and we want to be accountable to our patients for how we treat them," explained Dr. Perry, who is a specialist in geriatric medicine and was among the first group of Rush physicians whose profiles include patient feedback.

Dr. Perry hopes that making the patient feedback available will make it easier for patients to choose doctors that will be a good fit for them. He also believes it will help show patients the commitment Rush physicians have to providing a high quality patient experience. "We accept our patients' feedback as valuable information that's collected in a very structured and standardised way," he said.

The patient surveys are conducted by Press Ganey Associates, Inc. in South Bend, Indiana, which is the largest independent research firm conducting patient surveys for U.S. hospitals.

The addition of patient feedback enhances the wealth of information about physicians at Rush that is already available in the "Find a Doctor" section. The physician profile pages include information about each physician's education, training and clinical subspecialties and interests. They also may include research interests and lists of scholarly publications. Many of the profiles also feature video interviews with the doctors as well.

Patient survey evaluations improved among physicians at the University of Utah Hospitals in Salt Lake City after 2012, when it became the first U.S. hospital to put patient feedback online. Only three other U.S. hospitals have followed suit to date.

Source: [Rush University Medical Center](http://www.rush.edu)

Image Credit: Rush University Medical Center

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